

Full Town Council

To: All Town Councillors

Copies: **County Councillors** – Ferguson, Prentice, Seef & S Taylor
District Councillors – Ferguson, Davenport-Ray, Jennings, Pickering, I Taylor & S Taylor
Town Councillors – not a member of this committee
Local Press, Town Council Website & Noticeboard

Agenda for the meeting of the **Town Council** to be held on **Tuesday 23rd July** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Please be aware that meetings may be recorded and made available to the public. Your participation in the meeting indicates your consent to being included in these recordings.

Public Participation

There will be a 10-minute session before the meeting to allow any resident to address the committee on any matter appearing on the agenda for this meeting.

Members of the Full Town Council are hereby summoned to attend this meeting to consider the following business.

C Robson
Town Clerk

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive and note councillor's apologies.

2 Declarations of Interest

To receive from councillor's declarations as to disclosable pecuniary interests and/or non-statutory disclosable interests along with the nature of those interests in relation to any agenda item of this meeting.

3 Minutes

Members to approve the following minutes as a true and accurate record:
Annual Council Meeting held on 25th June 2024.

Attachment 1

4 County and District Councillor Reports

To receive verbal updates or reports from County and District Councillors on matters of significance to St Neots.

5 Committee Minutes

To receive and note draft minutes of meetings of the following committees and sub-committees and (if applicable) to approve recommendations therein which do not arise elsewhere;

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| i) Environment & Emergency Committee held on 2 nd July 2024 | Attachment 2 |
| ii) Planning Committee held on 9 th July 2024 | Attachment 3 |
| iii) Operations and Amenities Committee held on 9 th July 2024 | Attachment 4 |
| iv) Personnel Committee held on 16 th July 2024 | Attachment 5 |
| v) Finance & Governance Committee held on 16 th July 2024 | Attachment 6 |

RESOLVED to RECOMMENDED that that the Council continue to offer free memorial plaques for the Forget-Met-Not Memorial Garden in the future financial years and that the Council consider and budget for the provision of plaques as part of the 2025-26 budget setting process.

Attachment 7

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the updated Financial Regulations as presented subject to the following amendments;

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Section 5.14 be amended to include the Deputy Chairperson of the Finance and Governance Committee as a Councillor who can approve expenditure over £2,000, resulting in approval needed from two of any four named councillors. ii) Section 5.14 be amended to exclude the need for approval of expenditure of £2,000 by nominated councillors when the expenditure has been approved by a committee or the Council and a minuted resolution is in place. | Attachment 8 |
|---|--------------|

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the proposed Tree Maintenance Policy.

Attachment 9

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the Freedom of Information Policy subject to amending section 5.1 to read “including, but not limited to:”

Attachment 10

6 Projects Status Summary

To receive and note a status summary of key capital council projects which will continue to be progressed or have delivery dates over the August Council meeting break.

Attachment 11

- 1) Brickhills/Henbrook Play Area
- 2) Moores Walk Community Garden/Space
- 3) Changing Places Toilet
- 4) Priory Centre Redevelopment
- 5) Museum Building Repair Works
- 6) Temporary Priory Centre and Council Office relocation
- 7) Skate Park Refurbishment
- 8) Splash Park Funding

7 Fixed Asset Register

To receive and note the fixed asset register.

Attachment 12

8 Lease Agreement

To approve the entering of a lease hire agreement for a storage container to support the temporary closure and relocation of the Priory Centre.

Attachment 13

9 20MPH Scheme

To receive an update from the Town Clerk on the Cambridge County Council proposed town wide 20mph scheme.

10 Reports from Outside Bodies

To receive and verbal reports from Members who act as Council representatives on outside bodies.

11 Date of Next Meeting

To note the date of the next Council meeting will be 24th September 2024.

12 Committee In Private Session

RECOMMENDED In terms of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment or contractual matters and it is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

13 Purchase of Asset

To receive a report and recommendation from the Town Clerk on the purchase of an asset and government funding related to that purchase.

Confidential

Full Town Council

Present: Cllrs Slade (Chair), Banks, Bolanz, Chapman, Collins, Cooper-Marsh, Dundas-Todorov, Dunford, Goodman, Hitchin, Johnson, Macnab-Grieve, Mascarenhas, Pitt, Simonis, J Smith and S Smith.

