



NOTICE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Dear Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend the following meeting:

Meeting of... **CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL**
Time... **19:30**
Date... **Tuesday 28 May 2024**
Place... **Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Horsley'.

Catherine Horsley
Town Clerk
22 May 2024

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: In accordance with Standing Orders, a maximum of 30 minutes is set aside before the business of the meeting commences to enable members of the public to raise any issues pertaining to the agenda for the attention of Councillors. Up to 5 minutes is allowed for each person. Members of the public will only be permitted to speak during the Public Participation agenda item.

Councillors will be discussing all the items listed on the agenda below.

AGENDA

- TC 24/22 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence** (LGA 1972 s85 (1))
- TC 24/23 To Record any declarations of interest** Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)
- TC 24/24 Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 14 May 2024** – LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41
- TC 24/25 Paper B – TO FOLLOW - To Approve Accounts for Payment** – a list of payments to be made will be sent out as close to the meeting as possible to ensure as many payments are captured as possible, therefore avoiding delays in payments to providers.
- TC 24/26 Paper C – Summary of Income & Expenditure and Reserves Balance Reports for the financial year ended 31 March 2024**

TC 24/27	Paper D – To Receive and Note the final report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 March 2024
TC 24/28	Paper E - To Consider and Approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2024
TC 24/29	Paper F – To Confirm and Note the dates for the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of the Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return
TC 24/30	Paper G - To Declare any Conflicts of Interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP
TC 24/31	Paper H – To Note the already Approved minutes of Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing Committee – 29 November 2023 • Finance & Administration Committee – 4 January 2024 • Planning Committee – 9 April 2024 • Planning Committee – 23 April 2024
TC 24/32	Paper I – To Consider and Approve Recommendations from the Finance & Administration Committee
TC 24/33	Paper J – To Review and Approve the Council’s and/or Staff Subscriptions to Other Bodies
TC 24/34	Paper K – To Review and Approve Council Policies & Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints including Vexatious • Obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation – Data Breach, Data Privacy, Data Protection, Model Publication Scheme and Subject Access Request • Press & Media • Employment – Absence Management, Capability, Dignity at Work, Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding
TC 24/35	Paper L – To Approve and/or Retrospectively Approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrospective - Installation of Electricity Meter at the Grounds Unit • Retrospective - EICR Remedial Works at Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground Sports Pavilion • Approval – Installation of Water Meter at the Grounds Unit • Retrospective – Corfe Mullen United Juniors event at the Recreation Ground • Retrospective – Corfe Mullen Beavers Completing Gardening Badge at the Allotment site
TC 24/36	Verbal – To Note Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour on Town Council Sites
TC 24/37	Verbal – To Note Clerk’s Update
TC 24/38	Verbal – To Note Mayor’s Report
TC 24/39	Verbal – To Note Dorset Councillor Report
TC 24/40	Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas No decisions can be taken ¹

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)

- TC 24/41 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting –Tuesday 25 June 2024 at 19:00 in the Main Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.**
- TC 24/42 Close of meeting**



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council
held on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall

Present:

Councillors

D Sowry-House (Chair)
J Bonham
A Craven
S Florek
L Hardy
A Holland
P Holland
S Jefferies
J Lortie
P Neil
V Papilio

In Attendance:

Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk – minute taker)

Public Participation

There were two members of the public present, who were in attendance to understand the Town Council's priorities over their next five-year term and to request an improvement to pavements within the Parish.

Cllr Sowry-House welcomed all members to the annual meeting of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year. (Local Government Act 1972 s.15(4)).

TC 24/01 To Elect Chairman/Mayor of the Town Council for the Municipal Year 2024/25
(Local Government Act 1972 s. 15(1))

Cllr Jefferies proposed Cllr Sowry-House to continue as Chair/Mayor of the Town Council for the 2024/25 municipal year to provide continuity during the first year of the newly elected Council. This was seconded by Cllr Papilio.

Cllr Lortie proposed Cllr Craven due to his consistent approach to the Council's finances. Cllr Craven thanked Cllr Lortie for the proposal, however, declined due to being unable to dedicate the time required to the role.

Cllr Hardy proposed Cllr Lortie for equality of the Council. Cllr Lortie thanked Cllr Hardy for the proposal, however, felt she was unable to take up the role for the first year of the newly elected Council.

Members voted for Cllr Sowry-House to continue as Chair for the 2024/25 municipal year, with 10 members voting in favour, with one abstention, Cllr Sowry-House.

Cllr Sowry-House accepted the position.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Sowry-House be elected as Chair/Mayor of Corfe Mullen Town Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Cllr Sowry-House signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the end of the meeting. Local Government Act 1972 s.83(4)

TC 24/02 To Elect Vice Chairman/Deputy Mayor of the Town Council for the Municipal Year 2024/25 (Local Government Act 1972 s. 15(6))

Cllr Craven proposed Cllr Neil as Vice-Chair/Deputy Mayor of the Town Council for the 2024/25 municipal year to take forward the good work already started relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and climate change and environmental issues affecting the Parish. This was seconded by Cllr P Holland.

Ten members voted in favour, with one abstention Cllr Neil.

Cllr Neil accepted the position.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Neil be elected Vice-Chair/Deputy Mayor of Corfe Mullen Town Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Cllr Neil signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the end of the meeting.

TC 24/03 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

There were no apologies for absence.

TC 24/04 To Record any declarations of interest Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 24/05 Paper A - To Approve minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 23 April 2024 (LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41)

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2024 were **APPROVED**.

TC 24/06 Paper B - To Approve Accounts for Payment

Cllr Jefferies raised the following query:

Lines 149-155: Water invoices appeared high, particularly the allotments. The Clerk advised the water supplier had changed at the beginning of the financial year with the first invoices for estimated usage. Meter readings had been submitted; therefore, future invoices would be charged based on actual usage. It was also noted invoices were issued monthly rather than half-yearly as previously.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment totalling £12,283.95.

TC 24/07 Paper C - To Appoint Committee Members for the Municipal Year 2024/25

Members discussed the membership of the Committees for the 2024/25 municipal year, noting the Terms of Reference should state the maximum number of members rather than minimum, with 5 for the Staffing Committee, and 8 for the remaining Committees. The Chair of the Council to be a standing member on each Committee.

The Clerk noted consideration should be given to places remaining available on each Committee for new Councillors following the co-option process to fill the three

vacancies, albeit the quorum for each Committee meeting shall be no less than three in line with Standing Order 4viii.

It was agreed the Committee membership for the 2024/25 municipal year was as follows:

Planning & Highways Committee:

Cllr J Bonham
Cllr S Florek
Cllr L Hardy
Cllr A Holland
Cllr P Neil
Cllr V Papilio
Cllr D Sowry-House

Community Services Committee:

Cllr A Craven
Cllr P Holland
Cllr S Jefferies
Cllr J Lortie
Cllr Papilio
Cllr D Sowry-House

Finance & Administration Committee:

Cllr A Craven
Cllr S Florek
Cllr L Hardy
Cllr J Lortie
Cllr V Papilio
Cllr D Sowry-House

Staffing Committee:

Cllr S Florek
Cllr P Holland
Cllr S Jefferies
Cllr D Sowry-House

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the membership of the Committees as listed for the 2024/25 municipal year.

TC 24/08

Paper D - To Appoint Representatives to Outside Bodies and Arrangements for Reporting Back

Members discussed the appointment of representatives to outside bodies and arrangements for reporting back, as follows:

DAPTC Eastern Area Committee:

Cllr S Jefferies
Cllr L Hardy

Beacon Hill Liaison Sub-Committee:

Cllr S Jefferies

DAPTC Towns & Larger Parishes Committee:

Cllr P Neil
Cllr J Lortie

Corfe Mullen Allotment Association:

Cllr D Sowry-House

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the representatives to outside bodies as listed for the 2024/25 municipal year.

TC 24/09

Paper E – To Agree to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge

The Clerk read out the Civility and Respect Pledge to reiterate what the Council would be agreeing to, by signing the pledge.

It was **RESOLVED** for the newly elected Council to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

TC 24/10

Paper F - Review of Terms of Reference for Committees

The Clerk confirmed there were no amendments to the Committees Terms of References'.

Cllr Sowry-House noted the Planning Committee had historically been named the Planning & Highways Committee and suggested re-adopting the name due to highways issues being discussed as part of the agenda.

Cllr A Holland noted a formatting error. The Clerk confirmed this would be corrected prior to publishing on the website.

It was **RESOLVED** to rename the Planning Committee as the Planning & Highways Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Terms of References for the Committees of the Council, subject to updates noted.

TC 24/11 Paper G - Review and Adoption of Standing Orders

The Clerk presented the report, noting the Standing Orders had been reviewed in line with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Model Standing Orders for England, version 2 dated April 2022 with updates as follows:

- 3t – Meetings Generally: disclosable pecuniary interest wording.
- 12e – Draft Minutes: to reflect draft minutes published on the Council website no later than 10 working days following the meeting.
- 13i – Code of Conduct and Dispensations: new addition.
- 14d – Code of Conduct Complaints: new addition.
- 15bi (bullet points) – Proper Officer: consent to serve Councillors by email including summons, agendas, and papers.
- 5xxi – Ordinary Council Meetings: calendar of meetings for following calendar year, not municipal year.
- 18av. & c – Financial Controls and Procurement: should reflect the updated Financial Regulations for contracts for the supply of goods, services or works to the value of £30,000 including VAT not £25,000+VAT as stated.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Standing Orders, subject to the updates noted.

TC 24/12 Paper H - Review and Adoption of Financial Regulations

The Clerk presented the report, noting the Financial Regulations had been reviewed in line with the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioners Guide dated March 2024 and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) updated Model Financial Regulations for England dated April 2024.

The Clerk also noted the budgetary control and authority to spend on page 2 of the covers sheet should read: Authorised spending limit for Clerk for any items below £500 (previously £100), the Clerk and the Chair of the Council up to £2000 (previously £1000).

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Financial Regulations, subject to the updates noted.

TC 24/13 Paper I - Review of Inventory of Land and Other Assets Including Buildings and Office and Grounds Maintenance Equipment

The Clerk presented the report, noting the recommendation from the recent internal audit report to only list items with a value over £250 in line with JPAG Practitioners Guide. The Clerk confirmed this methodology would be used going forward.

Cllr Florek asked what the byelaw signs refer to. The Clerk confirmed the byelaws for the Parish were approved by the Secretary of State in October 1985, with a sign on each Town Council site stating what could/could not take place on the sites.

Cllr Hardy queried the differing costs of the welcome to village signs. The Clerk confirmed the value of the signs totalling £1700 was the cost of the original signs purchased in 2003 with £141.89 dated September 2022, being the cost to replace the stolen sign by the Lake Gates roundabout/Willett Road.

The Asset Register was **REVIEWED** and **NOTED**.

TC 24/14 Paper J - Confirmation of Arrangements for Insurance Cover in Respect of all Insurable Risks

The arrangements of insurance cover for all insurable risks were **REVIEWED** and **NOTED**.

TC 24/15 Paper K - Annual Calendar of Meetings 2025

The Clerk presented the report, noting the start times for Community Services and Finance & Administration Committee meetings should read 19:00 rather than 18:30 as stated.

Members discussed the dates for the Annual General Meetings of the Village Hall and Youth Trust Charities and felt the meetings should be held virtually following the school summer holidays.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the annual calendar of meetings for 2025, subject to updates noted.

TC 24/16 Paper L – To Appoint Internal Auditor for 2024/25 Financial Year

The Clerk presented the report, noting the current Internal Auditor had been in place for more than 12 years.

Best practice guidance recommends reviewing appointment of the Internal Auditor at least every 5 years to ensure added value and improve Councils operations, albeit there was no requirement to rotate auditors. However, the independence of the appointed person/firm should be reviewed annually relating to personal, financial and professional independence.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the appointment of the Council's Internal Auditor, Tim Light, Lightatouch, for the financial year from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 at a total cost of £1600 excluding VAT.

It was further **RESOLVED** to send a letter to Eleanor Greene, Do the Numbers Ltd thanking her for her diligence and service to the Council over the past 12 years.

TC 24/17 Paper M – To Declare Eligibility to Exercise the Use of the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011 s.1)

The Clerk confirmed the Council met the two criteria for eligibility for the General Power of Competence by having 11 elected members, more than two thirds elected members and a qualified Clerk who completed the CiLCA qualification in July 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to **DECLARE** eligibility to exercise the use of the General Power of Competence.

TC 24/18 Paper N – To Approve Scheme of Delegation Arrangements

The Clerk presented the report, noting the new policy provided clarity on the delegated arrangements of the Council to Committees and Officers.

Cllr Hardy queried point 2.2.2, stating the Proper Officer was specifically authorised to receive declarations of acceptance of office, and asked if there should be a counter point noting to 'receive resignations from office'.

The Clerk confirmed under statute, the Local Government Act 1972 s.84(1c), members resignations should be received by the Chair of the Council not the Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Scheme of Delegation arrangements.

TC 24/19 Matters for Forthcoming Agendas No decisions can be taken¹

The following items were noted:

- Dorset Council Ward Councillors to follow up response previously received relating to siting of bus shelters on Wareham Road at Windgreen.
- Respectful use of the chapel in the old cemetery to generate income.
- Installation of solar panels on Town Council buildings.
- Dorset Council asset transfer of the county field at the Recreation Ground.
- Sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- Become a Rights Respecting Council and Community.
- Councillor Surgeries/Drop-ins.
- Adopt and focus on four annual campaigns following feedback from electorates at Councillor Drop-ins.
- Approval of the Council's and/or Staff Subscriptions to Other Bodies, Complaints Procedures, Policies, Procedures and Practices in respect of obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation, Press/Media Policy and Employment Policies and Procedures.
- Dorset Council Ward Councillor to follow up progress update on the Beacon Hill landfill site.

The Chair, as one of the newly elected Dorset Council Ward Councillors, to provide Dorset Council updates to the Clerk in real-time to disseminate to members rather than waiting to a Full Council meeting. Cllr Florek and the Chair were taking part in all Dorset Council training and introducing themselves to officers at County Hall in Dorchester, in order to build relationships and communications for the benefit of the Town Council and the community.

Discussion took place relating to the county field which had been earmarked for development of a new school in the current adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan, and Dorset Councils view on providing education across Dorset.

Cllr Craven queried if the trigger for a by-election was set by Dorset Council or in statute. The Clerk confirmed the requirement for ten residents to request a by-election was in statute, under section 5 of the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006. The Clerk reported she had been liaising with DAPTC relating to the by-election costs in November 2023 and would report back any updates to a future meeting.

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)

Cllr Hardy noted the difficulties for new members awareness of the Councils ongoing and future projects and requested that as part of the new website, this information was made available. The Clerk advised an Annual Action Plan was being developed, which would assist new members and members of the public's awareness of the Councils projects and how the precept was being spent.

Cllr Lortie congratulated Cllrs Sowry-House and Florek on becoming the newly elected Dorset Council Ward Councillors for Corfe Mullen.

It was agreed to send the calendar of meetings for the remainder of 2023 and 2024 to all members following the meeting.

TC 24/20 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 28 May 2024 at 19:00 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

TC 24/21 Close of meeting at 20:08.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting.....Date

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CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/25

Paper: B

Subject:	Accounts for Payment
Prepared By:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO
Purpose of Report:	To approve the accounts for payment as scheduled on the attached PDF.
Key Points:	<p>Accounts for payment is created direct from Scribe Accounting.</p> <p>Each transaction has a number in the first column which is the transaction number in Scribe for ease of reference when Councillor's log into Scribe to check invoices.</p> <p>The description provides the details of the transaction, stating what it was for.</p> <p>The supplier is the person being paid.</p> <p>The pay type is whether it is IB (instant BACs), DD (direct debit) or Cheque. If it is a cheque the cheque number should be included.</p> <p>The notes column will provide any further explanation about the transaction.</p>
Recommendation:	To APPROVE Accounts for Payment totalling £22,547.80.

Accounts for Payment - 28 May 2024

Voucher					Payment	
No	Date	Total	Description	Supplier	Ref	Comments
203	01.06.2024	£432.00	Rates	Dorset Council	DD	Jun-24
202	01.06.2024	£227.00	Rates	Dorset Council	DD	Jun-24
201	27.05.2024	£76.43	Electricity Usage	SSE Energy Solutions (Southern Electric)	DD	Streetlighting - March 2024
200	26.05.2024	£71.47	Electricity Usage	SSE Energy Solutions (Southern Electric)	DD	Streetlighting - Feb 2024
199	25.05.2024	£76.38	Electricity Usage	SSE Energy Solutions (Southern Electric)	DD	Streetlighting - Jan 2024
198	03.06.2024	£45.53	Fuel	UK Fuels Limited	DD	Vehicles & Equipment
197	29.05.2024	£21.20	Materials & Supplies	Trade Uk (B&Q)	IB	Screws & wood glue for bench
196	29.05.2024	£804.00	Maintenance	Stanner Electrical Contractors	IB	EICR inspections & repairs
195	29.05.2024	£606.53	Annual Subscription	Starboard Systems Ltd, TA Scribe Accounts	IB	CMTC Bookings Software - Annual
194	27.05.2024	£316.08	Health & Safety	Peninsula Business Services Limited	DD	Monthly H&S
193	29.05.2024	£87.60	CMYT Items	Eastern Shires Purchasing Org.	IB	To be reimbursed
192	29.05.2024	£23.88	Materials & Supplies	Eastern Shires Purchasing Org.	IB	Toilet rolls for various sites
191	29.05.2024	£96.00	Health & Safety	Direct 365 Online Limited	IB	Legionella re-test
190	29.05.2024	£111.00	Room Hire	Corfe Mullen Village Hall	IB	
189	05.06.2024	£146.11	Electricity Usage	British Gas	DD	Pavilion
188	29.05.2024	£9.00	CMVH Items	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	To be reimbursed
187	29.05.2024	£18.99	CMYT Items	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	to be reimbursed
186	29.05.2024	£7.13	Stationery	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	Office
185	29.05.2024	£58.99	Equipment	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	External hard drive for office back up
184	29.05.2024	£42.10	CMYT Items	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	To be reimbursed
183	29.05.2024	£33.75	CMYT Items	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	To be reimbursed
180	29.05.2024	£6.18	Materials & Supplies	Trade UK (Screwfix)	IB	Plastic plugs for Pavilion benches
179	29.05.2024	£40.90	CMVH Items	Trade Uk (B&Q)	IB	To be reimbursed
178	29.05.2024	£25.00	Materials & Supplies	Nikki Gray	IB	Sign writing for Gator Vehicle
177	29.05.2024	£49.44	Monthly Subscription	Microsoft Ireland Operations Ltd.	IB	
176	29.05.2024	£119.38	Materials & Supplies	MBWilkes	IB	Cemetery driveway landscaping
175	29.05.2024	£242.58	Maintenance	BURNSgas Ltd	IB	Pavilion plumbing repairs
174	29.05.2024	£90.00	Maintenance	BURNSgas Ltd	IB	Pavilion plumbing repairs
173	29.05.2024	£238.34	Maintenance	Christchurch Garden Machinery	IB	Ride on mower service
172	29.05.2024	£183.13	Electricity Usage	British Gas	DD	Office
171	02.06.2024	£207.96	Gas Usage	British Gas	DD	Pavilion
170	29.05.2024	£6.59	Health & Safety	Amazon Payments UK Ltd.	IB	First Aid kit location signs
169	24.05.2024	£1,666.60	PAYE	HMRC	IB	
168	24.05.2024	£1,863.98	NIC	HMRC	IB	
167	24.05.2024	£3,872.94	Pension Contributions	DCPF	IB	
166	24.05.2024	£10,623.61	Salaries	Central Computer Management Ltd	IB	
TOTAL:		£22,547.80				



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/

Paper: C

Subject:	Summary of Income & Expenditure and Reserves Balance Reports for the financial year ended 31 March 2024
Prepared By:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO
Purpose of Report:	To Receive and Note the Summary of Income & Expenditure and Reserves Balance Reports
Background:	Budget Monitoring for 2023/24 has been carried out quarterly. Following the year end work, the reports show the final year end position.
Key Points:	<p>Summary of Income & Expenditure Report - Appendix 1 shows the position of each cost centre/code in respect of the financial year ending 31 March 2024 including year-end adjustments with any under/overspend.</p> <p>The total net expenditure up to 31 March 2024 is £418,337.12 which is an underspend of £104,218.88 on the agreed budget.</p> <p>The total net income up to 31 March 2024 is £577,730.01 which is increase of £55,174.01 on the agreed budget.</p> <p>Note: the major expenditure including plant replacement, office porch, cricket fence & nets and website redesign have not been progressed during the 2023/24 financial year. Employee costs were lower than anticipated due to a reduced Grounds Team.</p> <p>Income has significantly increased due to higher than anticipated investment returns, allotment rents, cemetery fees, CIL receipts and recreational income.</p> <p>As stated at the recent Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on 21 May 2024, the overall position is better than anticipated, due to stringent control of budget spend and ensuring value for money when procuring contractors and supplies.</p> <p>Reserves Balance Report – Appendix 2 shows the earmarked/capital reserves and general fund balances for the financial year ending 31 March 2024.</p> <p>Note: Council must ensure it has a minimum of 3-6 months operating costs held in the general reserve fund. The Councils average monthly operating costs are circa £40,000.</p>
Implications:	<p>It is good practice to monitor the budget on at least a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Reports provide transparency of the Councils financial position as at year end.</p> <p>Members should be checking for any anomalies and unusual variances which have not been explained previously.</p>

Recommendation:	To RECEIVE and NOTE the summary of Income & Expenditure Report and Reserves Balance Report
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Corfe Mullen Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023-2024
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2024)

Allotments

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
74	Rent							(N/A)
75	Water				250.00	697.40	-447.40	-447.40 (-178%)
76	Maintenance				3,000.00	1,325.63	1,674.37	1,674.37 (55%)
77	Compensation							(N/A)
99	Insurance				300.00	205.15	94.85	94.85 (31%)
106	Sheds							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL					3,550.00	2,228.18	1,321.82	1,321.82 (N/A)

Banking

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
82	CCLA transfers				50.00	50.00		(0%)
100	Bank Charges				60.00	45.32	14.68	14.68 (24%)
101	PWLB Loan Interest				70.00	66.24	3.76	3.76 (5%)
134	Scottish Widows Transfer							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL					180.00	161.56	18.44	18.44 (N/A)

Cemeteries

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
64	Insurance				700.00	615.48	84.52	84.52 (12%)
65	Rates & Utilities				4,000.00	2,841.59	1,158.41	1,158.41 (28%)
66	Repairs and Maintenance				2,000.00	1,609.37	390.63	390.63 (19%)
SUB TOTAL					6,700.00	5,066.44	1,633.56	1,633.56 (28%)

Climate Change

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
58	Events and Measures				500.00	12.00	488.00	488.00 (97%)
SUB TOTAL					500.00	12.00	488.00	488.00 (97%)

CMVH

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
108	VH Reimbursement							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL								(N/A)

CMYT

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
125	CMYT - Reimbursement							(N/A)

Corfe Mullen Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023-2024
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2024)

SUB TOTAL

(N/A)

Employees

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
10	Salaries				166,000.00	130,150.80	35,849.20	35,849.20 (21%)
92	PAYE				21,000.00	14,995.00	6,005.00	6,005.00 (28%)
93	National Insurance				29,000.00	22,671.62	6,328.38	6,328.38 (21%)
95	Pension				59,000.00	46,219.43	12,780.57	12,780.57 (21%)
SUB TOTAL					275,000.00	214,036.85	60,963.15	60,963.15 (28%)

Exceptional and Capital

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
80	PWLB Loan Repayments				5,076.00	5,075.67	0.33	0.33 (0%)
84	Allotment Improvements							(N/A)
85	Plant Replacement				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00 (100%)
86	Litter Bin/Dog Bin Replacement							(N/A)
87	Highways Improvements net of CIL							(N/A)
88	Chapel Repairs							(N/A)
89	Platinum Jubilee Celebration							(N/A)
90	Building Revaluation							(N/A)
91	Trailer for Groundstaff Team					22.49	-22.49	-22.49 (N/A)
109	Cricket Fence and Nets				2,000.00	-1,200.00	3,200.00	3,200.00 (160%)
110	Henbury Play Area Fence							(N/A)
111	Tree Survey					3,350.00	-3,350.00	-3,350.00 (N/A)
112	Recreation Ground Pit Area				2,000.00	3,240.00	-1,240.00	-1,240.00 (-62%)
113	Office Porch				6,000.00		6,000.00	6,000.00 (100%)
114	Neighbourhood Plan					271.70	-271.70	-271.70 (N/A)
115	Remembrance Sunday				1,000.00	372.32	627.68	627.68 (62%)
117	CIL Expenditure							(N/A)
127	Kings Coronation				1,000.00	1,031.76	-31.76	-31.76 (-3%)
128	Replacement Laptop				800.00	665.83	134.17	134.17 (16%)
129	Replacement Vehicle				12,000.00	12,950.00	-950.00	-950.00 (-7%)
130	Civic Regalia				1,000.00	972.80	27.20	27.20 (2%)
131	Website Redesign				5,000.00		5,000.00	5,000.00 (100%)
132	Old Cemetery Driveway				10,000.00	5,710.00	4,290.00	4,290.00 (42%)
SUB TOTAL					47,876.00	32,462.57	15,413.43	15,413.43 (N/A)

General Admin

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
11	Staff Travelling Expenses				300.00	69.80	230.20	230.20 (76%)
28	Legal Fees				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00 (100%)
29	Employment Services				1,500.00	1,348.00	152.00	152.00 (10%)
30	Staff Training				2,500.00	2,199.00	301.00	301.00 (12%)
31	Staff Professional Fees				500.00	337.00	163.00	163.00 (32%)
32	Councillor Training				500.00	457.68	42.32	42.32 (8%)
33	Insurance				1,700.00	1,230.96	469.04	469.04 (27%)
34	DAPTC				1,450.00	1,444.56	5.44	5.44 (0%)

Corfe Mullen Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023-2024
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2024)

35 Audit Fees	2,400.00	2,165.00	235.00	235.00 (9%)
36 Meeting Room Hire	2,000.00	1,572.00	428.00	428.00 (21%)
37 Advertising	1,000.00	500.24	499.76	499.76 (49%)
38 Councillors Travelling Expenses	100.00		100.00	100.00 (100%)
39 Chairman's Allowance	500.00	242.74	257.26	257.26 (51%)
40 Town Council Newsletter	6,000.00	3,887.52	2,112.48	2,112.48 (35%)
41 Publications and Subscriptions	300.00	240.00	60.00	60.00 (20%)
42 Office IT & Software	4,800.00	3,909.70	890.30	890.30 (18%)
44 Election Costs	500.00	11,455.28	-10,955.28	-10,955.28 (-2191%)
45 Miscellaneous	50.00	84.00	-34.00	-34.00 (-68%)
46 Notice Boards & Signs	1,000.00	53.70	946.30	946.30 (94%)
47 Civic Expenses	1,000.00	76.00	924.00	924.00 (92%)
105 Health & Safety Services	3,500.00	3,442.08	57.92	57.92 (1%)
136 Health & Safety - Lone Working De		437.85	-437.85	-437.85 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL	33,600.00	35,153.11	-1,553.11	-1,553.11 (N/A)

Grants

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
68	Youth Centre Revenue Grant				37,000.00	32,491.75	4,508.25	4,508.25 (12%)
69	CMVH				3,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00 (100%)
73	Small Grants Programme GPC				6,000.00	6,150.00	-150.00	-150.00 (-2%)
SUB TOTAL					46,000.00	38,641.75	7,358.25	7,358.25 (-2%)

Income: Allotment

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
4	Allotment Rents		1,615.50	1,615.50				1,615.50 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL			1,615.50	1,615.50				1,615.50 (N/A)

Income: Bank Interest

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
3	Bank Interest	1,500.00	28,056.91	26,556.91				26,556.91 (1770%)
SUB TOTAL		1,500.00	28,056.91	26,556.91				26,556.91 (1770%)

Income: Booklet Sales

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
7	Booklet/Leaflet Sales							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL								(N/A)

Income: Cemetery

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
2	Cemetery Fees	4,500.00	8,415.00	3,915.00				3,915.00 (87%)

Corfe Mullen Town Council

Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023-2024

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2024)

SUB TOTAL		4,500.00	8,415.00	3,915.00				3,915.00 (87%)
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Income: Exceptional and Capital		Income			Expenditure			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
78	CIL Receipts	4,000.00	6,261.60	2,261.60				2,261.60 (56%)
79	S.106 Receipts							(N/A)
120	Neighbourhood Plan Grant Fundin							(N/A)
126	Refundable Damage Deposits		100.00	100.00				100.00 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL		4,000.00	6,361.60	2,361.60				2,361.60 (N/A)

Income: FOI		Income			Expenditure			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
6	FOI							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL								(N/A)

Income: Other		Income			Expenditure			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
8	Other Income							(N/A)
9	Village hall							(N/A)
102	VAT Reclaim							(N/A)
SUB TOTAL								(N/A)

Income: Precept		Income			Expenditure			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
1	Precept	502,456.00	502,456.00					(0%)
SUB TOTAL		502,456.00	502,456.00					(0%)

Income: Recreation Ground		Income			Expenditure			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
5	Recreation	100.00	50.00	-50.00				-50.00 (-50%)
118	Pitch Fees	5,000.00	6,223.00	1,223.00				1,223.00 (24%)
119	Tennis Court Fees	5,000.00	9,188.00	4,188.00				4,188.00 (83%)
133	Cricket Fees		931.50	931.50				931.50 (N/A)
135	Pavilion Lounge Hire		14,432.50	14,432.50				14,432.50 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL		10,100.00	30,825.00	20,725.00				20,725.00 (N/A)

Office Costs		Income			Expenditure			Net Position
Code	Title	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
48	Printing/Postage/Stationery				500.00	636.53	-136.53	-136.53 (-27%)

Corfe Mullen Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023-2024
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2024)

49 Telephone/Internet	1,100.00	888.13	211.87	211.87 (19%)
50 Copier Lease				(N/A)
51 Insurance	700.00	615.48	84.52	84.52 (12%)
52 Rates	4,000.00	3,929.62	70.38	70.38 (1%)
53 Repairs & Maintenance	1,000.00	1,394.59	-394.59	-394.59 (-39%)
54 Utilities	3,500.00	1,813.64	1,686.36	1,686.36 (48%)
55 Fire and Security	1,000.00	308.42	691.58	691.58 (69%)
56 Office Cleaning (inc Windows)	400.00	362.56	37.44	37.44 (9%)
57 Miscellaneous	100.00	43.16	56.84	56.84 (56%)
104 Office Furniture				(N/A)
107 Office - Waste Collection	450.00	420.84	29.16	29.16 (6%)
SUB TOTAL	12,750.00	10,412.97	2,337.03	2,337.03 (N/A)

Recreation

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
12	Ground Staff Building (premises C				3,000.00	2,490.56	509.44	509.44 (16%)
13	Public Toilets				5,000.00	4,957.47	42.53	42.53 (0%)
14	PPE & Uniform				2,000.00	1,613.95	386.05	386.05 (19%)
15	Cleaning Materials & Supplies				2,000.00	1,965.23	34.77	34.77 (1%)
16	Litter & Dog Bins				1,000.00	725.22	274.78	274.78 (27%)
17	Security (Alarm & CCTV)				9,500.00	8,168.18	1,331.82	1,331.82 (14%)
18	Waste & Recycling				4,600.00	4,403.90	196.10	196.10 (4%)
19	Tools & Equipment				4,000.00	1,965.31	2,034.69	2,034.69 (50%)
20	Contractor Costs				3,000.00	16,539.00	-13,539.00	-13,539.00 (-451%)
21	Utilities				3,000.00	5,198.93	-2,198.93	-2,198.93 (-73%)
22	Insurance				700.00	615.48	84.52	84.52 (12%)
23	Rent DCC				650.00		650.00	650.00 (100%)
24	Play Areas				6,000.00	1,904.63	4,095.37	4,095.37 (68%)
25	Dog Warden							(N/A)
26	Community Orchard							(N/A)
27	Tree Planting				200.00		200.00	200.00 (100%)
97	Telephone/Broadband/Mobiles				700.00	554.70	145.30	145.30 (20%)
98	Recreation/Sports Facility Mainten				10,000.00	2,965.18	7,034.82	7,034.82 (70%)
116	Pavilion - Health & Safety				1,000.00	716.28	283.72	283.72 (28%)
121	Pavilion - Utilities				15,000.00	7,250.25	7,749.75	7,749.75 (51%)
122	Pavilion - Professional Fees				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00 (100%)
123	Pavilion - Cleaning & Supplies				9,000.00	7,231.03	1,768.97	1,768.97 (19%)
124	Pavilion - Maintenance				5,000.00	2,330.61	2,669.39	2,669.39 (53%)
SUB TOTAL					86,350.00	71,595.91	14,754.09	14,754.09 (N/A)

Street Lighting & Furniture

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
81	Street Lighting and Furniture				3,000.00	2,788.23	211.77	211.77 (7%)
SUB TOTAL					3,000.00	2,788.23	211.77	211.77 (7%)

Vehicles & Plant

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend

Corfe Mullen Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023-2024
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2024)

59 Road Tax			350.00	320.00	30.00	30.00 (8%)		
60 Insurance			1,500.00	1,436.26	63.74	63.74 (4%)		
61 Vehicle Fuel			1,500.00	1,311.23	188.77	188.77 (12%)		
62 Vehicle Maintenance			1,000.00	1,993.43	-993.43	-993.43 (-99%)		
63 Plant Maintenance			2,000.00	433.21	1,566.79	1,566.79 (78%)		
103 Equipment Fuel			700.00	283.42	416.58	416.58 (59%)		
SUB TOTAL			7,050.00	5,777.55	1,272.45	1,272.45 (-99%)		
Restated						(N/A)		
NET TOTAL		522,556.00	577,730.01	55,174.01	522,556.00	418,337.12	104,218.88	159,392.89 (15%)
V.A.T.			23,124.21			24,075.90		
GROSS TOTAL			600,854.22			442,413.02		

Corfe Mullen Town Council
Reserves Balance
2023-2024

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>OpeningBalance</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>CurrentBalance</u>
Capital					
Plant Replacement	737.07	1,262.93			2,000.00
Chapel Repairs	-2,612.60	2,612.60			0.00
Trailer for Grounds Maintenance	2,500.00		2,164.16		335.84
Office Porch	4,000.00	6,000.00			10,000.00
Replacement Vehicle		12,000.00	12,950.00		-950.00
Total Capital	4,624.47	21,875.53	15,114.16		11,385.84
Earmarked					
Platinum Jubilee Celebration	1,299.97	-1,299.97			0.00
Building Revaluation	-700.00	700.00			0.00
Section 106 Monies	204,848.02				204,848.02
Pavilion Refurbishment/Rebuild	42,761.67				42,761.67
Cricket Fence and Nets	2,000.00				2,000.00
Henbury Play Area Fence	-1,072.50	1,072.50			0.00
Tree Survey	5,000.00		4,895.00		105.00
Recreation Ground Pit Area	5,000.00	-3,000.00	3,240.00		-1,240.00
Neighbourhood Plan	6,629.11		271.70	-2,143.13	4,214.28
Remembrance Sunday	1,958.98	-958.98	372.32		627.68
CIL Receipts	2,989.76			6,261.60	9,251.36
Kings Coronation		1,000.00	1,066.76		-66.76
Replacement Laptop		800.00	665.83		134.17
Civic Regalia		1,000.00	972.80		27.20
Website Redesign		5,000.00			5,000.00
Old Cemetery Driveway		10,000.00	5,710.00		4,290.00
Refundable Damage Deposits		750.00		-150.00	600.00
Total Earmarked	270,715.01	15,063.55	17,194.41	3,968.47	272,552.62
TOTAL RESERVE	275,339.48	36,939.08	32,308.57	3,968.47	283,938.46
GENERAL FUND					315,498.76
TOTAL FUNDS					599,437.22



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/27

Paper: D

Subject:	Internal Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2024																		
Prepared By:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO																		
Purpose of Report:	To Receive the Internal Auditor's Report for the year ending 31 March 2024 and note Clerk's responses.																		
Background:	<p>The Internal Auditor carries out a year-end report following the interim visit to highlight areas which require attention to achieve best practice.</p> <p>The Internal Auditor also completes the Internal Audit section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) which is submitted to the External Auditor, BDO LLP.</p>																		
Key Points:	<p>Year End accounts have been run and confirmed by the Internal Auditor in accordance with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.</p> <p>The following items in the first 3 columns were raised with the Clerk's response shown in column 4. The full report can be found in Appendix 1.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Control</th><th style="text-align: left;">Issue</th><th style="text-align: left;">Recommended Action</th><th style="text-align: left;">Clerk's Response</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>B - VAT partial exemption</td><td>The council has taken over running the sports pavilion and has reclaimed VAT on the repairs while not charging it on income.</td><td>An analysis shows that the income is over 48% zero rates non business and the total VAT reclaimed is £3505 in the year. No adjustments are required.</td><td>Noted. To continue monitoring.</td></tr> <tr> <td>B – Pavilion rebuild</td><td>The council is commencing the process of rebuilding the pavilion.</td><td>Great care will be needed to ensure compliance with VAT rules on the building. Professional advice should be sought at the earliest stage.</td><td>Noted. To seek advice on VAT position upon commencing engagement with consultants and/or contractors.</td></tr> <tr> <td>D - General Reserve</td><td>Due to lower than expected expenditure in some areas, the General Reserve of the council is at the very upper end of good practice.</td><td>Projects due to commence in 2024/25 will use up some of the funds and replacement staff have been recruited</td><td>As a result of reduced grounds team and recruitment of team, employee costs were lower than predicted, albeit contracting out costs for sports pitch and grounds</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			Control	Issue	Recommended Action	Clerk's Response	B - VAT partial exemption	The council has taken over running the sports pavilion and has reclaimed VAT on the repairs while not charging it on income.	An analysis shows that the income is over 48% zero rates non business and the total VAT reclaimed is £3505 in the year. No adjustments are required.	Noted. To continue monitoring.	B – Pavilion rebuild	The council is commencing the process of rebuilding the pavilion.	Great care will be needed to ensure compliance with VAT rules on the building. Professional advice should be sought at the earliest stage.	Noted. To seek advice on VAT position upon commencing engagement with consultants and/or contractors.	D - General Reserve	Due to lower than expected expenditure in some areas, the General Reserve of the council is at the very upper end of good practice.	Projects due to commence in 2024/25 will use up some of the funds and replacement staff have been recruited	As a result of reduced grounds team and recruitment of team, employee costs were lower than predicted, albeit contracting out costs for sports pitch and grounds
Control	Issue	Recommended Action	Clerk's Response																
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D - General Reserve	Due to lower than expected expenditure in some areas, the General Reserve of the council is at the very upper end of good practice.	Projects due to commence in 2024/25 will use up some of the funds and replacement staff have been recruited	As a result of reduced grounds team and recruitment of team, employee costs were lower than predicted, albeit contracting out costs for sports pitch and grounds																

				<p>maintenance offset some of the employee costs underspend. There has also been a significant increase in recreational income and higher investment returns than predicted. Projects not progressed during 2023/24 financial year include the office porch and website redesign which will be progressed in the 2024/25 financial year. £60,000 of the general reserves will also be used to cover the predicted 2024/25 expenditure, negating the need to increase the precept further.</p>
	G – Leavers & Starters	It is good practice the leaving date of all departing staff and the name of all joining staff.	This is both a control over payroll totals and a service to residents.	Noted. To be documented in the minutes where appropriate.
	H – Asset de minimis	Several of the purchases classified as assets in the year are of low value and will not be in use for more than one year	Guidance in the Practitioners Guide suggests a risk assessed de minimis of the order of £250 for items added to the box 9 total.	Noted. Recommendation to be implemented in the 2024/25 financial year.
	M – Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) Forms	Please ensure that all members of the new council fully and accurately complete their forms this month.	Please remember that only the monitoring officer can redact home address from the form	Noted. The Clerk has provided the external link to complete Register of Interests electronically via the Dorset Council website managed by the Dorset Council monitoring officer. A link to all members Register of Interests on the Dorset Council

				website is shown on the Town Council website for transparency.
	O – Corfe Mullen Sports Association (CMSA) Charity 1141499	The change in trustee details have been submitted to the Charity Commission but their records are behind.	All progress towards integrating Pavilion activities into the council and then rebuilding the pavilion need to be clearly recorded.	Noted. Change of the CMSA Trustees to the Town Council as Sole Trustee has been submitted to the Charity Commission. The Charity will be managed and governed in the same way as the Village Hall and Youth Trust charities, where the Town Council are the Sole Trustee.
	<p>The report of the Internal Auditor provides some positive feedback regarding maintaining governance and financial records throughout the financial year. The Clerk will continue to make further improvements and ensure the Council remains compliant at all levels.</p> <p>Due to the Councils income & expenditure being >£500k, annual internal audit costs are £1150. A £350 discount was received for excellent record keeping.</p>			
Implications:	Internal Audit provides a good basis for Councils to make improvements and their recommendations should not be ignored.			
Recommendation:	To RECEIVE and NOTE the final report from the Internal Auditor for the year ending 31 March 2024.			