Absent: Cllrs Crompton, Kumar, Maslen, Terry

In attendance: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and RFO

Minutes of the meeting of St Neots Town Council held on **Tuesday 25th June 2024** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public Participation

There were 24 members of the public present. Four members of the public addressed the Council on agenda item 5 the proposed St Neots Splash Park and a funding request to the Council. All four residents spoke in favour of the splash park and while acknowledging the mixed response to the proposal across the community they felt there was wide support from the target demographic. As well as highlighting positives they saw with a splash park, the speakers encouraged the Council to make a decision on the granting of funding, stating that the matter had been going on for a considerable number of years.

ACTIONS

037 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs Kumar, Maslen and Terry.

Admin

038 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Dundas-Todorov declared an interest in agenda item 5 Splash Park Funding request as a Councillor appointed trustee of the CIO.

039 Council Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of 28th May 2024 as a true and accurate record subject to amending that Cllr Maslen had not been proposed and seconded as nomination for Chairperson of the Promotions and Events Committee.

The Chairperson brought agenda item 5 forward on the agenda as a number of residents were present in relation to that matter.

Funding Request – Splash Park

Cllr Simonis, Deputy Chairperson of the Council introduced the item as it had last come to the Council during his term as Chairperson. Cllr Simonis explained that the Council had a duty to act responsibly and with due diligence when committing funding of any level to a project, including external funding for which the Council must be

satisfied the use of public funds is appropriate and will provide long term benefits for residents. The Council must be satisfied that;

- The project is wanted/needed and has public support
- There is a clear understanding on the costs of the project and what this will deliver
- The project offers good value
- The project is sustainable with a long-term viability that ensures protection of Council funds
- The project has a strong commercial basis
- Members needed to consider the application for funding in the same way it did other applications, including risks and assurances

The meeting was also advised there had been a number of legal matters relating to the site that had been investigated and addressed as part of due diligence arising from advice taken by both the Council and the CIO.

The Town Clerk advised the meeting that there was a misconception that the Council was at risk of losing CIL reserves due to 'spend by' time limits associated with contributions received. The Council was not at risk of losing any of its current CIL reserve and funding had already been allocated to projects which addressed any upcoming deadlines over the next year.

Cllr Dundas-Todorov addressed the Council in the capacity of a Council appointed trustee to the St Neots Aquatic and Leisure CIO (SNAL). Cllr Dundas-Todorov spoke on the history of the CIO and its set up in relation to the Council. It was highlighted that there is currently a lot of investment and positive activity in St Neots and the splash park project could play a key part in making St Neots a thriving and active town. The CIO and Council could take this opportunity to work together to find a way of delivering such an asset. A personal thank you was expressed to the CIO trustees for their work over the years.

Cllr Dundas-Todorov withdrew from the Council meeting at 19:44 and did not take part in the debate.

The Chairperson of St Neots Aquatic and Leisure (SNAL) CIO was invited to address the Council and take Councillors question's.

Cllr J Smith left the meeting at 19:55 for personal reasons.

Members raised a number of points in relation to the proposed splash park and the Heads of Terms provided, highlighting the need for detail and agreement on key areas members felt were necessary to the sustainability of the project, including;

- Opening and operational hours and days, particularly minimum requirements that will be placed on the operator
- Costs of entry and the management and limitations of those costs

- How a council funded facility will be kept accessible to all, including entry costs
- Concessions and the freedom of users to take in food and drink
- Clarity on the provision of a toilet block and where this fits in the planned phased delivery of the site
- Permissions on car park usage and assurances that these permissions will continue should operator arrangements change – this was seen as key to the sustainability of the project but was not within the Heads of Terms. With out guaranteed long-term car parking assurances the project is not workable.
- The basis of the lease between the CIO and Eat n Bowl and whether this would be a repairing lease, which was not indicated in the Heads of Terms
- The agreed approach and commitments to maintenance and repair of the site and the responsibility of different parties

Councillors pointed out that a number of key points that needed to be agreed to deliver a sustainable project were missing from the Heads of Terms, particularly assurances on opening hours, car parking and staffing. The Chairperson of the CIO commented that it appeared the Heads of Terms the CIO had provided to the Council may not be the most up to date version. However, as far as the CIO were concerned there was a full-fledged plan which will come forward as a legal agreement which will address and agree the Council's terms.

Members queried running and staffing costs for the facility as set out in the business plan, highlighting what they saw as discrepancies in the figures and seeking clarity on what the predicted running costs would be. Members explained understanding this was key in making sure any funding provided would result in a sustainable facility.