Do the Numbers Limited

1st May 2024

Catherine Horsley, Clerk
Corfe Mullen Town Council,

Dear Catherine,

Subject: Review of matters arising from Internal Audit for 31 March 2024

Following my visits to the office today and earlier in the year, please find below the list of matters arising.

I found the records and systems of the council to be in extremely good order.

The internal audit was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the [Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015](#) and the guidance and instruction in the [Practitioners Guide 2024](#)

Test	Matter arising	Recommended Action
A	<i>Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
B	<i>This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for</i>	
VAT partial exemption	The council has taken over running the sports pavilion and has reclaimed VAT on the repairs while not charging it on income.	An analysis shows that the income is over 48% zero rates non business and the total VAT reclaimed is £3505 in the year. No adjustments are required.
Pavilion rebuild	The council is commencing the process of rebuilding the pavilion.	Great care will be needed to ensure compliance with VAT rules on the building. Professional advice should be sought at the earliest stage.
C	<i>This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
D	<i>The budget resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, the reserves were appropriate</i>	
General reserve	Due to lower than expected expenditure in some areas, the General Reserve of the council is at the very upper end of good practice.	Projects due to commence in 2024/25 will use up some of the funds and replacement staff have been recruited.
E	<i>Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
F	<i>Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for</i>	
Not applicable to this council		
G	<i>Salaries to employees and allowances to members we paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied</i>	
Starters and leavers	It is good practice the leaving date of all departing staff and the name of all	This is both a control over payroll totals and a service to residents.

eleanorgreene@dothenumbers.uk

Registered in England No. 7871759

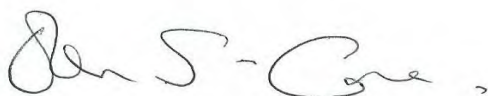
Director: Eleanor S Greene

	joining staff.	
<i>H</i>	<i>Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained</i>	
Asset de minimis	Several of the purchases classified as assets in the year are of low value and will not be in use for more than one year.	Guidance in the PG suggests a risk assessed de minimis of the order of £250 for items added to the box 9 total.
<i>I</i>	<i>Periodic Bank reconciliations were carried out during the year</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
<i>J</i>	<i>Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis, agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail and debtors and creditors recorded.</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
<i>K</i>	<i>Certified Exempt in prior year</i>	
Not applicable to this council		
<i>L</i>	<i>Transparency Code</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
<i>M</i>	<i>Public Rights</i>	
DPI forms	Please ensure that all members of the new council fully and accurately complete their forms this month.	Please remember that only the monitoring officer can redact home address from the form.
<i>N</i>	<i>Publication of prior year AGAR</i>	
	The records of the council comply	with this test
<i>O</i>	<i>Trust funds</i>	
CMSA Charity 1141499	The change in trustee details have been submitted to th Charity Commission but their records are behind.	All progress towards integrating Pavilion activities into the council and then rebuilding the pavilion need to be clearly recorded.
<i>P</i>	<i>Borrowing</i>	
	No longer applicable to this council	

Please find attached my invoice for the balance of the agreed fee.

If either you or your members have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Eleanor S Greene



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/28 & TC 24/29

Paper: E & F

Subject:	Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024
Prepared By:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO
Purpose of Report:	To Approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024
Background:	<p>The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Form 3 should be completed by local councils where the higher of gross income or expenditure exceeds £25,000 but does not exceed £6.5m or where the higher of gross income and expenditure was £25,000 or less but are unable to certify as exempt or requests a limited assurance review.</p> <p>Corfe Mullen Town Council falls within the category of gross income or expenditure exceeds £25,000 and being unable to certify itself exempt. The External Auditor, BDO LLP has also confirmed the Council will require an intermediate audit for 2023/24 financial year.</p>
Key Points:	<p>Parts of the AGAR Form 3 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24: Completed and signed by the Internal Auditor. • Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement: Prepared by the Clerk and following approval by Full Council signed by the Chair and Clerk. • Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24: Prepared and signed by the RFO ahead of meeting/approval, following approval by Full Council signed by the Chair. • Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24: To be completed by the External Auditor. • The RFO sets the commencement date for the exercise of public rights: Date inspection period to commence – Tuesday 4 June 2024 and ends on Monday 15 July 2024 <p>Once approved by Full Council and signed appropriately, the AGAR Form 3, along with the following supporting documents to be submitted to External Auditor, BDO LLP no later than 30 June 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of the dates for exercise of public rights. • Copy of Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2024. • Explanation of significant variances. • Reconciliation of boxes 7 & 8. • Confirmation that there are no conflict of interests. • Up to date contact details for Clerk/RFO and Chair. <p>In addition, based on the intermediate audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of accounting records on which the AGAR are based. • Copy of closing bank statements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of meeting minutes appointing/reappointing the internal auditor. • Copy of letter of engagement scoping internal audit. • Copy of meeting minutes of annual review of internal audit. <p>The following documents will be published on the Town Council website before 1 July for public inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 • Annual Governance Statement • Accounting Statements 2023/24 • Declaration that the accounts are as yet unaudited • Details of the arrangements for the exercise of public rights • Name and address of External Auditor
Implications:	<p>Failure to publish the AGAR and supporting documents on the Town Council website before 1 July 2024 would result in breach of Regulation 15(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.</p> <p>The exercise of public rights must be 30 consecutive working days which must include the first 10 working days of July 2024.</p> <p>Failure to submit AGAR and supporting documents to the External Auditor ahead of 1 July 2024, may result in fees and consequences of non or late response to the Council.</p>
Recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Governance Statement – to APPROVE, signed by the Chair and Clerk • Accounting Statements 2023/24: to APPROVE, signed by the Chair • Notice of Public Rights and Publications of Unaudited AGAR – to NOTE.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

Publication Requirements

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

WWW.CORFEMULLEN-TC.GOV.UK/ACCOUNTS_AND_ASSETS

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

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

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

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

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

16/01/2024 01/05/2024

ELEANOR S-GREENE ICAN

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

1/5/24.

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

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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

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

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

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

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

28/05/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

TC 24/

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

Chair

Clerk

WWW.CORFEMULLEN-TC.GOV.UK/ACCOUNTS-AND-ASSETS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	328,212	440,044	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	459,546	502,456	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	123,814	75,274	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	242,545	214,037	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	10,284	5,142	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	218,698	199,158	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	440,044	599,437	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	448,315	590,612	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	859,371	881,569	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	5,076	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 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

C. Garsley

Date

25/04/2024

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

28/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

TC 24/

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

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

In respect of

CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website –

<https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

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

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

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2023/24

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

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

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

BDO LLP

External Auditor Signature

Date

Name of Smaller authority: Corfe Mullen Town Council

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF
UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE &
ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN**

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

**Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement _Monday 3 June 2024_____ (a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.</p> <p>Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2024, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO, Corfe Mullen Town Council, Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3UA</p> <p>commencing on (c) _Tuesday 4 June 2024_____</p> <p>and ending on (d) _Monday 15 July 2024_____</p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and• The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority. <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:</p> <p>BDO LLP Arcadia House Maritime Walk Ocean Village Southampton SO14 3TL ✉ councilaudits@bdo.co.uk</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO</p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.

The basic position

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act) governs the work of auditors appointed to smaller authorities. This summary explains the provisions contained in Sections 26 and 27 of the Act. The Act and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 also cover the duties, responsibilities and rights of smaller authorities, other organisations and the public concerning the accounts being audited.

As a local elector, or an interested person, you have certain legal rights in respect of the accounting records of smaller authorities. As an interested person you can inspect accounting records and related documents. If you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them. You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the smaller authority form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.

The right to inspect the accounting records

Any interested person can inspect the accounting records, which includes but is not limited to local electors. You can inspect the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records. You can copy all, or part, of these records or documents. Your inspection must be about the accounts, or relate to an item in the accounts. You cannot, for example, inspect or copy documents unrelated to the accounts, or that include personal information (Section 26 (6) – (10) of the Act explains what is meant by personal information). You cannot inspect information which is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is information which would prejudice commercial confidentiality if it was released to the public and there is not, set against this, a very strong reason in the public interest why it should nevertheless be disclosed.

When smaller authorities have finished preparing accounts for the financial year and approved them, they must publish them (including on a website). There must be a 30 working day period, called the 'period for the exercise of public rights', during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounting records. Smaller authorities must tell the public, including advertising this on their website, that the accounting records and related documents are available to inspect. By arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records. You may have to pay a copying charge. The 30 working day period must include a common period of inspection during which all smaller authorities' accounting records are available to inspect. This will be 1-12 July 2024 for 2023-24 accounts. The advertisement must set out the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, how you can communicate to the smaller authority that you wish to inspect the accounting records and related documents, the name and address of the auditor, and the relevant legislation that governs the inspection of accounts and objections.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

You should first ask your smaller authority about the accounting records, since they hold all the details. If you are a local elector, your right to ask questions of the external auditor is enshrined in law. However, while the auditor will answer your questions where possible, they are not always obliged to do so. For example, the question might be better answered by another organisation, require investigation beyond the auditor's remit, or involve disproportionate cost (which is borne by the local taxpayer). Give your smaller authority the opportunity first to explain anything in the accounting records that you are unsure about. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you can question the external auditor about the accounting records.

The law limits the time available for you formally to ask questions. This must be done in the period for the exercise of public rights, so let the external auditor know your concern as soon as possible. The advertisement or notice that tells you the accounting records are available to inspect will also give the period for the exercise of public rights during which you may ask the auditor questions, which here means formally asking questions under the Act. You can ask someone to represent you when asking the external auditor questions.

Before you ask the external auditor any questions, inspect the accounting records fully, so you know what they contain. Please remember that you cannot formally ask questions, under the Act, after the end of the period for the exercise of public rights. You may ask your smaller authority other questions about their accounts for any year, at any time. But these are not questions under the Act.

You can ask the external auditor questions about an item in the accounting records for the financial year being audited. However, your right to ask the external auditor questions is limited. The external auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions. The external auditor cannot answer questions about policies, finances, procedures or anything else unless it is directly relevant to an item in the accounting records. Remember that your questions must always be about facts, not opinions. To avoid misunderstanding, we recommend that you always put your questions in writing.

The right to make objections at audit

You have inspected the accounting records and asked your questions of the smaller authority. Now you may wish to object to the accounts on the basis that an item in them is in your view unlawful or there are matters of wider concern arising from the smaller authority's finances. A local government elector can ask the external auditor to apply to the High Court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, or to issue a report on matters which are in the public interest. You must tell the external auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you think the item is unlawful, or why you think that a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide the external auditor with the evidence you have to support your objection. Disagreeing with income or spending does not make it unlawful. To object to the accounts you must write to the external auditor stating you want to make an objection, including the information and evidence below and you must send a copy to the smaller authority. The notice must include:

- confirmation that you are an elector in the smaller authority's area;
- why you are objecting to the accounts and the facts on which you rely;
- details of any item in the accounts that you think is unlawful; and
- details of any matter about which you think the external auditor should make a public interest report.

Other than it must be in writing, there is no set format for objecting. You can only ask the external auditor to act within the powers available under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

A final word

You may not use this 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor. Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved, they will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. They may also decide not to consider an objection if they think that it is frivolous or vexatious, or if it repeats an objection already considered. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision not to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, you will have to pay for the action yourself.

For more detailed guidance on public rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication Local authority accounts: A guide to your rights are available from the NAO website.

If you wish to contact your authority's appointed external auditor please write to the address in paragraph 4 of the *Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return*.



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/30

Paper: G

Subject:	To Declare any Conflicts of Interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP
Prepared by:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO
Purpose of Report:	For members to declare any interests resulting from the appointment of the External Auditor, BDO LLP
Background:	<p>Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is the independent, sector led organisation responsible for the appointment and contract management of external auditors to smaller authorities since the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 established new arrangements for the accountability and audit of local public bodies in England. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is less than £6.5 million.</p> <p>Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms.</p>
Key Points:	<p>BDO LLP were appointed by the SAAA for the 5-year period from 2022/23 to 2026/27 financial years, following a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each local authority/contract area from 1 April 2022.</p> <p>BDO LLP will be responsible for the arrangements in respect of the 2023/24 AGAR process. The contact details are as follows:</p> <p>BDO LLP, Arcadia House, Maritime Walk, Ocean Village, Southampton SO14 3TL Email: councilaudits@bdo.co.uk Tel.: 02380 881700</p> <p>Councils are asked annually to declare to BDO LLP if there are any conflicts of interest. Previously, no conflict of interest has been declared. However, with a newly elected Council, if circumstances have changed, any potential conflict of interest relating to BDO LLP, for instance, if a Councillor or close relation is employed by them, a conflict of interest must be declared.</p>
Implications:	<p>Failure to declare an interest could result in Council being unable to be part of the SAAA procurement of External Auditor and incurring additional costs to procure another External Auditor.</p> <p>Failure to appoint an External Auditor could result in Council not meeting its legal obligation under the Accounts and Audit Regulations to submit and publish its AGAR and supporting documents with the timeframe designated by Law.</p>

Recommendation:	To CONFIRM Members do not have any conflicts of interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP.
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Minutes of the Meeting of the Confidential Town Council Staffing Committee held at 11:00 on Wednesday 29 November 2023 in the small hall of Corfe Mullen Village Hall

Present: Cllr P Purvis (Chair)
Cllr P Holland
Cllr Jefferies
Cllr D Mattocks
Cllr D Sowry-House

In attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO) – minute taker
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk)

SS 23/20 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

There were no apologies for absence received.

SS 23/21 To Record any declarations of interest Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

SS 23/22 To Approve minutes of meeting held on 31 July 2023 LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2023 were **APPROVED**.

SS 23/23 To Consider Items in Respect of Staffing Matters

The Deputy Clerk provided an update on the current position with the team member on long term sick who was currently signed off until 3 December 2023. A copy of the Occupational Health Assessment report was shared with members.

Members discussed the report and advice sought from SW Councils, HR Advisers on the next steps. The team member to be invited to an Attendance Hearing comprising of a panel of three Staffing Committee members along with the Clerk to take notes and the Deputy Clerk to summarise the sickness timeline in order for the panel to reach a decision on how to proceed.

It was agreed the Attendance Hearing would take place w/c 11 December 2023, with Cllrs Mattocks, P Holland and S Jefferies in attendance.

The Clerk reported one of the part time assistant grounds persons had expressed an interest to retire with effect from 31 March 2024 and how this would impact the team resources.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Long', is written over a horizontal line.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to commence the process to recruit a full-time assistant grounds person as soon as possible in order for the successful candidate to be in post ahead of the assistant grounds persons retirement on 31 March 2024.

The Clerk provided an overview of the grounds team tasks and how this was being managed alongside the subcontracted work to BCP Contractors to ensure all Town Council sites were maintained with a reduced grounds team.

The Clerk provided a verbal update on the office staff following her return from sick leave, with further discussion required at the next Staffing Committee meeting.

The update was **NOTED**.

SS 23/24 Paper C – To Consider and Approve Lone Working Policy

The Clerk presented the report, reminding members of the discussion which took place at the Full Council meeting held on 26 September 2023.

Members raised concerns with office and grounds staff working alone, particularly whilst the Clerk was on sick leave and with a reduced grounds team. It was felt a more robust process should be in place to ensure the safety of all staff including Village Hall staff whilst working alone.

The update was **NOTED**.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to investigate an appropriate 24/7 personal alarm device for all lone workers, intercom for the office and lock box for office and Village Hall keys to be accessed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council.

Following procurement of a personal alarm device(s), intercom for the office and lock box for office and Village Hall keys, Lone Working Policy to be updated and reviewed at a future Staffing Committee ahead of approval by Full Council.

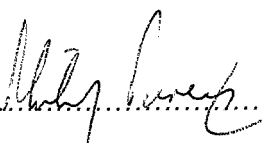
SS 23/25 Matters for forthcoming agendas No decisions can be taken¹

- Update on the grounds team and office staff

SS 23/18 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – It was agreed the next meeting would be scheduled in January 2024.

SS 23/19 Meeting closed at 11:55.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting.....

 Date 15/4/2024

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)



**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance & Administration Committee held at 19:00
on Thursday 4 January 2024 in the small hall of the Village Hall**

Present: **Councillors**
D Sowry-House (Chair)
A Craven
S Florek
A Holland
P Holland
J Lortie
D Mattocks
J Stennett

In Attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk – Minute taker)

Public Participation

There were 5 members of the public present, none of whom wished to speak.

FA 23/26 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

There were no apologies for absence, all members were present.

FA 23/27 To Record any declarations of interest Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

Cllr Florek declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of Friends of Corfe Mullen Library.

Cllr Craven declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to the proposed capital expenditure budget for bus shelters, due to a family members request for a new bus shelter at Windgreen on Wareham Road.

FA 23/28 Paper A - To Approve minutes of meeting held on 8 November 2023 LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023 were **APPROVED**.

FA 23/29 Paper B – To Approve Accounts for Payment

The Accounts for payment totalling £7,392.96 were **APPROVED**.

FA 23/30 Paper C - To Receive and Note the Budget Monitoring Report for the quarter ended 31 December 2023

The Clerk presented the report, noting due to the timing of the meeting and distributing the summons and papers prior to 31 December 2023, the budget monitoring report was not available. However, the Clerk reported there was a

predicted underspend up to 31 December 2023 of circa £95,000, with comments noted as follows:

- Lower employee costs mainly due to a reduced grounds team, albeit some of the underspend was offset by the contracted-out pitch maintenance and grass cutting costs.
- Sports provision and pavilion lounge income was higher than anticipated.
- Increase in expenditure during Quarter 4 2023/24 for outstanding exceptional and capital work item costs, including cemetery driveway maintenance works and purchasing additional vehicle for the grounds team.

The Clerk concluded; the Town Council was in a strong financial position up to 31 December 2023.

The update for the quarter ending 31 December 2023 was **NOTED**.

FA 23/31

Paper D - To Consider draft Budget and Precept for the 2024/25 financial year for recommendation to Full Council

The Clerk presented the proposed budget for the 2024/25 financial year, highlighting the cost centres with a predicted underspend at the end of the 2024/25 financial year, with comments noted as follows:

- Predicted expenditure underspend of £76,744.55.
- Predicted increased income variance of £47,221.48.
- Total predicted surplus/underspend for the 2023/24 financial year circa £125,000 based on forecasted income and expenditure from December 2023 to March 2024.
- Due to the predicted surplus/underspend, the Clerk recommended allocating £35,000 to the pavilion refurbishment/rebuild earmarked reserves.
- Options 2 and 3 provided an amount to be used from the general reserves to reduce the level of precept.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend approval to Full Council to set the Corfe Mullen Town Council annual budget for 2024/25 financial year at £611,125.00.

Members then discussed the level of precept required from Dorset Council to cover the 2024/25 budget and the effect of any increase on those who pay Council Tax, with members acknowledging the cost-of-living crisis, alongside the Town Council's responsibility to provide services within the community.

Cllr Craven proposed option 2, an increase of 9.73%. This was seconded by Cllr Florek.

Cllr Mattocks proposed an increase of 7%, which he felt was more acceptable to Council Taxpayers rather than the three percentage rates noted within the report. This was seconded by Cllr Lortie with 5 members voting in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to set the precept at £537,395.50, an increase of 7%, which would see a Band D property increasing from £126.34 to £135.18 per annum with £73,729.50 of general reserves used to reduce the deficit.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to transfer £35,000 of general reserves to the pavilion refurbishment/rebuild earmarked reserves.

FA 23/32 Matters for forthcoming agendas No decisions can be taken¹

There were no matters for forthcoming agendas.

FA 23/33 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – Tuesday 21 May 2024 at 19:00
in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

FA 23/34 Close of Meeting at 19:48.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting..... *J. White*Date..... *22/5/24*

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)



**Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Tuesday 9 April 2024 at 18:30 in the small hall of the Village Hall**

Present: **Councillors**
P Purvis (Chair)
S Florek
L Hardy
A Holland
P Neil
D Sowry-House
J Stennett

In Attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO - Minute Taker)

Public Participation

There were 33 members of the public present, three of whom wished to speak pertaining to planning application no. P/FUL/2024/01470 – Little Manor Farm, Waterloo Road, Corfe Mullen BH21 3SN.

The first member of the public advised he was attending the meeting to find out more relating to the barn conversion as a result of recent Facebook posts.

The second member of the public expressed his anger that the developer had used the planning system for his own benefit and did not support the application.

The third member of the public noted he lived adjacent to the development and felt the conversion was not built to the design specifications and was higher than the original barn. The proposed parking area was adjacent to his bedroom window. The area was liable to flooding, with access via a dangerous bend. No bat survey had been carried out and he did not support the application.

Members of the public were asked if anyone was in support of the application, to which there was no response.

The Chair thanked the members of public for their representation and opened the meeting.

PC 23/194 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Everett who had prior commitment.

PC 23/195 To Record any declarations of interest Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

Cllr Neil declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to planning application P/HOU/2024/01357- The Bungalow, Old Common Farm, Wareham Road, Corfe Mullen BH21 3RZ, due to being related to the applicant.

Cllr Duncan Sowry-House declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of Keep Corfe Mullen Green.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Duncan Sowry-House', is written over the bottom right of the page.

PC 23/196 Paper A - To Approve minutes of meeting held on 26 March 2024 LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2024 were **APPROVED**.

PC 23/197 Paper B – To Note Update on Planning Application No. P/HOU/2021/04059 – 12 Beacon Road, Corfe Mullen

The Clerk presented the report, noting the planning permission granted by Dorset Council Planning in February 2022 and conditions relating to commencement of the development, obscured glazed windows and parking.

Should the member of the public who raised concerns relating to the development feel the conditions had not been met, it should be reported to the Dorset Council Planning Enforcement.

The update was **NOTED**.

PC 23/198 Paper C - To Note Planning Decisions Report – decisions between 6 - 20 March 2024

The planning decisions report was **NOTED**.

PC 23/199 Paper D - To Consider the following applications received from Dorset Council:

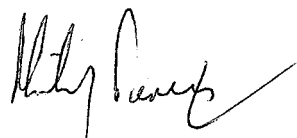
Application No: P/FUL/2024/01470
Location: Little Manor Farm Waterloo Road Corfe Mullen BH21 3SN
Proposal: Conversion of agricultural building to form 5 dwellings in lieu of permitted development approval (3/21/1669/PNAGD)
<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=404203>

The Clerk noted the report provided additional information relating to communication with Dorset Council Planning to convert the agricultural building into four smaller and one large dwelling and the planning decision in December 2021.

Discussion took place relating to the planning decision notice prior application – Agricultural to Dwelling no. 3/21/1669/PNAGD dated 16 December 2021 set out in Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order. Development in the Green Belt and scoping of a rural exception site against recent planning decisions refused in the Waterloo Valley sighting Green Belt and the inconsistencies in decisions made by Dorset Council Planning.

Cllr Neil provided some background information on the site and the results of his research were noted as follows:

- Total of 708.5 sqm to be converted, below the maximum 865 sqm that can be converted under Class Q Permitted Development Rights.
- Planning Application no. P/FUL/2022/01049 – Construct new internal track from existing access to yard and remove existing track was refused by Dorset Council Planning on 11 May 2022, concluding there was no exceptional justification for the works as it was considered to have a deleterious impact on the Green Belt and the residential amenity of the adjoining occupiers.
- Natural watercourse continually floods running adjacent to the development.
- There was no mention in the Planning Statement of foul water disposal.
- The location was not served by public transport; therefore, occupiers would be reliant on the use of vehicles, increasing traffic movement.



- Environment Agency maps show the high risk of surface water flooding in the location, particularly the access route to the development. However, under paragraph 9.6 of the Planning Statement it states the development would not give rise to any flooding implications to the site and neighbouring land.
- Elevations of the access route had been raised by 600mm to alleviate flooding.
- On visiting the site, the access route had been edged with wooden sleepers.
- Potential nutrients flowing into the nearby natural watercourse.
- Dorset Council Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2021 states that the western section of the site was within 400m of the Dorset heathlands with the remainder within the 5k buffer zone. The site was remote from existing infrastructure and facilities and was therefore considered to be an unsuitable site.
- Dorset Council Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance dated July 2023 under paragraph 1.9.23 states pre-emptive site clearance is accounted for under the Environmental Act Schedule 8, Part 1, Paragraphs 6a-b if there is evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to any of the habitats or species on the site.
- Dorset Council Sustainability Checklist dated December 2023 states the development was sustainable and it was anticipated that air or ground source heat pumps, solar panels and connection to a low carbon community heat network would be incorporated. There is no mention of refuse collection.
- Dwellings considered to be high end and not affordable housing, which was needed in the village.
- Limited emergency vehicle access to the development.

The Chair concluded with the number of members of the public present demonstrated the community's strength of feeling to the development.

It was **RESOLVED** to **STRONGLY OBJECT** on the basis shown in Appendix 1.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders 3e-g to enable further members of the public to speak.

One member of the public enquired about the location of the grass track mentioned previously and how she was not aware of a track in the time she had lived in the village.

One member of the public spoke on the previous use of the agricultural building built in the late 1970's and how the developer had not extended the footprint of the development which was to be connected to mains sewage and her disappointment of the lies that had been said relating to the development.

One member of the public spoke about the destruction of trees and that this was not true with hedge laying in progress to increase the wildlife habitat. He noted the previous owner had planted numerous trees elsewhere on his land and that members did not know what was going on behind the scenes.

The developer made himself known to the meeting and that he had purchased the land with planning permission for five dwellings with the recent application to change the interior only, noting there were sufficient turning circles for emergency vehicles.

There were considerable tensions and emotions from the members of the public.

The Chair reinstated Standing Orders to enable the remainder of the meeting to continue.

Application No: P/HOU/2024/01357
Location: The Bungalow Old Common Farm Wareham Road Corfe Mullen BH21 3RZ
Proposal: Demolition of existing single garage and construction of new double garage with storage



<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=404065>

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no objections or issues.

Notification of Appeal:

Application No: P/FUL/2023/00671
Appeal Reference: APP/D1265/W/23/3333141
Appeal Start Date: 18 March 2024
Location: Badgers Green Waterloo Road Corfe Mullen Dorset BH21 3SN
Description: Construction of new commercial unit and associated parking spaces and bike store
<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=394193>

The notification of appeal was **NOTED**.

PC 23/200 Paper E – To Note Highways Update and Consider New Items to Agree How to Proceed

The Clerk presented the report, noting there were no new updates since the previous meeting.

The Highways Update was **NOTED**.

PC 23/201 Matters for forthcoming agendas No decisions can be taken¹

There were no items for forthcoming agendas.

PC 23/202 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – the date and time of the next meeting will be Tuesday 23 April 2024 at 18:30 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

PC 23/203 Close of Meeting at 19:20.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting..........Date.....23/4/2024.....

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)

Appendix 1 - Application No: P/FUL/2024/01470 – Little Manor Farm, Waterloo Road, Corfe Mullen BH21 3SN.

Members of the Planning Committee met on 9 April 2024 to consider the above application, acknowledging the planning decision notice no. 3/21/1669/PNAGD prior App – Agriculture to Dwelling issued on 16 December 2021 setting out various conditions in addition to Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order.

Under paragraph 2 of the informative notes within the planning decision notice no. 3/21/1669/PNAGD prior App – Agriculture to Dwelling states the access track would require planning permission before works to the building to convert from agriculture to dwellings commences. Planning application no. P/FUL/2022/01049 to construct internal track was refused in April 2022.

Planning Application no. P/FUL/2024/01470 does not provide any information relating to the access track currently under construction, visible from Waterloo Road, particularly mitigating flood risks, albeit the applicant has stated construction of the access track would be 600mm above ground level and whether it meets building regulations for access of emergency vehicles.

Following lengthy discussion, the Planning Committee strongly object on the following grounds:

The proposal is contrary to the following policies within the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy (2014):

- **ME1 – Safeguarding Biodiversity and Geodiversity:** The proposed development does not protect, maintain and enhance the condition of its habitats and species within a regionally important geological and geomorphological area.

Evidence to deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain and avoidance of harm to existing habitats and species has not been demonstrated through an ecological survey. Therefore, the application does not comply with the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol (DBAP) which is designed to meet the requirements of Natural England Protected Species Standing Advice and to address the mitigation hierarchy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- **ME2 – Protection of the Dorset Heathlands:** The proposed development is between 400m and 5km of protected European and internationally protected heathlands, Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), RAMSAR, Wild Purbeck Nature Improvement Area and Higher Potential Ecological Network and does not provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) or provision of other appropriate avoidance/mitigation measures.
- **ME3 – Sustainable Development Standards for New Development:** The completed Dorset Council Sustainability Statement and Checklist does not demonstrate a commitment to water and energy efficiency, solar gain, minimising waste, pollution and water run off incorporating sustainable drainage, only 'anticipated or unknown'. There is no indication of how foul waste is removed from the site.
- **ME6 – Flood Management, Mitigation and Defence:** The proposed dwellings are in flood zone 1. However, the Environment Agency historic data shows the access/egress route in some parts are at risk to surface water up to 90cm showing a 3.3% high risk of flooding each year.

The emergency plan describes the access/egress from the site in the event of flooding, which is also at risk of surface water flooding and if constructed along with the swale would be within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands. In line with the policy, this does not demonstrate future proofing against the effects of climate change and unaided access/egress during flooding events.

- **HE2 – Design of New Development:** The proposed development is in a rural setting, outside the defined settlement boundary of Corfe Mullen, which will significantly compromise the tranquillity of

the area and visual amenity. The development is out of character and not compatible with its surroundings and neighbouring properties, therefore, impacting on the amenity and privacy currently enjoyed by neighbouring properties.

The planning statement submitted as part of planning application no. 3/21/1669/PNAGD states the agricultural appearance of the building has been maintained, whilst maximising natural light provision. The proposed development creates an intrusive silhouette on the landscape, visible from Waterloo Road.

- **HE3 – Landscape Quality:** The proposed development does not protect the character settlements and their landscape setting, mature trees and hedgerows, visual amenity and wildlife corridors, along with noise, light pollution and motion from the dwellings and traffic generated.
- **LN2 – Design, Layout and Density of New Housing Development:** The design and layout of the proposed development conflicts with the local character and distinctiveness of the area. The outdoor space allocated for each dwelling is minimal based on the sizes of the dwellings. The plans do not show a provision for refuge and recycling on site. The site is not along the prime transport corridors or does it have good access to public transport and essential facilities and services, due to its rural setting, away from the village.
- **KS3 – Green Belt:** The proposed development is within the Green Belt and fails to protect the separate physical identity of individual settlements in the area. Scoping for a rural exception site is not demonstrated.
- **KS9 – Transport Strategy and Prime Transport Corridors:** The proposed development is not located along and/or at the end of the prime transport corridors in the most accessible locations and supported by transport improvements to benefit existing and future communities.

The site is not easily accessible or in a sustainable location due to the steep incline to reach facilities within the village, making walking and cycling impractical and not accessible to all. Access to public transport is via a steep incline.

Access by the emergency services and refuge collectors is limited due to the single-track access with limited turning circles.

- **KS11 – Transport and Development:** The proposed development does not reduce the need to travel or improve access to facilities and services in the village, due to the rural setting accessed by a single track.

The site does not provide safe access and/or permeable layouts to access public transport.

Material changes on the residential amenity of the neighbouring property due to increased traffic and character of the area.

- **KS12 – Parking Provision:** There are 15 vehicle parking facilities with at least 3 unusable spaces and no parking provision for those with disabilities and/or visitors for 5 dwellings without garages, in line with the Dorset Council residential car parking provision guidance.

The proposal is also contrary to the following policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs:

- **82:** The proposed development does not support housing developments reflecting the local needs or scoping for a rural exception site.
- **108:** The proposed development does not promote use of public transport.
- **111:** The plans do not demonstrate a provision of parking spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

- **114b & 116b/e:** Due to the location of the proposed development, in a rural setting accessed by a single track, this does not provide safe and suitable access to the proposed development for all users, particularly those with disabilities and reduced mobility in terms of all modes of transport.
- **116d:** Delivery of goods and access by services and emergency vehicles would be limited, due to rural setting accessed via a single track.
- **128d:** The proposed development does not maintain the areas prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens).
- **135c:** The proposed development is not sympathetic to the rural setting and local characteristics of its surroundings.
- **143c:** The proposed development does not safeguard the countryside from encroachment.
- **144 & 145:** The proposed development is within the Green Belt. Dorset Council strategic policies would need to set out any new Green Belts to be established in the exceptional circumstances listed in para 144 a-e.
- **152:** The proposed development would be harmful to the Green Belt and does not demonstrate very special circumstances to be approved.
- **153:** The extent of the engineering works required to create the access route would represent an imposing feature on the landscape and would have an urbanising effect and detract from the character and appearance of the open countryside. The access route is visible from Waterloo Road.
- **159a:** The proposed development increases vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change, particularly the flood risk.
- **160:** There is no evidence of suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and support infrastructure.
- **167d:** There is no evidence to suggest the flood risk will not increase elsewhere in the Waterloo Valley. Climate change is expected to increase flood risk, which is already being seen locally, and would make access to the proposed development unsustainable in the long-term.
- **173e:** The safe access and escape route detailed in the emergency plan is also liable to surface water flooding from the nearby natural watercourse.
- **175:** No evidence of sustainable drainage systems or maintenance arrangements in place to ensure acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development.
- **180a:** The proposed development does not protect and/or enhance valued landscapes and biodiversity of the area.
- **185a:** The proposed development does not safeguard the local wildlife rich habitats and wider ecological networks.

Finally, the Dorset Council Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment completed in 2021 (site reference LA/CMUL/016) concluded *'the western section of the site is within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands, and the remainder is within the 5k Dorset Heathlands buffer. The site is remote from existing infrastructure and facilities, therefore making it an unsuitable site'*.

Members request the application is considered in light of the above comments by the East Dorset Planning Committee, rather than a delegated Officer decision, if the Officers comments are at variance to the above.

Corfe Mullen Town Council
9 April 2024



**Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Tuesday 23 April 2024 at 18:30 in the small hall of the Village Hall**

Present: **Councillors**
P Purvis (Chair)
D Everett
S Florek
L Hardy
A Holland
P Neil
D Sowry-House
J Stennett

In Attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk/Minute Taker)

Public Participation

There were 6 members of the public present, none of whom wished to speak.

PC 23/204 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

There were no apologies for absence.

PC 23/205 To Record any declarations of interest Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

PC 23/206 Paper A - To Approve minutes of meeting held on 9 April 2024 LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2024 were **APPROVED**.

PC 23/207 Paper B - To Note Planning Decisions Report – decisions between 3 April – 17 April 2024

The planning decisions report was **NOTED**.

PC 23/208 To Consider the following applications received from Dorset Council:

Application No: P/HOU/2024/01602
Location: 47 Rectory Avenue Corfe Mullen Dorset BH21 3EZ
Proposal: Roof alterations to front elevation and open porch to side elevation.

<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=404360>

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no objections.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Stennett', is written over the bottom right of the page.

Certificate of Lawfulness:

Application No: P/CLP/2024/01674
Location: 304 Lambsgreen Lane Corfe Mullen Dorset BH21 3DN
Proposal: Single storey side extensions.
<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=404442>

The certificate of lawfulness was **NOTED**.

Tree Works Applications:

Application No: P/TRT/2024/01933
Location: 31 Towers Way Corfe Mullen Dorset BH21 3UA
Proposal: Oak: Remove tertiary branches only on the lowest 2x branches overhanging 33 Towers Way.
<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=404744>

The tree works application was **NOTED**.

Notification of Appeal:

Application No: P/FUL/2023/02389
Location: 21 Gorse Road Corfe Mullen BH21 3SJ
Description: Sever land, demolish outbuildings and erect 1 No 3 bed chalet bungalow with balcony, Juliet Balcony and associated access and parking.
Appeal Reference: APP/D1265/W/24/3338434
<https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=396281>

The Clerk reminded members of the previous objection submitted to Dorset Council Planning on 12 June 2023. Members had no further comments to submit, therefore, the objection remained.

The notification of appeal was **NOTED**.

PC 23/209 Paper C – To Note Highways Update

The Clerk presented the update, noting the following comments:

- Item 3: The lolly-pop person on Wareham Road, near Brownsea Avenue had been replaced making it safer for children and young people crossing the busy section of road.
- Item 4: The beacons on the Lockyers Road zebra crossing had been replaced with LED light fittings.
- Item 8: The Clerk and Cllr Purvis had discussed the Department of Transport's recommendations for traffic calming measures to be considered following the accident investigation relating to the recent serious accident on Blandford Road. Measures to be considered with Dorset Council Highways in various locations across the parish include road narrowing chicanes, kerb build-outs, pinch points, pedestrian refuges and islands.
- Item 15: Consideration to be given to a village gateway on Wimborne Road coming up from the A31 Lake Gates roundabout with 30mph speed limit sign should Dorset Council Highways approve a reduction in the speed limit.
- Item 16: 'SLOW' has been repainted on Wareham Road towards Brownsea Avenue/Henbury View Road following resurfacing works.



The update was **NOTED**.

PC 23/210 Matters for forthcoming agendas No decisions can be taken¹

There were no matters for forthcoming agendas.

Cllr Purvis noted his last meeting as Chair of the Planning Committee and thanked all members for their support, research and expertise shared during the 2023/24 municipal year and wished members the best of luck for the future.

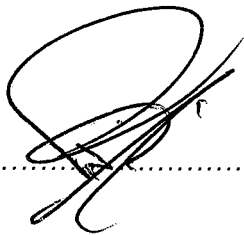
Cllr Sowry-House thanked Cllr Purvis for his commitment, diligence and input on highways related matters during his time as Chair of the Planning Committee.

PC 23/211 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – the date and time of the next meeting will be Tuesday 21 May 2024 at 18:30 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

Cllr A Holland passed on her apologies for the meeting to be held on 21 May 2024, due to a medical appointment.

PC 23/212 Close of Meeting at 18:42.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting.....



Date. 21st May 2024

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/32

Paper: I

Subject:	To Approve the Recommendations from the Finance and Administration Committee
Prepared by:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO
Purpose of Report:	To Approve the resolutions made at the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on 21 May 2024.
Background:	The Finance & Administration Committee does not hold delegated authority from the Full Council to make decisions except for Accounts for Payment, therefore all resolutions require approval by Full Council.
Key Points:	<p>It was RESOLVED to recommend APPROVAL to the Full Council the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FA 24/07: Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring Report and Year End Position for financial year ended 31 March 2024 shown in Paper C Appendix 1. FA 24/08: Update the bank mandate and signatories for the newly elected Council for a 5-year term, to be reviewed annually as follows: REMOVE Paul Harrison, Dave Everett and David Mattocks and REPLACE with Cllr Adrian Craven, Cllr Jocelyn Lortie and Cllr Vanessa Papilio. FA 24/09: APPROVAL of the General and Earmarked Reserves Policy. FA 24/10: APPROVAL of the Investment Strategy Policy. FA 24/11: APPROVAL of the use of variable direct debits, BACS by the Councils payroll provider and use of CHAPs for fund transfers between the Councils banking arrangements. FA 24/12: APPROVAL to fund transfers on 1 May 2024 - £260,000 transfer from the co-operative bank to the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) on receipt of the first tranche of the Precept to ensure the co-operative bank account remained below the FSCS limit of £85,000. Mandate authorised by Cllrs Anne & Paul Holland and countersigned by the Clerk.
Implications:	Failure to approve the recommendations from the Finance & Administration Committee would result in unlawful decisions and the Council not compliant with its financial regulations.
Recommendation:	To APPROVE the recommendations from the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on 21 May 2024.



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/33

Paper: J

Subject:	Council and Staff Subscriptions
Prepared By:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk & RFO
Purpose of Report:	To review the subscriptions of the Council and any staff to other organisations in line with the Councils Standing Orders 5jxv.
Background:	<p>Subscriptions for 2023/24 are held as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clerks & Councils Direct Update Service• National Association of Local Councils (NALC)• Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC)• Society of Local Councils Clerks (SLCC)• Institute of Cemetery and Cremation Management (ICCM)• Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
Key Points:	All subscriptions are actively used and essential to the smooth running of Council.
Implications:	Lack of membership may leave Council exposed to having a lack of up-to-date knowledge and therefore not being compliant in some areas of its management.
Recommendation:	<p>To review and note the subscriptions for 2024/25 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clerks & Councils Direct Update Service• National Association of Local Councils (NALC)• Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC)• Society of Local Councils Clerks (SLCC)• Institute of Cemetery and Cremation Management (ICCM)• Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/34

Paper: K

Subject:	Council's Policies and Procedures
Prepared By:	Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk/RFO
Purpose of Report:	To review, approve and adopt the Council's policies and procedures.
Background:	<p>In line with the Council's standing orders 5jxvi-xix, policies and procedures should be reviewed annually at the annual meeting of the municipal year.</p> <p>Following advice from Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils (DAPTC), some policies and procedures approval was deferred to this meeting, as not to over burden the newly elected Councillors at the Annual Town Council meeting.</p>
Key Points:	<p>The policies and procedures have been reviewed in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Society of Local Councils & Clerks (SLCC) best practice. The HR policies have been based on South West Councils, the Council's HR Advisers guidance and templates</p> <p>There are no substantive amendments, mainly formatting to ensure all policies and procedures follow a consistent layout.</p> <p>Appendices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complaints Procedure: produced as a leaflet to make the approach more user friendly. 2. Vexatious Complaints Policy 3. Data Breach Policy 4. Data Protection Policy 5. Model Publication Scheme 6. Subject Access Request Policy and Procedure 7. Data Privacy Notice 8. Press & Media Policy: to be clear as to how the media is dealt with and the responsibilities of Councillors in respect of media reporting. 9. Absence Management Policy 10. Capability Procedure 11. Dignity at Work Policy 12. Equality & Diversity Policy 13. Safeguarding Policy
Implications:	<p>Failure to have correct policies and procedures in place exposes the Council to challenge of its compliance, particularly data protection and employment laws.</p> <p>Should policies and procedures not be reviewed, the Council would be in breach of its Standing Orders.</p>

Recommendation:	<p>To review and APPROVE the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complaints Procedure 2. Vexatious Complaints Policy 3. Data Breach Policy 4. Data Protection Policy 5. Model Publication Scheme 6. Subject Access Request Policy and Procedure 7. Data Privacy Notice 8. Press & Media Policy 9. Absence Management Policy 10. Capability Procedure 11. Dignity at Work Policy 12. Equality & Diversity Policy 13. Safeguarding Policy
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CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

MAKING A COMPLAINT

CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL
Council Office Towers Way Corfe Mullen Wimborne Dorset BH21 3UA
Telephone: 01202 698600 Email: office@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

The Town Council wants to provide good local services and first-class information on other services in the area. However, if you have a concern about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Council or its staff, we have drawn up a complaints procedure designed to deal with your concerns speedily and fairly.

HOW CAN YOU COMPLAIN?

COMPLAINTS ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL EMPLOYEE

In writing to:

- Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk, Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3UA. Tele no. 01202 698600.
Email: catherinehorsley@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk
- OR, if your complaint is about the Town Clerk, to the Chair of the Council, Cllr Sowry-House, Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3UA. Tele no. 01202 699688.
Email: dash@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk

Such complaints will then be dealt with as an internal employment matter and any appropriate action taken.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT A COUNCILLOR UNDER THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

In writing to:

Mr Jonathan Mair, Monitoring Officer, Dorset Council, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ. Tele no. 01305 224181
Email: Jonathan.Mair@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Such complaints need to cite the name of the councillor you are complaining about and the Code of Conduct clause you believe they are in breach of.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE COUNCIL SERVICE, ADMINISTRATION OR PROCEDURES

In writing to:

- Catherine Horsley, Town Clerk, Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3UA. Tele no. 01202 698600.
Email: catherinehorsley@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk

Such complaints will be handled under the Council's Complaints Procedure

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We promise:

- To deal with your complaint in an understanding and sympathetic way
- To acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days and let you know the name of the person dealing with your complaint
- To respond to all complaints within 15 working days

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY COMPLAINT?

STAGE 1 RESPONSE TO YOUR COMPLAINT

The Town Clerk will consider your complaint and hopefully it will be resolved to your satisfaction, either by immediate action or a course of action agreeable to you. If you feel that the complaint cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, you can ask for the matter to be referred to a sub-committee of three Town councillors under Stage 2. Stage 1 will be completed within 15 working days of the date of your complaint.

STAGE 2 REVIEW OF STAGE 1 RESPONSE

If you are dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response, you may, within 15 working days of the date of the response, request a review. This will be undertaken by a sub-committee of three Town councillors who will consider and investigate your complaint and review the Stage 1 response. You will receive a response within 15 working days of your request for a review. The decision of the sub-committee will be final.



Corfe Mullen Town Council

Vexatious Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group, or a group of complainants, might be considered to be habitual or vexatious. The following clauses form the Council's policy for ways of responding to these situations.
- 1.2. In this policy the term habitual means 'done repeatedly or as a habit'. The term vexatious is recognised in law and means 'denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant'. This policy intends to assist in identifying and managing persons who seek to be disruptive to the Council through pursuing an unreasonable course of conduct.
- 1.3. The term complaint in this policy includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 and reference to the Complaints Procedure is, where relevant, to be interpreted as meaning a request under those Acts.
- 1.4. Habitual or vexatious complaints can be a problem for Council staff and members. The difficulty in handling such complainants is that they are time consuming and wasteful of resources in terms of Officer and Member time. While the Council endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy to the needs of all complainants there are times when there is nothing further which can reasonably be done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem.
- 1.5. Raising of legitimate queries or criticisms of a complaints procedure as it progresses, e.g., if agreed timescales are not met, should not in itself lead to someone being regarded as a vexatious or an unreasonably persistent complainant. Similarly, the fact that a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint and seeks to challenge it once, or more than once, should not necessarily cause them to be labelled vexatious or unreasonably persistent.
- 1.6. The aim of this policy is to contribute to the overall aim of dealing with all complainants in ways which are demonstrably consistent, fair and reasonable.

2. Habitual or Vexatious Complainants

- 2.1. For the purpose of this policy the following definitions of habitual or vexatious complainants will be used. The repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of:
 - a. unreasonable complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes; and/or
 - b. reasonable complaints in an unreasonable manner.
- 2.2. Prior to considering its implementation the Council will send a summary of this policy (shown in Appendix 1) to the complainant to give them prior notification of its possible implementation.
- 2.3. Where complaints continue and have been identified as habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 3, the staff and Council will seek agreement to treat the complainant as a habitual or vexatious complainant for the appropriate course of action to be taken. Section 4 details the options available for dealing with habitual or vexatious complaints.
- 2.4. The Clerk on behalf of the Council will notify complainants, in writing, of the reasons why their complaint has been treated as habitual or vexatious and the action that will be taken. Dorset Councillors for Corfe Mullen will also be informed that a constituent has been designated as a habitual or vexatious complainant.
- 2.5. The status of the complainant will be kept under review. If a complainant subsequently demonstrates a more reasonable approach, then their status will be reviewed.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Council, hinder the Council's consideration of their or other people's complaints. The description 'unreasonably persistent' and 'vexatious' may apply separately or jointly to a particular complainant.
- 3.2. Examples include the way in which, or frequency with which, complainants raise their complaints with staff or how complainants respond when informed of the Council's decision about the complaint.
- 3.3. Features of an unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant include the following (the list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the person will be considered as being in this category).

An unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant may:

- have insufficient or no grounds for their complaint and be making the complaint only to annoy (or for reasons that they do not admit or make obvious)
- refuse to specify the grounds of a complaint despite offers of assistance
- refuse to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved
- refuse to accept that issues are not within the remit of the complaints policy and procedure despite having been provided with information about the scope of the policy and procedure
- refuse to accept that issues are not within the power of the Council to investigate, change or influence
- insist on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice (e.g., insisting that there must not be any written record of the complaint)
- make what appears to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaints, and seek to have them dismissed or replaced
- make an unreasonable number of contacts with the Council, by any means in relation to a specific complaint or complaints
- make persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (e.g., could be a complainant who insists on immediate responses to questions, frequent and/or complex letters, telephone calls or emails)
- harass or verbally abuse or otherwise seek to intimidate staff dealing with their complaint, in relation to their complaint by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive and racist language or publish their complaints in other forms of media
- raise subsidiary or new issues whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the complaint at the start of the complaint process
- introduce trivial or irrelevant new information whilst the complaint is being investigated and expect this to be taken into account and commented on
- change the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed
- deny statements they made at an earlier stage in the complaints process
- are known to have electronically recorded meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other person(s) involved
- adopts a 'scattergun' approach, for instance, pursuing a complaint or complaints not only with the Town Council, but at the same time with, e.g., a Member of Parliament, other Councils,

elected Councillors of the Town Council and other Councils, the Council's Independent Auditor, the Standards Board, the Police, other public bodies or solicitors

- refuse to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given
- make the same complaint repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded and insist that the minor differences make these 'new' complaints which should be put through the full complaints procedure
- persistently approach the Council through different routes or other persons about the same issue
- persist in seeking an outcome which Council has explained is unrealistic for legal or policy (or other valid) reasons
- refuse to accept documented evidence as factual
- complain about or challenge an issue based on an historic and/or an irreversible decision or incident
- combine some or all of these features

4. Imposing Restrictions

4.1. The Council will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated properly according to the adopted complaints procedure.

4.2. In the first instance the Clerk will consult with the Chair of the Council prior to issuing a warning to the complainant. The Clerk will contact the complainant in writing, or by e-mail, to explain why this behaviour is causing concern and ask them to change this behaviour and outline the actions that the Council may take if they do not comply.

4.3. If the disruptive behaviour continues, the Clerk will issue a reminder letter to the complainant advising them that the way in which they will be allowed to contact the Council in future will be restricted. The Clerk will make this decision in consultation with the Chair of the Council and inform the complainant in writing of what procedures have been put in place and for what period.

4.4. Any restriction that is imposed on the complainant's contact with the Council will be appropriate and proportionate and the complainant will be advised of the period of time over which the restriction will be in place. In most cases restrictions will apply for between three to six months, but in exceptional cases this may be extended. In such cases the restrictions would be reviewed on a quarterly basis, or at the next Full Council Meeting.

4.5. Restrictions will be tailored to deal with the individual circumstances of the complainant and may include:

- banning the complainant from making contact by telephone except through a third party e.g., a solicitor, a Councillor or a friend acting on their behalf
- banning the complainant from sending emails to individuals and/or all Council Officers and insisting they only correspond by postal letter
- requiring contact to take place with one named member of staff only
- restricting telephone calls to specified days and/or times and/or duration
- requiring any personal contact to take place in the presence of an appropriate witness
- letting the complainant know that the Council will not reply to or acknowledge any further contact from them on the specific topic of that complaint (in this case, a designated member of staff will be identified who will read future correspondence)

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

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

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

4.8. Where a complainant continues to behave in a way that is unacceptable, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council may decide to refuse all contact with the complainant and stop any investigation into their complaint.

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

5. New complaints from complainants who are treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent

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

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

6. Review

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

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

7. Record Keeping

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

- the name and address of each member of the public who is treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent, or any other person who so aids the complainant
- when the restrictions came into force and ends
- what the restrictions are
- when the person and Council were advised
- full Council be provided with a regular report giving information about members of the public who have been treated as vexatious/persistent as per this policy

8. Policy Review

- 8.1. This Vexatious Complaints Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.
- 8.2. Future reviews will be carried out annually in line with the Complaints Policy or when any changes are made to current legislation, whichever is sooner.

9. References

- 9.1. Data Protection Act 2018 –
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- 9.2. UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>
- 9.3. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

DRAFT



Appendix 1 - Vexatious Policy Summary

Corfe Mullen Town Council are committed to dealing with all complaints equitably, comprehensively, and in a timely manner. The Council will not normally limit the contact which complainants have with Council staff. However, the Council do not expect staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour by complainants or members of the public. Unacceptable behaviour includes behaviour, which is abusive, offensive or threatening and may include:

- using abusive or foul language on the telephone or face to face
- sending multiple emails or communications
- leaving multiple voicemails

The Council will take action to protect staff and its officers from such behaviour. If a complainant behaves in a way that is unreasonably persistent or vexatious, the Council will follow the Vexatious Policy.

Before any action is taken, the Clerk will ensure the complaint is being, or has been, investigated properly according to the Council's Complaints Policy. When a complainant begins to demonstrate behaviours, such as listed above, the Clerk will consult with the Chair of the Council to determine whether the complaint fulfils the definition as shown below:

'Corfe Mullen Town Council defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Council, hinder the Council's consideration of their or other people's complaints. The description 'unreasonably persistent' and 'vexatious' may apply separately or jointly to a particular complainant'.

If it is agreed that the complaint fulfils the definition, the Clerk will issue a warning to the complainant about their behaviours by phone, in writing or by email to explain why their behaviour is causing concern and ask them to change this behaviour.

If the disruptive behaviour continues, the Clerk will issue a reminder letter to the complainant advising them that the way in which they will be allowed to contact the Council in future will be restricted.

If following this letter, the behaviour continues the Clerk will inform the Chair of the Council and determine what restrictions are to be imposed on the complainant and for how long. This will be communicated to the complainant in writing.

Any restriction that is imposed on the complainant's contact with the Council will be appropriate and proportionate and the complainant will be advised of the period of time the restriction will be in place for and reviewed on an annual basis.

Where a complainant continues to behave in a way which is unacceptable, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, may decide to refuse all contact with the complainant and stop any investigation into their complaint.

Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, the Council will consider other options, e.g., reporting the matter to the Police or taking legal action.

A copy of the Vexatious Complaints Policy is available on the Council website or from the Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3UA.



Corfe Mullen Town Council

Data Breach Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) defines a personal data breach as a 'breach of security leading to accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data transmitted, stored or otherwise processed'.

Examples include:

- Access by an unauthorised third party
- Deliberate or accidental action (or inaction) by a controller or processor
- Sending personal data to an incorrect recipient
- Computing devices containing personal data being lost or stolen
- Alteration of personal data without permission
- Loss of availability of personal data

- 1.2. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') takes the security of personal data seriously, computers are password protected and hard copy files are kept in locked cabinets.

2. Consequences of a personal data breach

- 2.1. A breach of personal data may result in a loss of control of personal data, discrimination, identity theft or fraud, financial loss, damage to reputation, loss of confidentiality of personal data, damage to property or social disadvantage. Therefore, a breach, depending on the circumstances of the breach, can have a range of effects on individuals.

3. The Council's duty to report a breach

- 3.1. If the data breach is likely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of the individual, the breach must be reported to the individual and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) without undue delay and, where feasible, not later than 72 hours after having become aware of the breach. This will be normally done by the Town Clerk.
- 3.2. To report a data breach to the ICO use the ICO online system as follows - <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/report-a-breach/>
- 3.3. If the ICO is not informed within 72 hours, the Town Clerk, on behalf of the Council, must give reasons for the delay when the breach is eventually reported.
- 3.4. When notifying the ICO of a breach, the Council must:
- i. Describe the nature of the breach including the categories and approximate number of data subjects concerned and the categories and approximate number of personal data records concerned.
 - ii. Communicate the name and contact details of the Council (normally the Town Clerk);
 - iii. Describe the likely consequences of the breach
 - iv. Describe the measures taken or proposed to be taken to address the personal data breach include measures to mitigate its possible adverse effects.
- 3.5. When notifying the individual affected by the breach, the Council must provide the individual with the details ii – iv above.

3.6. The Council does not need to communicate with an individual if the following applies:

- It has implemented appropriate technical and organisational measures (i.e., encryption) so those measures have rendered the personal data unintelligible to any person not authorised to access it.
- It has taken subsequent measure to ensure that the high risk to rights and freedoms of individuals is no longer likely to materialise, or;
- It would involve a disproportionate effort

3.7. However, the ICO must still be informed even if the above measures are in place.

4. Data processor's duty to inform the Council

4.1. If a data processor (e.g., payroll provider) becomes aware of a personal data breach, it must notify the Council without undue delay. It is then the Council's responsibility to inform the ICO.

5. Records of data breaches

5.1. All data breaches must be recorded whether they are reported to individuals or not. This record will help to identify system failures and should be used to improve the security of personal data.

Record of data breach

Date of Breach	Type of breach	Number of individuals affected	Date reported to ICO/individual	Actions to prevent breach recurring

6. Policy Review

6.1. This Data Breach Policy was presented to the Full Council meeting, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.

6.2. Future reviews will be carried out annually or when any changes are made to current legislation, whichever is sooner.

7. References

7.1. Data Protection Act 2018 –

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>

7.2. UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

7.3. Information Commissioner's Office -

<https://ico.org.uk/>

7.4. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).



Corfe Mullen Town Council

Data Protection Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') recognises its responsibility to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 which regulates the use of personal data. This does not have to be sensitive data; it can be as little as a name and address.

2. General Data protection Regulations (GDPR)

- 2.1. The GDPR sets out high standards for the handling of personal information and protecting individuals' rights for privacy. It also regulates how personal information can be collected, handled and used. The GDPR applies to anyone holding personal information about people, electronically or on paper. The Council has also notified the Information Commissioner that it holds personal data about individuals.

- 2.2. When dealing with personal data, Council staff and elected members must ensure that:

- **Data is processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner**
This means that personal information should only be collected from individuals if staff have been open and honest about why they want the personal information.
- **Data is processed for specified purposes only**
This means that data is collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes only.
- **Data is relevant to what it is needed for**
Data will be monitored so that too much or too little is not kept; only data that is needed should be held.
- **Data is accurate and kept up to date and is not kept longer than it is needed**
Personal data should be accurate, if it is not it should be corrected. Data no longer needed will be shredded or securely disposed of.
- **Data is processed in accordance with the rights of individuals**
Individuals must be informed, upon request, of all the personal information held about them
- **Data is kept securely**
There should be protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage.

3. Storing and accessing data

- 3.1. The Council recognises its responsibility to be open with people when taking personal details from them. This means that staff must be honest about why they want a particular piece of personal information.
- 3.2. The Council may hold personal information about individuals such as their names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers. These will be securely kept at the Council offices and are not available for public access. All data stored on the Council office computers are password protected. Once data is not needed any more, is out of date or has served its use and falls outside the minimum retention time of the Council's records management and retention policy, it will be shredded or securely deleted from the computer.
- 3.3. The Council is aware that people have the right to access any personal information that is held about them. Subject Access Requests (SARs) must be submitted in writing (this can be done

in hard copy or email). If a person requests to see any data that is being held about them, the SAR response must detail:

- How and to what purpose personal data is processed
- The period the Council tend to process it for
- Anyone who has access to the personal data

3.4. The response must be sent within 30 days and should be free of charge.

3.5. If a SAR includes personal data of other individuals, the Council must not disclose the personal information of the other individual. That individual's personal information may either be redacted, or the individual may be contacted to given permission for their information to be shared with the Subject.

3.6. Individuals have the right to have their data rectified if it is incorrect, the right to request erasure of the data, the right to request restriction of processing of the data and the right to object to data processing, although rules do apply to those requests.

3.7. Please see the Subject Access Request Procedure for more details.

4. Confidentiality

4.1. The Council elected members and staff must be aware that when complaints or queries are made, they must remain confidential unless the subject gives permission otherwise. When handling personal data, this must also remain confidential.

5. Policy Review

5.1. This Data Protection Policy was presented to the Full Council meeting, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.

5.2. Future reviews will be carried out annually or when any changes are made to current legislation, whichever is sooner.

6. References

6.1. Data Protection Act 2018 –
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>

6.2. UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

6.3. Information Commissioner's Office -
<https://ico.org.uk/>

6.4. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME (Freedom of Information)

Information available from Corfe Mullen Town Council under the Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published Cost: Charges per copy for hard copies see schedule at end	How the information can be obtained
Class1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) This will be current information only. N.B. Councils should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted.	(hard copy or website)
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Both
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Both
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Both
Staffing structure	Both
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit) Current and previous financial year as a minimum	Both
Annual return form and report by auditor	Both
Finalised budget	Both
Precept	Both
Borrowing Approval letter	Both
Standing Orders	Both
Financial Regulations	Both
Grants given and received	Both
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Both
Members' allowances and expenses	Both
Parish Plan (current)	Both
Annual Report to Parish Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Both
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum	(hard copy or website)
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Both
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Both
Minutes of meetings (as above) – note this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Both

Reports presented to council meetings – note this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Included in agendas
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy where consultation was responded to on paper – online responses not available
Responses to planning applications	Both
Bye-laws	Both
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only	Both
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Code of Conduct	Both
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services Equality and diversity policy Health and safety policy Dignity at Work policy Safeguarding policy Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Both
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Both
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Both
Class 6 – Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Hard copy if any
Assets register	Website
Register of members' interests	Dorset Council website
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hard copy
Class 7 – The services we offer	(hard copy or website; some information may

(Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses) Current information only	only be available by inspection)
Allotments	Hard copy
Burial grounds	Both
Village halls	Both
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Both
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Hard copy
Bus shelters	Hard copy
Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Hard copy

Contact details: Town Clerk, Corfe Mullen Town Council, Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 3UA. **Tele no.** 01202 698600. **Email:** office@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 25p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Photocopying @ 50p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class

* the actual cost incurred by the public authority



Corfe Mullen Town Council

Subject Access Request Procedure

Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') shall complete the following steps when processing a request for personal data (Subject Access Request (SAR)).

1. Ascertain whether the requester has a right to access the information and in what capacity.
2. Obtain proof of identity (once this step has been completed the clock can start).
3. Engage with the requester if the request is too broad or needs clarifying.
4. Make a judgement on whether the request is complex and therefore should be extended to a two-month response time.
5. Acknowledge the requester providing them with:
 - a) the response time - one month (as standard), two months if complex;
 - b) details of any costs - nil for standard requests, or, if the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, or further copies of the same information is required, a fee can be charged which is in line with the administrative cost.
6. Use its Audit of Processing Activities to identify data sources and where they are held.
7. Collect the data.
8. If (6) identifies third parties who process it, then engage with them to release the data to the Council.
9. Review the identified data for exemptions and redactions in line with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Code of Practice on Subject Access.
10. Create the final bundle and check to ensure all redactions have been applied.
11. Submit the final bundle to the requester in a secure manner, and in the format which they have requested.



Corfe Mullen Town Council

General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) Privacy Notice

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') takes your privacy and the protection of personal data it collects about you very seriously. Your personal data is information that tells the Council something from which you can be identified. This privacy notice explains how the Council collects and uses your personal data.

2. How does the Council collect your personal data?

- 2.1. The Council collects your personal data whenever you access or sign up to any of the Council's services, request information, make a complaint, apply for a job or participate in activities provided by the Council. The personal data collected may include your name, e-mail address, home or work address, telephone or mobile number, date of birth or bank account details.

3. Who provides the Council with your personal data?

- 3.1. Generally, you will be the person who provides the Council with your personal data. The Council may however collect personal data about you from other people such as: complainants; Government departments and agencies; or other local authorities; other persons.

4. How does the Council use your personal data?

- 4.1. The Council uses your personal data mainly to perform a task carried out in the public interest or in connection with your use of any of the Council's services, or if you make an enquiry or complaint, apply for a job etc. The Council may use your personal data to fulfil any contractual obligations owed to you or to provide you with something that you have asked the Council to do before entering into a contract with you.

5. When does the Council need your consent to use your personal data?

- 5.1. Where the Council wishes to use your personal data for purposes that are neither connected with the performance of its public functions or of contractual obligations, the Council may rely on your consent to collect and use your personal data. This could be when the Council would like to use your information in a way which is unexpected or different to the original purpose.
- 5.2. Where the Council requires your consent, it will give you a genuine choice whether or not you should give your express consent and will not rely upon your silence as you giving consent. The Council will also tell you at the time you give your consent, how you can withdraw your consent at any time and will make it easy for you to do so.

6. Who will the Council share your personal data with?

- 6.1. The Council may share your personal data where it is under a legal obligation to do so; is performing its public functions and powers; where the aim is the detection and prevention of crime/fraudulent activity; or if there are serious risks to the public, Council staff, a child or adults who are thought to be at risk, for example if they are frail, confused or cannot understand what is happening to them.
- 6.2. The Council will not sell your personal data to any other organisation for the purposes of direct marketing.

7. How long will the Council hold your personal data?

- 7.1. The Council will not use or continue to hold your personal data for any longer than is necessary to perform its public functions and powers or any contractual obligations owed to you unless the Council has a legitimate reason such as complying with a legal obligation for doing so. The Council has a Records Management & Retention Policy.

8. What rights do you have in respect of the personal data held by the Council?

- 8.1. The GDPR gives you a number of rights. For further information please see:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/>

9. What to do if you have any concerns or queries

- 9.1. If you believe that the personal data the Council holds about you may be wrong or inaccurate or that the Council has misused your personal data, you should contact the Town Clerk. You also have the right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

10. Data Controller Contact Details

- 10.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council, Council Office, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 3UA. Tele no. 01202 698600. Email: office@corfemullen-tc.gov.uk.

11. Review

- 11.1. This Data Privacy Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.
- 11.2. Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

12. References

- Data Protection Act 2018 – <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

PRESS & MEDIA POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities.
- 1.2 The Council shall, where possible, co-operate with those whose work involves gathering material for publication in any form including use of the internet (the 'media').
- 1.3 This policy explains how the Council may work with the media to meet the above objectives in accordance with the legal requirements and restrictions that apply.

2. Legal requirements and restrictions

- 2.1 This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998, other legislation which may apply and the Council's standing orders and financial regulations. The Council's financial regulations and relevant standing orders referenced in this policy are available via the Council's publication scheme.
- 2.2 The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information where the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's standing orders, under contract or by common law.
- 2.3 Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's publication scheme.

3. Meetings

- 3.1 Any meeting of the Council, its committees and sub-committees are open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's standing orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the Council and its committees if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.
- 3.2 Where a meeting of the Council and its committees include an opportunity for public participation, the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's standing orders.
- 3.3 The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV/radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites which enable a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted unless (i) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or (ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings or (iii) paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 below apply.
- 3.4 The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.

- 3.5 Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by any person who is present at the meeting, including councillors and staff, is not permitted.
- 3.6 The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting and they shall do so at their own expense.
- 3.7 The Council's standing orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub-committee.

4. Other communications with the media

- 4.1 The Council's communications with the media seek to represent the corporate position and views of the Council. If the views of councillors are different to the Council's corporate position and views, they will make this clear.
- 4.2 The Town Clerk, or in their absence, the Deputy Town Clerk, may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council.
- 4.3 Any enquiries from the Media shall be dealt with by the Town Clerk, as the Proper Officer of the Council, in the first instance. Consultation with Council and/or the Chair shall be carried out to establish a detailed response to any media enquiries.
- 4.4 Subject to the obligations on councillors not to disclose information referred to in paragraph 2.2 above and not to misrepresent the Council's position, councillors are free to communicate their position and views but must be clear that it is their personal view and not that of the resolved majority decision of Council.

5. Review

- 5.1 This Press and Media Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.
- 5.2 Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

6. References

- Council's Data Protection Policy
- Data Protection Act 2018 – <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>
- Electronic Communications Policy
- Councillors Code of Conduct
- Council's Civility & Respect Pledge
- National Association of Local Councils (NALC)



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

Absence Management Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') is committed to providing effective, high-quality service to all its customers and to optimising the contribution of all employees. As part of this aim, it is essential that all employees are committed to maximising attendance.
- 1.2. The Council is concerned for the wellbeing of its employees and seeks to protect their health and safety by creating a safe working environment. In return, the Council expects all employees to take reasonable care of their own health, seek medical help whenever appropriate, and to attend work when fit to do so.
- 1.3. The Council recognises that genuine medical grounds will occasionally result in employee absence. It is the Council's policy to treat all such sickness absence in a fair, sensitive, and consistent manner across all areas of the workforce.
- 1.4. The Council must balance the sensitive management of genuine individual sickness against its need to be publicly accountable for its resource allocation and, as such, cannot sustain high levels of sickness absence. Action will therefore be taken to address recurrent short-term sickness or extended periods of absence as appropriate.

2. Aims

- 2.1. In order for the Council to meet its responsibilities, it will ensure that:
 - It provides a supportive environment for those employees affected by ill-health;
 - Managers and employees adhere to this policy and procedure; and
 - Levels of sickness absence are the subject of routine monitoring.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The onus for attending work on a regular basis and for reporting absence in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures rests with the employee. It is also an employee's responsibility to appropriately detail any periods of absence on their record of hours worked.
- 3.2. The responsibility for recording, monitoring, and managing absence on a day-to-day basis lies with the Town/Deputy Clerk. It is therefore essential that they ensure all employees are aware of the Council's Absence Management Policy and Procedures.

4. Reporting

- 4.1. Employees who are unable to work due to illness/injury must contact the Town/Deputy Clerk as soon as possible. This should be no later than 08:30 on the first day of absence or the nearest working day.
- 4.2. The employee should provide some indication of:
 - The nature of the absence;
 - The date the injury/illness began (including weekends and holidays);
 - The expected duration of the absence; and
 - Whether there are any immediate work commitments that need completing/reassigning during the absence.

- 4.3. If the employee is unable to do so, they must arrange for someone else to do this on their behalf.
- 4.4. If the Town/Deputy Clerk is unavailable, the employee should ensure that contact is made with the office.
- 4.5. The employee must maintain contact with the Town/Deputy Clerk during any period of sickness absence lasting longer than one day, so that the Town/Deputy Clerk is aware of any progress and the expected date of return to work.
- 4.6. Failure to follow the sickness reporting process may lead to the absence from work being considered as unauthorised, resulting in loss of pay and possible disciplinary action.

5. Certification

- 5.1. Where the absence is for a period of up to seven days (inclusive of weekends) and not covered by a statement of fitness to work ('fit note'), the employee will be asked to complete a self-certification form on their return to work.
- 5.2. If the absence exceeds seven days, and the employee has not already done so, the employee should provide medical evidence in the form of a fit note, for the remainder of the absence. The employee will need to ensure that there is always a current fit note in place.
- 5.3. All fit notes must be certified by a healthcare professional who has assessed the employee's fitness for work. Healthcare professionals who are eligible to issue fit notes are nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, and doctors. The fit note should state whether or not the employee needs to see a doctor or other healthcare professional again before returning to work.
- 5.4. If the fit note states that the employee 'may be fit for work', the employee should inform the Town/Deputy Clerk immediately. They will discuss with the employee whether there are any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate the return to work, taking into account the doctor's or healthcare professional's advice. This may take place at a Return-to-Work Interview or an Absence Review Meeting. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, the employee will remain on sick leave and the Town/Deputy Clerk will set a date to review the situation.

6. Return to Work Meetings

- 6.1. When the employee returns to work after any period of absence, the Town/Deputy Clerk will arrange to meet with them. This meeting will occur on the first day back or as soon as possible. The purpose of this meeting is:
- 6.2. To provide an opportunity for the Town/Deputy Clerk to check the employee is fit enough to return to work;
 - To give the employee an opportunity to voice any concerns they may have and/or to identify any domestic, welfare, or work-related problems in an appropriate forum;
 - To ensure the employee is aware of work-related matters that have occurred during their absence; and
 - Fill out the Sickness Declaration Form.

7. Miscellaneous

- 7.1. It is important that the employee complies with these procedures so that:
- The Council can monitor sickness absence across the workforce and identify any intervention/support needed;
 - The Council can provide assistance to individual employees where necessary; and
 - Any sick pay to which the employee would otherwise be entitled is not withheld or refused.
- 7.2. If an employee wilfully abuses the sickness absence/payments provisions or absented themselves without permission, then this will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's disciplinary process.
- 7.3. Records retained in respect of sickness absence will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality at all times, in accordance with the provisions of prevailing Data Protection legislation. The employee is entitled to access their records on request.

8. Underlying Medical Conditions

- 8.1. If at any stage of the Managing Attendance Review Process the employee and/or their manager identifies that their attendance may be affected by an underlying medical condition, the Town/Deputy Clerk will give consideration whether to request that an Occupational Health referral is arranged.
- 8.2. This process would involve discussing with the employee the proposal to undertake a referral to the Council's Occupational Health Service. The purpose of this referral would be to obtain independent medical advice on:
- The nature of any underlying/recurrent condition;
 - How to support the employee to improve their attendance, e.g. suggestions for reasonable adjustments to the employee's work, which the Council could consider.
- 8.3. Any agreed adjustments should be taken into account when applying the following procedure, which may need to be adapted accordingly.
- 8.4. Where appropriate, an employee may be referred to Occupational Health on more than one occasion e.g. when there has been a change to an employee's underlying health condition or prior to an attendance hearing.

9. Frequent Intermittent Absence

- 9.1. In addition to the Return-to-Work meetings after all periods of absence, the Council will institute a more formal review of attendance records and reasons for absence with an employee if there has been either (a) four episodes of absence or (b) a total of 10 working days' short-term sickness absence within any period of 12 months.
- 9.2. The number of days of short term sickness absence which constitutes the absence trigger point will be reduced pro rata for employees who work less than 5 days per week as follows:

al Days Worked /week	ice Trigger – No. of Working Days

10.Stage 1 - Absence Review Meeting

- 10.1. The relevant manager will arrange an absence review meeting to meet with any employee whose absence record matches or exceeds the above criteria.
- 10.2. During the meeting, the manager should draw the employee's attention to their poor attendance record and the problems their absences are causing for the Council and other employees. If the employee discloses an underlying health condition, then the advice in section 5 above should be followed.
- 10.3. The employee will be advised that their attendance record will be monitored (over a period of not less than 3 months) and that significant improvement will be required. In addition, employees will be warned that if no such improvement is forthcoming, serious consideration will be given to reviewing their employment situation in accordance with this procedure. This will be confirmed in writing.
- 10.4. Return to Work interviews will continue to be carried out following any absences that occur during this and subsequent monitoring periods. These interviews afford the manager the opportunity to remind the employee of the Council's concerns.

11.Stage 2 – Further Absence Review Meeting

- 11.1. If no significant improvement in attendance is demonstrated, a further absence review meeting will be arranged. At this meeting, the employee will once again be reminded of the problems caused by the absences.
- 11.2. The employee will normally be told that their attendance record will be subject to a further period of monitoring (of not less than 3 months) and that significant improvement will be required. In addition, employees will be warned that if no such improvement is forthcoming, their employment may be terminated. This will be confirmed in writing.

12.Stage 3 – Final Absence Review Meeting

- 12.1. Where an employee's attendance has still not improved to the required level, a final absence review meeting will be arranged as per section 8 which may lead to an Attendance Hearing (see Section 9) to consider dismissal.

13.Maintaining levels of attendance

- 13.1. Employees whose levels of attendance improve satisfactorily during periods of informal or formal monitoring will be reminded that they will be expected to maintain these levels of attendance. Failure to do so will result in further monitoring or the initiation of formal action.

14.Long-Term Absence

- 14.1. All cases of long-term absence will be treated sympathetically, and every assistance will be given to the employee to return to work.

15.Long-Term Absence Review Meetings

- 15.1. The Council will maintain contact with the employee and advise them that they should keep the Council informed of developments relating to their medical condition.
- 15.2. The Council will hold Absence Review Meetings with the employee during their absence, as appropriate, to keep up to date, review the on-going absence, and offer support to the employee where appropriate.
- 15.3. Where an employee remains absent and a return to work is not foreseeable within a reasonable timescale, the Town/Deputy Clerk will arrange a Final Absence Review meeting (see Section 8), which may lead to an Attendance Hearing (see Section 9) to consider dismissal.

16.Occupational Health

- 16.1. In order to ensure the Council has access to guidance and advice in respect of the best course of action to follow in relation to cases of absence, employees might, depending on the nature or length of the absence in question, be referred to the Council's Occupational Health Advisor. Where the Occupational Health Advisor makes a recommendation that might affect the employee's continued employment, the relevant manager will hold an Absence Review Meeting with the employee to discuss the advice and options going forward. Employees may wish to have the support of a trade union representative or a work colleague present during such a meeting, and this should be positively encouraged.
- 16.2. In certain cases, the Occupational Health Advisor might find that an employee is unfit to perform a particular job but fit enough to undertake other types of work. In such cases, full consideration will be given to the possibility of redeployment into alternative positions. Consideration will also be given to redeployment in cases where work in a particular place poses problems with attendance.
- 16.3. Where a return to work following a period of prolonged absence might be facilitated by temporary redeployment or phased re-introduction (e.g. reduction in hours) an employee can discuss these options with their manager and, if such measures are appropriate, the Council will ensure that the support mechanisms necessary for this to occur are provided. Such arrangements will be for a defined period and will be subject to joint review.

17.Final Absence Review Meeting

- 17.1. Prior to an attendance hearing being arranged for either frequent intermittent absence or long-term absence, the Town/Deputy Clerk will normally meet with the individual for a final absence review meeting.
- 17.2. The purpose of the meeting would be to provide a final opportunity to review the employees absence levels and for the Town Clerk to decide on whether an attendance hearing should be held. Other outcomes could include seeking further medical advice or extending the period of monitoring.

18.Attendance Hearing

- 18.1. Where the decision is made to proceed to an Attendance Hearing, the employee will be invited in writing to attend the hearing and notified of their right to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or colleague.

- 18.2. The Hearing Panel will be comprised of three members of the Staffing Committee who will make the decision. The Town Clerk will attend to outline the history of absence and any relevant steps taken and advice received.
- 18.3. All paperwork relating to the hearing will be circulated 5 days in advance of the hearing to all parties attending.
- 18.4. Once the Panel has considered the manager's and employee's cases, and all other relevant information, it will adjourn to make a decision.
- 18.5. The decision to terminate the employees employment may take place where:
- An employee is declared permanently unfit for work;
 - An employee is declared medically unfit for their work and alternative employment has not be found;
 - The service can no longer tolerate the high level of absence.
- 18.6. The decision of the Panel will be confirmed to the employee in writing within 5 working days. The letter should clearly set out:

18.6.1. The Panel's decision:

- a) If a warning has been issued the timescale for this and the level of improvement required;
- b) If the decision is not to take action at this point and to review again in a certain time period, the applicable timescale for this; or
- c) If the decision is to dismiss the employee, inform them of their relevant notice period and provide them with any relevant pension information; and

18.6.2. The employee's right of appeal.

19. Appeals

- 19.1. Employees have the right to appeal against any decision to issue a formal warning or dismissal under this procedure. If an employee wishes to appeal, they should write to the Town Clerk setting out the grounds of their appeal. This must be done within 10 days of the date of the letter informing them of the outcome of the Attendance Hearing.
- 19.2. Appeals will be heard by a separate panel of members, who will also normally be part of the Staffing Committee. An appeal hearing will be held where the employee can present their appeal. The Chair of the original panel will also attend to explain the original decision. Witnesses may be called.
- 19.3. Once the Appeal Panel has considered both the employee's appeal and the Hearing Chair's case, and considered all other relevant information, it will adjourn to make a decision.
- 19.4. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and will be confirmed to the employee in writing within 5 working days. There is no further right of appeal.

20. Personal, Domestic, or Work-Related Problems

- 20.1. Where an employee reveals that their absence has been a consequence of personal, domestic, or work-related problems, the relevant manager should endeavour to discuss with them any relevant details that they wish to disclose. Although an employee may have genuine concerns about revealing sensitive

or personal information, they should be reminded that such matters will be treated confidentially, and that the Council cannot assist them if it is not made aware of the problem. If an employee wishes to discuss matters with someone other than the relevant manager, the Chair of the Staffing Committee can be contacted for a confidential interview.

- 20.2. Once the problem has been clearly identified, appropriate assistance can be offered to the employee. In some circumstances, special leave, temporary adjustments in working arrangements, or referral to specialist agencies may be granted.

21. Alcohol/Drug Dependency

- 21.1. Where an employee discloses that their absences are a consequence of alcohol or drug-related problems, they will be encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily through the Council's Occupational Health Service or through resources of their own choosing. Employees may be granted, if necessary, leave to undergo treatment and any such leave will be regarded as sick leave within the terms of the Council's sick pay scheme, with the monitoring of progress by the Occupational Health Service.
- 21.2. Should an employee refuse or discontinue any programme of assistance designed for them, then any unacceptable behaviour or inadequate standard of work will be dealt with on its merits through the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

22. Welfare

- 22.1. If, as a consequence of medically related absence, the relevant manager has any concerns about an employee's ability to undertake the full range of duties and responsibilities associated with their post, consideration should be given to suspending them with pay, or finding alternative duties whilst medical advice is sought from the Occupational Health Provider.

23. Monitoring

- 23.1. Monitoring is an important part of sickness absence. In order for reports to be issued to managers, it is important that all absence from the workplace is reported. All signed absence forms should be returned as soon as possible after the employee's Return to Work Interview has been conducted. The Town/Deputy Clerk will ensure that an absence history is maintained for each employee. These records will provide the base data for the compilation, at regular intervals, of statistics showing the level of sickness absence across the Council.
- 23.2. The absence monitoring system will also enable the Town/Deputy Clerk to identify Individual cases where frequent or lengthy absences have occurred, or where patterns of absence have been identified. However, the manager should view such notifications as a secondary means of identifying problems or potential problems.
- 23.3. The manager should ensure that they maintain comprehensive records at all times for each employee in relation to contact during and immediately following periods of sickness absence. These details should be maintained on the employee's personal file and should be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality at all times. Employees will be entitled to access these records on request.

24. Review

- 24.1. This Absence Management Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.
- 24.2. Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

25. References

- Data Protection Act 2018 –
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>
- Equality Act 2010 -
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Council's Disciplinary Procedure
- Council's Dignity at Work Policy
- Council's Safeguarding Policy
- Council's Data Privacy Notice
- Council's Grievance Procedure

APPENDIX 1 – RETURN TO WORK DISCUSSION

Name:					
Date of Interview:					
Time of Interview:					
Period of Sickness Absence:	From		To		
Number of Working Days Absent					

* Self Certificate / fit note provided (*delete as appropriate) – Attached

Provide brief details of the content of the discussion:
<p style="font-size: 100px; opacity: 0.3; transform: rotate(-30deg);">DRAFT</p>

Signed Date.....
(Employee)

Signed Date.....
(Town/Deputy Clerk)



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

Capability Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This procedure is used to support, enhance, and improve the performance of employees. This procedure sets out a framework for resolving issues relating to poor performance, in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996, Human Rights Act 1998, and the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary Procedures. The procedure aims to ensure consistent and fair treatment is given to all individuals.

2. Scope

- 2.1. Where there are issues of misconduct or of negligence, these will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure. For matters of sickness, disability, or ill health, the Absence Management Policy will be used.

3. General Principles

- 3.1. The Procedure is not a substitute for good management practices. It should only be invoked when initial attempts to improve performance have been unsuccessful following discussions between the employee and their manager.
- 3.2. The employee must be given at least 5 working days' notice of the requirement to attend a formal review meeting or an appeal.
- 3.3. The employee has the right to be represented at formal review meetings or appeals.
- 3.4. In the event of a formal warning or a dismissal, the employee has the right of appeal.

4. Related Procedures

- 4.1. When using the procedure, it may be necessary to refer to the contents of other agreed documents such as:
- The Equality & Diversity Policy
 - The Absence Management Policy
 - Other conditions set out in the Staff Handbook

5. Representation

- 5.1. Employees have the right to representation at hearings and appeals relating to any stage of the formal procedure. This can be a trade union representative or a work colleague.
- 5.2. Representatives can take an active part in review meetings.

6. Action against a Trade Union Official

- 6.1. In normal circumstances no action will be taken against an officer of a recognised Trade Union until the matter has been discussed with a full-time officer of that union.

7. The Informal Procedure

- 7.1. The Town/Deputy Clerk (or Chair of the Staffing Committee in relation to matters concerning the Town Clerk) should deal with minor issues of poor performance in the first instance.

7.2. A meeting with the employee to discuss poor performance should be arranged and any problems or areas for concern should be raised by the Town/Deputy Clerk. Appropriate support and training should be offered to assist the individual towards meeting the required standards in the future. Realistic targets should be agreed with the individual and future expectations made clear by the Town/Deputy Clerk. The Town/Deputy Clerk will record the points discussed in the meeting and confirm this in writing to the employee along with the agreed plan to achieve acceptable levels of performance. A review meeting should be arranged within 2 months to assess whether the targets have been met and whether the performance is satisfactory.

7.3. In most cases, these meetings should provide sufficient guidance, support, and clarification of standards to rectify the situation.

7.4. However, the formal procedure will apply when:

- Previous informal advice or guidance has proved ineffective; or
- The performance is so poor that informal discussions are unlikely to help.

8. The Formal Review

8.1. If informal discussions have proved unsuccessful in raising performance levels to the standards set by the Town/Deputy Clerk then the formal procedure will be invoked. There are three stages to the formal procedure. The employee has the right of representation at each stage.

8.2. During each stage, the employee's performance will be monitored closely. The method of doing this will be made clear to them at the conclusion of each review meeting.

9. Stage 1: The Capability Review

9.1. The Capability Review should build on the informal discussions. It should be sufficiently specific so that the employee knows exactly what it is about their performance that is unsatisfactory and how they can improve to the required standard. The Town/Deputy Clerk (or Chair of the Staffing Committee, in relation to matters concerning the Town Clerk) will carry out the Review.

9.2. The review has four main purposes:

- To allow the Town/Deputy Clerk to discuss with the employee: (i) the standards of work required; (ii) what improvement is necessary; (iii) how the employee can be helped to achieve them; and (iv) how improvement will be assessed and the timescale which must be reasonable.
- To allow the employee to: (i) obtain a clear understanding of what is expected of them; (ii) give an explanation or comment on their work; and (iii) give their views on how the problem can best be tackled.
- To allow the Town/Deputy Clerk and the employee to explore other options, such as: (i) additional instruction, training, or personal development activity; or referral to occupational health, which may involve alternative action under the Council's Absence Management Policy. Please refer to the Absence Management Policy.
- To make clear to the employee: (i) the timescale for improvement; (ii) how and by whom their work will be monitored during the review period; and (iii) the consequences if their work does not improve or if improvement is not maintained.

9.3. Ideally, standards of performance should be agreed between the Town/Deputy Clerk and employee. However, in the absence of such an agreement, the Town/Deputy Clerk must satisfy themselves that any targets set are reasonable and non-discriminatory. If training has already been given, then its effectiveness should be reviewed and any further training and support agreed.

9.4. If the Town/Deputy Clerk is satisfied at the conclusion of the review meeting that there is a shortfall in performance, the employee will be issued with a formal warning and an action plan, including timescales, to achieve. It will also be made clear that failure to achieve the action plan will lead to the next stage of the formal procedure. The length of time given to improve will depend on the nature of the job and the performance gap but in normal circumstances it should not be more than 3 months. The Town/Deputy Clerk should confirm the outcome of the meeting in writing to the individual within 5 working days.

10. Stage 2 – The Capability Review

10.1. If the employee fails to achieve the standards in the timescales set out in the action plan then Stage 2 of the procedure is invoked. This involves a further review based on the same structure as Stage 1.

10.2. Stage 2 of the Capability Review will be conducted by the Town/Deputy Clerk (or Chair of the Staffing Committee, in relation to matters concerning the Town Clerk). If it is concluded that there is still a performance issue to be addressed, a further formal warning should be issued along with an action plan giving details of the standards of performance required and the timescales within which these must be achieved. The employee should be reminded that if the action plan is not achieved, then Stage 3 will be invoked. It needs to be made clear that Stage 3 may result in a decision to dismiss the employee. Again, the length of time given to improve will depend on the nature of the job and the performance gap but in normal circumstances should not be more than 3 months. A letter to confirm the outcome of the meeting should be sent to the employee within 5 working days, it should also explain the employee's right to appeal against any warning issued.

11. Stage 3 – The Final Capability Review

11.1. The Final Capability Review will be heard by three members of the Staffing Committee.

11.2. The Town/Deputy Clerk who conducted Stages 1 and 2 should also be present to provide details of the previous review meetings and of the steps taken to encourage improvement in the employee's performance.

11.3. The employee will have the opportunity to respond and put forward any points they wish to be considered.

11.4. Consideration should be given to any alternatives to dismissal, such as redeployment or options of downgrading. However, this may not always be possible and will depend on each individual situation and the circumstances of the organisation.

11.5. The Panel must satisfy themselves that they have heard all of the relevant information, and that the employee has been given sufficient opportunity to improve. If they consider that the employee's performance remains unsatisfactory, they must inform the employee that their employment is terminated on the grounds of capability or any alternatives to dismissal.

- 11.6. The employee's dismissal will be with notice or, if serving their notice period is not in the interests of the Council, they will receive pay in lieu of notice. The dismissal must be confirmed in writing within 5 working days, stating the reasons for it, and informing the employee of their right of appeal.

12. Levels of Authority

- 12.1. Guidance is given here on the appropriate levels of authority, although alternative arrangements may have to be made on occasion.

Formal	Officer	Authority
Stage 1 & 2	Town/Deputy Clerk	Formal warnings
Stage 3	Staffing Committee	Dismissal

13. The Right of Appeal

- 13.1. In the event of a formal warning or dismissal, the employee has the right of appeal to the Town Clerk (or Chair of the Staffing Committee, in relation to matters concerning the Town Clerk). The Appeal must be made in writing within 10 days of the date of the letter confirming dismissal.
- 13.2. Three members of the Staffing Committee will hear the appeal, providing that they have had no previous involvement in the matter. They will be assisted by an independent adviser.
- 13.3. The appeal will take place as soon as is practically possible. The Appeal Panel will consider the details of the poor performance presented by the Chair of the Final Capability Review and will consider the comments of the employee.
- 13.4. The decision of any appeal hearing is final.

14. Training

- 14.1. Appropriate training will be given to the Town/Deputy Clerk or any Members who might be involved in capability or appeals meetings to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities under this procedure.

15. Review

- 15.1. This Capability Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.
- 15.2. Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

16. References

- Data Protection Act 2018 –
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>
- Equality Act 2010 -
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

- Council's Disciplinary Procedure
- Council's Dignity at Work Policy
- Council's Safeguarding Policy
- Council's Data Privacy Notice
- Council's Grievance Procedure

DRAFT



Corfe Mullen Town Council

Dignity at Work Policy



**Civility &
Respect**

1. Introduction

Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all Councillors, officers and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the Council.

2. Purpose

The Council is committed to creating a working environment where all Council employees, Councillors, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. The Council aims to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying.

In support of this objective, the Council has signed up to the Civility Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available [NALC](#) & [SLCC](#)

The Council recognises that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed. However, the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

This document:

- explains how the Council will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment;
- ensures that the Council responds sensitively and promptly; and,
- supports its employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

3. Scope

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by the Clerk and all employees engaged to work at the Council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with the Council this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the Chair of the Council, the complaint should be raised with the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

Agency staff, or contractors are equally expected to treat Council colleagues, and other representatives and stakeholders with dignity and respect, and the Council may terminate the contract, without notice, where there are suspicions of harassment or bullying.

Complaints about other employment matters will be managed under the Council's Grievance Policy.

It is noted that the management of a situation may differ depending on who the allegations relate to (e.g., employees, contractor, Councillor), however, the Council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, Councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

Aims of the Policy

Version: 1
Date of Approval: XX May 2024
Minute No. TC 24/XX

The information set out in sections 4 and 5 show how harassment and bullying can affect both individuals and the Council, and demonstrates the need for a policy. The aims of having a Dignity & Respect policy are as follows:

- To ensure that all of the Council's employees are treated with dignity and respect;
- To ensure that harassment and bullying is prevented and, if it does occur, that action is taken to stop it;
- To ensure that the working environment is such that each employee feels confident and comfortable about the way they will be treated whilst at work;
- To ensure that all of the Council's employees know what harassment and bullying is and what the Council's policy is;
- To explain the responsibilities of Councillors, and employees; and
- To explain the procedures for dealing with harassment and bullying.

4. The position on bullying and harassment

All staff and Council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. The Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in its workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether harm is intended or not. Neither will the Council tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that, if you have bullied or harassed someone (e.g., physical violence, harassment), in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

The Council expects all its representatives to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, Civility and Respect Pledge, Equality & Diversity Policy, and all other policies and procedures set by the Council.

The Council expects all its representatives to demonstrate respect by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. See the Grievance Policy for further details regarding the process. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. While the Council will assume that all complaints of bullying and harassment are made in good faith, in the event that allegations are found to be malicious or vexatious the person raising the complaint may be subject to action under the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Harassment

- Where a person is subject to uninvited conduct that violates their dignity, in connection with a protected characteristic
- Behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic

Bullying

- Behaviour that leaves the victim feeling threatened, intimidated, humiliated, vulnerable or otherwise upset. It does not need to be connected to a protected characteristic.

5. What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?

‘Bullying’ or ‘harassment’ are phrases that apply to treatment from one person (or a group of people) to another that is unwanted and that has the effect of violating that person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person.

Examples of bullying and harassment include:

- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g., promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person’s appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, including jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person’s age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments or gestures
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities
- Withholding information, a person needs in order to do their job
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property
- Display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person

- Isolation or non-cooperation at work
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, whether directly and/or in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

Bullying and harassment can occur through verbal and face to face interactions but can also take place through sharing inappropriate or offensive content in writing or via email and other electronic communications and social media.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable, and behaviour could be harassment when the person had no intention to offend. We all have the right to determine what offends us. Some behaviour will be clear to any reasonable person that it is likely to offend – for example sexual touching. Other examples may be less clear; however, you should be aware that harassment will occur if behaviour continues after the recipient has advised you that the behaviour is unacceptable to them.

Harassment can also occur where the unwanted behaviour relates to a perceived characteristic (such as offensive jokes or comments based on the assumption someone is gay, even if they are not) or due to their association with someone else (such as harassment related to their partner having a disability for example). See the Council's Diversity & Equality Policy.

All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity and should feel able to challenge behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

It is important to recognise that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues/Councillors is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routines and should not be interpreted as anything different.

6. Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e., you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the Council will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Responsibilities of Managers, Employees, and Members

○ Managers

Managers will have the following responsibilities:

- Compliance with the policy;
- Creating/ensuring that there is a supportive working environment;
- Making sure that their employees know the details of this policy and ensuring compliance with it;
- Making sure that their employees know what standards of behaviour are expected of them;
- Taking allegations of harassment and/or bullying seriously and dealing with them as quickly as possible;
- Ensuring that victims of harassment and/or bullying receive appropriate support which might include counselling. (Note: consideration should be given as to whether the harasser/bully should also be given access to counselling, as the employee who has been accused of bullying/harassment can find this a stressful situation);
- Dealing with complaints of bullying and harassment;
- Ensuring that matters are dealt with confidentially and impartially;
- Ensuring that their employees attend any training requirement; and
- Liaising with the Town/Deputy Clerk on how to deal with cases that arise.

○ Employees

Employees will have the following responsibilities:

- Compliance with the policy;
- Treating their colleagues with dignity and respect;
- Having an awareness of their own standards of behaviour;
- Making it clear that they find harassment and bullying unacceptable;
- Reporting harassment and supporting management with the investigation of complaints; and
- Intervening to stop harassment and/or bullying and give support to victims.

Councillors

Councillors will have the following responsibilities:

- Compliance with the policy; and
- Treating employees with dignity and respect.

7. Reporting Concerns

7.1. What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague): If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, please raise this with your line manager in the first instance or, with the Town Clerk/or Chair of Staffing Committee. Any such report will be taken seriously, and the Council will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation.

7.2. What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a Councillor: If you are being bullied or harassed by a Councillor, please raise this with the Town Clerk or the Chair of the Council in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in

consultation. There are two possible avenues, informal or formal. The Informal Resolution is described below. Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct must be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

7.3. The Council will consider reasonable measures to protect everyone's health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties or change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

7.4. **What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to harassment or bullying:** If witnessing such behaviour, you should report the incident in confidence to the Town Clerk or the Chair of the Staffing Committee. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

7.5. **What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff:** If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues, informal or formal. These are described below.

8. Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the Council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the Town/Deputy Clerk, your line manager or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own line manager, you should raise the issue with the Chair of the Council. (If your concern relates to the Chair, you should raise it with the Chair of the Staffing Committee). The Chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by telling the alleged perpetrator, without prejudicing the matter, that:

- there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the Council staff
- such behaviour is contrary to the Council's policy
- for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

It may be possible for this conversation to take place with the alleged perpetrator without revealing names, if this is what you want. The person dealing with it will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances the Council may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Chair of the Council or Chair of the Staffing Committee (or another appropriate person) will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as extremely serious allegation or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. The Council will consult with you before taking this step.

9. Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment through the Council's grievance procedure. You should raise your complaint to the Town Clerk or the Chair of the Council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The Town Clerk or the Chair of the Council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint in line with the grievance policy. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- the name of the alleged perpetrator(s)
- the nature of the harassment or bullying
- the dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred
- the names of any witnesses and
- any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told the name and the details of the grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, the Council will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, the Council will consider whether it is appropriate to make temporary adjustments to working arrangements whilst the matter is being investigated.

Where your complaint relates to potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct, these will need to be investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The Council will consider any adjustments to support you in your work and to manage the relationship with the Councillor the allegations relate to, while the investigation proceeds.

Investigations will be carried out promptly (without unreasonable delay), sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. When carrying out any investigations, the Council will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the data protection policy.

The Council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to understand better your complaint (see the grievance policy for further information, and details of your right to be accompanied).

After the investigation, a panel will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation in accordance with the grievance procedure. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

Following the conclusion of the hearing the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You should put your appeal in writing explaining the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision. Your appeal will be heard under the appeal process that is described in the grievance procedure.

Malicious/Unfounded Complaints

Version: 1
Date of Approval: XX May 2024
Minute No. TC 24/XX

This procedure is designed to protect individuals who raise their concerns. It is accepted that some allegations may arise from genuine misunderstandings. However, making a malicious and unfounded complaint may itself constitute harassment and be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

10. The use of the Disciplinary Procedure

If at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, the Council believes there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, the Council will instigate its disciplinary procedure. The Council will keep you informed of the outcome.

Confidentiality

Any complaint received, either formally or informally, will be treated with as much confidentiality as possible. However, in order to enable your complaint to be investigated and/or resolved the individuals concerned will have to be made aware of your complaint, and it may not be possible to do this without identifying you.

The knowledge that a complaint has been made will be restricted to the minimum number of people necessary to investigate what happened. All those involved in any complaint must respect this and ensure that they are sensitive to the needs of both the complainant and the alleged harasser/bully.

All involved in investigating a complaint will do so impartially and make no inferences that either party is at fault until the investigation is complete. Breaches of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action.

11. Review

This Dignity at Work Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024 minute no. TC 24/XX.

Future reviews will be carried out annually or when any changes are made, whichever is sooner.

12. References

- National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
- Society of Local Councils & Clerks (SLCC)
- Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils (DAPTC)
- South West Councils Bullying and Harassment Policy checked April 2023

Appendix 1 –

Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment related to a protected characteristic could include;

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age** or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.
- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender, or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant persons stomach.
- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles, or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals dress or appearance.
- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Our Commitment

- 1.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') is committed to being an effective equal opportunities organisation in terms of recruitment, employment, provision of Council services and avoiding unlawful discrimination.
- 1.2. This policy is intended to assist the Council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.
- 1.3. Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

2. The Law

- 2.1. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. These are known as 'protected characteristics'.
- 2.2. Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.
- 2.3. The Council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

3. Types of Unlawful Discrimination

- 3.1. **Direct discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

- 3.2. **Indirect discrimination** is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

3.3. Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

3.4. Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

3.5. Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

3.6. Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

3.7. Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

4. Equal Opportunities in Employment

4.1. The Council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

5. Recruitment

5.1. Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

6. Working Practices

6.1. The Council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the Council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The

Council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The Council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

7. Equal Opportunities Monitoring

7.1. The Council will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

7.2. The Council treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the Data Protection Policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the Council's Privacy Notices.

8. Dignity at Work

8.1. The Council has a separate Dignity at Work Policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

9. People not employed by the Council

9.1. The Council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the Council.

9.2. You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the Council who will take appropriate action.

10. Training

10.1. The Council will raise awareness of equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

10.2. The Council will raise awareness of all staff engaged to work at the Council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the Dignity at Work Policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

11. Your Responsibilities

11.1. Every employee is required to assist the Council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

11.2. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or members of the public are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

12. Grievances

- 12.1. If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the Council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the Dignity at Work Policy.
- 12.2. The Council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

13. Monitoring and Review

- 13.1. This policy will be monitored periodically by the Council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, the Council will monitor the ethnic and gender composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups. If changes are required, the Council will implement them.
- 13.2. Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

14. Policy Statements

The Council will:

14.1. Age

- ensure people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure people who want to work are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities; and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people

14.2. Disability

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure a person with a disability whether physical or mental impairment have access to our services and employment opportunities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people; and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, Braille facilities, alternative formatting, and sign language interpretation

14.3. Gender Reassignment

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination
- offer equal access to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same; and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment

14.4. Marriage or Civil Partnership

- ensure people are treated with respect and dignity and a positive image is promoted regardless
- challenge discriminatory assumptions of our employees; and
- ensure no individual is disadvantaged and we take into account the needs of our employees'

14.5. Pregnancy and Maternity

- ensure people are treated with respect and dignity and a positive image is promoted regardless
- challenge discriminatory assumptions of our employees; and
- ensure no individual is disadvantaged and we take into account the needs of our employees'

14.6. Race

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents; and
- actively promote race equality in the Council

14.7. Religion or Belief

- ensure employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible; and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others

14.8. Sexual Orientation

- ensure we consider the needs of gay, lesbian or bisexual people; and
- promote positive images of gay, lesbians and bisexuals

14.9. Ex-offenders

- prevent discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults)

14.10. Equal Pay

- ensure all employees, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value

15. Review

15.1. This Equality and Diversity Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX..

15.2. Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

16. References

- Data Protection Act 2018 –
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>
- Equality Act 2010 -
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Council's Disciplinary Procedure
- Council's Dignity at Work Policy
- Council's Safeguarding Policy
- Council's Data Privacy Notice
- Council's Grievance Procedure
- Civility & Respect Pledge
- South West Councils Equal Opportunities Policy checked in August 2021



Corfe Mullen Town Council

Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') delivers a wide variety of services and functions which can bring employees, councillors and volunteers into contact with a wide variety of people. This could be either as the main part of their role or indirectly when they are carrying out their work such as during home visits, working outdoors in a public space or seeing members of the public in Council buildings.
- 1.2. Everyone who is vulnerable has the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. A person's ability to keep themselves safe is partly determined by their individual circumstances and it is recognised that this may change at different stages in a person's life. The Council is committed to safeguarding all vulnerable people using any of its services and being involved in any of its activities and to treat them with respect.
- 1.3. The Council recognises that we all have a responsibility to protect vulnerable people and has developed this policy to ensure that effective practices are in place for all the Council's activities.
- 1.4. The Council has a duty to co-operate with other agencies and authorities to promote the well-being of children and young people. Dorset Council is the lead agency for the protection of vulnerable people.

2. Aim

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to set out the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and how this will be implemented by the Council in the discharge of its duties.
- 2.2. All children and adults at risk have a right to protection and freedom from abuse or exploitation, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage or racial culture, religious belief, sexual orientation, economic status or otherwise. The Council recognise the need to ensure their welfare when they encounter the services provided.
- 2.3. This policy applies to all Council staff members, all councillors and all those organisations who have a working relationship with the Council.
- 2.4. This policy will set out the following:
 - the Council's approach to the safeguarding of its clients
 - the ways in which the Council does this
 - the steps taken to avoid abuse taking place
 - the actions that will be taken by the Council to deal with abuse if it occurs

3. Scope of Policy

- 3.1. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff who, during their role have direct or indirect contact with vulnerable people, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- 3.2. Children and young people are defined as those aged under 18.
- 3.3. A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over:

- who is, or may be, in need of community care services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability
- who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation, e.g., a person who:
 - is frail due to age
 - is suffering from mental illness or dementia
 - has drug or alcohol problems
 - has a learning disability
 - has mental or physical ill health or disability
 - has sensory loss e.g., hearing/sight impairment

3.4. Vulnerability is related to how able an adult is to make and exercise their own informed choice, free from duress or undue influence, and to protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

3.5. An adult should be assumed to be covered by this policy unless there is information to indicate that they are not.

4. Types of Abuse

4.1. 'No Secrets' produced by the Department for Health in 2000 describes abuse as 'a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. There are seven categories of abuse:

4.2. **Physical:** causing physical harm, including hitting, shaking, biting, grabbing, withholding food or drink, force-feeding, wrongly administering medicine, unnecessary restraint, failing to provide physical care and aids to living.

4.3. **Sexual:** including sexual assault, rape, inappropriate touching/molesting, forcing or enticing someone into sexual acts they don't understand or feel powerless to refuse; grooming a child or young person in preparation for abuse.

4.4. **Emotional or psychological:** persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection, including verbal abuse, shouting, swearing, threatening abandonment or harm, isolating, taking away privacy or other rights, bullying/intimidation, blaming, belittling, silencing, controlling or humiliating.

4.5. **Financial or material:** illegal or improper use of an adult's property, money or other assets without their informed consent or where the consent is obtained by fraud. It can include withholding money or possessions, theft of money or property, fraud, intentionally mismanaging finances, borrowing money and not repaying.

4.6. **Neglect:** persistent or severe failure to meet a person's basic physical and psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of their health or development, and can include withholding shelter, food, drink, heating and clothing, failing to provide access to health, social and educational services, ignoring physical care needs, exposing a person to unacceptable risk, failing to ensure adequate supervision or unresponsiveness to the basic emotional needs of a child.

4.7. **Discriminatory:** including slurs, harassment and maltreatment due to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

4.8. **Institutional:** including the use of systems and routines which neglect a person receiving formal care e.g., in a children's home.

5. Signs of Abuse

5.1. There are many possible signs of abuse, none being conclusive on their own e.g.:

- unexplained injury/weight loss/cuts and bruises/dirtiness
- changes in behaviour
- depression/low self-esteem
- lack of self-care/dehydration/abnormal eating pattern
- harm to self
- obsessive behaviour
- bills not being paid
- an overly critical or disrespectful carer who may bully or undermine
- isolation from usual network of friends, family or community

6. Safeguarding

6.1 Safeguarding children from abuse and promoting their welfare means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

6.2 Safeguarding vulnerable adults means protecting them from maltreatment and preventing injury or significant harm. Abuse violates an adult's human and civil rights. It can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

6.3 A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere – at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.

7. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

7.1 We all have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns over the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults. This extends to the identification of signs of abuse; poor practice by staff, councillors and others acting for or on behalf of the Council, and allegations brought to the Council's attention by a member of the public. Reporting safeguarding concerns can prevent serious abuse or harm from happening, or from escalating.

7.2 Staff, councillors and volunteers must not attempt to investigate abuse themselves; neither must they confront anyone who is allegedly responsible for abuse nor tell them that allegations have been made about them.

7.3 Report safeguarding allegations or concerns to Dorset Council's Children's and Adults Services at the earliest possible opportunity, at least within 24 hours.

7.4 Contact the Police if a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be in imminent danger or a criminal offence may have been committed.

7.5 On reporting a concern as much information should be provided as possible, e.g.:

- the child, young person or vulnerable adult's name and address (and parents'/carers' address if different)
- the reason for concern – a note of significant events or conversations should be made as promptly as possible to assist with any referral and subsequent investigation. Evidence such as social media entries should be preserved
- any other known factors which may be contributing to the problem
- additional information such as age (or date of birth), ethnicity, religion, language and disabilities/ specific needs

7.6 The safeguarding concern should still be reported whether the information is complete.

8. Confidentiality, Record Keeping and Sharing Information

8.1 Information about safeguarding concerns should be regarded as confidential. The information is not secret, and the Council will co-operate with investigations by Dorset Council's Children's and Adults services, or the Police as applicable, and follow their advice to ensure that any risk to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults is addressed.

8.2 Where a disclosure is made it is important that the staff or councillors do not promise the child/young person/vulnerable adult to keep the information secret, but that they will only disclose it to someone who can help them.

8.3 It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child or vulnerable person, their family and any child protection investigation that may follow.

9. Allegations against a councillor or member of staff

9.1 If someone witnesses behaviour by a councillor, member of staff, contractor or partner, or an allegation is made about them that indicates that they have, or may have:

- harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or put them at risk of harm
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult or behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults

They must report it as a safeguarding concern to the Police and/or Dorset Council's Children's and Adults Services at the earliest possible opportunity.

9.2 A councillor or member of staff must report any allegation made against them to the Town Clerk or Chair of the Council.

9.3 Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure including in instances where the member of staff resigns or leaves. However, investigations by the responsible authorities will take precedence over internal Council procedures relating to conduct. The Town Clerk, Chair of the Council or Chair of the Staffing Committee will liaise with the responsible authorities to agree the appropriate course of action.

9.4 The Town Clerk, Chair of the Council or Chair of the Staffing Committee will seek advice from Dorset Council's Children's and Adults Services or Police prior to informing a member of staff of

an allegation against them. The Town Clerk, Chair of the Council or Chair of the Staffing Committee will offer appropriate welfare support to the member of staff and ensure that they are kept appropriately informed during any investigation process.

9.5 In accordance with the law, the Council will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff:

- who was dismissed because they harmed a child or adult
- who was dismissed or removed from working in a regulated activity because they might have harmed a child or adult otherwise
- who would have been dismissed for either of these reasons, but they resigned first; or
- who works with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity and has been cautioned or convicted for a relevant offence

9.6 Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to councillors will be referred to Dorset Council's Monitoring Officer and dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

10. Recruitment and Selection

10.1 Criminal record checks will be made where appropriate.

10.2 Roles that involve 'regulated activities', such as caring for, supervising or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults, require an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check.

10.3 This may include checking whether someone is included in the two DBS 'barred lists' of individuals who are unsuitable for working with children and adults. DBS Checks must be obtained for staff and volunteers undertaking these roles, and they will not be permitted to commence unaccompanied work until they have been received.

10.4 It is against the law for employers to employ someone, or allow them to volunteer for, this kind of work if they know they are on one of the barred lists.

11. Information and Training

11.1 Appropriate information will be made available to staff and councillors in the form of this policy and any necessary training.

12. External organisation licensed by, or working with, for, or on behalf of the Council

12.1 The Council works with and through several external organisations such as: charities, contractors, other public sector bodies etc.

12.2 Where these external organisations are likely to have significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults as a direct result of their work for, on behalf of, or in partnership with the Council, they are required to have safeguarding procedures, such as safe recruitment and selection processes, in place.

12.3 They must be made aware of this policy and must provide the Council with a copy of their safeguarding procedure.

13. How to make a safeguarding adults alert/referral

- 13.1 If you're an adult experiencing abuse or neglect, or if you're concerned about an adult possibly experiencing abuse or neglect, contact Dorset Council's Adult Services. Further information is available on the Dorset Council's web site:
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/care-and-support-for-adults>

14. How to make a safeguarding children and young people alert/referral

- 14.1 Details of Dorset Council's Children's Service can be found:
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/contact-childrens-services>
- 14.2 If there is an immediate issue of safety, then the Police should be contacted.

15. Useful Contacts

- 15.1 Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership -
<https://pdscp.co.uk/>
- 15.2 NSPCC -
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

16. Review

- 16.1 This Safeguarding Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on XX May 2024, minute no. TC 24/XX.
- 16.2 Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

17. References

- Care Act 2014
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018 –
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted/data.htm>
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>
- Department of Health and Social Care – 'No Secrets' Guidance -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-secrets-guidance-on-protecting-vulnerable-adults-in-care>
- Council's Disciplinary Procedure
- Council's Grievance Procedure



CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL – REPORT

Meeting Date: 28 May 2024

Agenda Item: TC 24/35

Paper: L

Subject:	Items requiring Approval
Prepared By:	Rachel Virrill, Deputy Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To Approve and/or Retrospectively Approve Items
Background:	Various items requiring retrospective approval or approval as listed.
Key Points:	<p>1. Retrospective approval of installation of electricity meter at the Grounds Unit: Following discussions at the Full Council meeting on 23 April 2024 relating to the high cost of utility bills received from the Scouts, a quotation was emailed to Councillors to request approval to proceed with the following quotation received from a trusted Electrician:</p> <p>Scope of work: To install a new in-line sub-meter for the electrical supply to allow the Town Council to know exactly how many kWh are being used in the Grounds Unit from the electricity supplied from the scouts hut. Total cost of £249.99+VAT</p> <p>2. Retrospective approval of EICR remedial works at Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground Sports Pavilion: We have recently engaged with a contractor to carry out a full Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) of the sports pavilion, previously known as Fixed Wire Testing. This must be carried out every 5 years. The inspection was completed with a report issued which highlighted a number of issues that need to resolved as soon as possible to ensure compliance of the building. A quotation was provided as follows:</p> <p>Scope of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrade DB1 & DB2 and merge into 1x new TPN panel with type A RCBO & SPD protection for all circuits, including installing extra RCBOs for the double tagged circuits.• Replace the lighting contractor box which has a broken lid and a hole in the side.• Replace the male WC surface 1g switch which has a hole in the side.• Replace the non-IP rated LED batton in shower changing room two for a new non-corrosive LED IP rated fitting.• Replace the 1g metal clad switch which has an incorrect plate supplying the shower room light in changing room two for a new unit.• Install support fixings on the 1x unsupported cable in the old immersion heater cupboard.• Investigate and locate the loading of circuit 13.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace one times cracked surface double socket in the hallway by room 10. <p>Total cost of £2610.00+VAT</p> <p>3. Approval of installation of water meter at the Grounds Unit: In addition to the quotation for an electricity meter at the Grounds Unit, a quotation has been received to install a water meter to measure water usage at the Grounds Unit as follows:</p> <p>Scope of work: To supply and install new water meter. To test the works on completion and to leave in good working order.</p> <p>Total cost of £160.83+VAT</p> <p>4. Retrospective approval for Corfe Mullen United Juniors event at the Recreation Ground Request received from Corfe Mullen United Juniors Football Club (CMUJ) to hold their annual end of season presentation at the Recreation Ground on Saturday, 27 April 2024. This was emailed out to Councillors for approval.</p> <p>Event schedule as follows: 9:15am – Football matches, refereed by under 16 players 11:30am – Presentation, with trophies kept under small gazebo. PA system used whilst awarding prizes. Sale of food and drinks, gas barbeque on concreted area between Sports Pavilion and Guides building as a method of fundraising for the club. 12:30pm – Event ends.</p> <p>5. Retrospective approval for Corfe Mullen Beavers to Complete Gardening Badge at the Allotment site The Allotment Association was approached by a plot holder whose son attends a Beaver Group at Corfe Mullen Scout hut enquiring as to the viability of the group visiting the allotment site to assist them with their gardening badge.</p> <p>The request is for a group of approximately 15 beavers to visit the site one evening for an hour, with their group leaders on 6 June 2024 between 5.15pm and 6.15pm.</p> <p>Activities would include sowing seeds, tour of the site, explaining gardening tools and safe use. Scouts will provide sufficient adult supervision and Allotment Association Committee members will be on site to oversee the visit and activities.</p>
Implications:	<p>The Town Council would be liable if its sites were not compliant with health and safety regulations.</p> <p>Financial impact on the Council by installing meters to monitor usage for future billing from Corfe Mullen Scouts.</p> <p>Not supporting community events would have a negative impact on the Town Council.</p>

	Public liability insurance must be in place for any events held at Town Council sites, along with a risk assessment to be shared with the Town Council office.
Recommendation:	<p>To RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE/APPROVE the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Installation of Electricity Meter at the Grounds Unit at a total cost of £249.99+VAT. 2. EICR remedial works at Corfe Mullen Recreation Ground Sports Pavilion at a total cost of £2610.00+VAT 3. Installation of Water Meter at the Grounds Unit at a total cost of £160.83+VAT. 4. Corfe Mullen United Juniors holding end of season presentation event at the Recreation Ground on 27 April 2024 5. Corfe Mullen Beavers attending the allotment site on 6 June 2024 to Complete Gardening Badge.