A Member queried whether there were cost differences in the proposed delivery of the site that were different to when the matter was last considered. The Chairperson of the CIO commented that the funding request is based on a fixed price contract from the splash park contractor, but there were increasing project costs which could be managed through an agreement with a contractor temporarily occupying the site to undertake free landscape work. The CIO was working with the company to help lower costs across the project, including through income generated through rent.

The Chairperson acknowledged that there was a discrepancy in the opening hours proposed, with the business plan not matching the planning conditions. It was recognised the Plan needed to be amended to reflect the condition. Members referred to a number of other areas of the Plan which needed updating.

A Member expressed concern at statements made by the Chairperson of the CIO in radio interviews that all information the Council had requested had been provided and that Councillors were not able to understand it. A Councillor commented that they did not recognise this to be the situation, particularly given the Council had requested sight of draft agreements addressing the points and concerns it had previously raised with the CIO which had not been provided.

Members reiterated the risks to the council and public funds, particularly should an agreement on operating the facility provide unworkable in the long term and the facility cease to function.

Members sought assurances that should funding be provided the CIO would draw up and enter into contracts and agreements to satisfy the Council's concerns and meet conditions relating to them, including accepting a grant agreement drawn up by the Council. The Chairperson of the CIO confirmed the CIO would and that legal contracts would be drawn up, including an operating agreement to formally agree actions and terms set out to be signed off by the Council before any money could be drawn down. The CIO had not drawn up agreements to date because it did not want to invest funds in legal costs if there was no support for the project from the Town Council. It was stated the legal costs for the CIO to have agreements drawn up was estimated at £12,000.

A Member commented that the Council could agree to pay for the cost of the CIO's legal work to remove risk to the CIO in spending funds without a confirmation on grant funding.

Proposed that the Town Council defer making a decision on the awarding of any grant funding on the understanding that the Council agrees to pay the legal costs to prepare documentation between the relevant parties at a cost of up to £12,000.

The proposal was not seconded. A Member commented that the Council could reserve funds pending the completion of the documentation asked for and negotiation of conditions.

Proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council allocates £650,000 of funding from its CIL reserve to the St Neots Splash Park project with release of any funding subject to the negotiation and approval by Council of a grant agreement and CIO meeting conditions set out within that agreement, along with a formal operational agreement between the CIO and operator, approval by the Charity Commission that permits the building of a splash park on the site and the updating of the business plan.

A Member clarified that this means the CIO will need to come back to the Council and conditions will need to be agreed and met before any funding could be given to the project.

It was agreed to work towards a December date for formal approval of documents and meeting of conditions.

Committee Minutes

- 052 i) Members received and noted minutes of the Promotion & Events Committee held on 4th June 2024.
- 053 ii) Members received and noted minutes of the Planning Committee held on 11th June 2024.

054 iii) Members received and noted minutes of the Operations and Amenities Committee held on 11th June 2024.

055 iv) Members received and noted minutes of the Extraordinary Environment and Emergency Committee held on 12nd June 2024.

Members considered and resolved the following recommendation from the Environment and Emergency Committee;

056 **RESOLVED** that the Town Council adopt the Climate Action Plan proposed by the Environment and Emergency Committee.

A Member recommended that all councillors review the priority matrix in the document, which was a good summary of the actions set out within the plan.

057 v) Members received and noted minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee held on 18th June 2024.

Members considered and resolved the following recommendations from the Grants Sub-Committee;

058 **RESOLVED** to award £10,000 to Money Advice St Neots towards the provision of drop-in services every Thursday in St Neots and that the Town Council confirm whether funding comes from the 2024-25 Grant Aid budget or the Council's General Reserves

059 **RESOLVED** to award £7,400 to Huntingdon Volunteer Centre towards the delivery and progression of the St Neots Car Scheme and associated support services.

060 vi) Members received and noted minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee held on 18th June 2024.

Members considered and resolved the following recommendations from the Finance and Governance Committee;

061 **RESOLVED** that a budget of £4,000 be allocated to the redesign of the Town Council website. That £1,247 in earmarked reserves for website programming be allocated to the project, along with £2,753 from the General Reserves.

062 **RESOLVED** to allocate £2,626 from the AFD earmarked reserves towards the increased health and safety cost of running the 2024 event and noting a resulting overspend of £1,244 which would come from the Council's General Reserve.

- 063 vii) Members received and noted minutes of the Planning Committee held on 25th June 2024.

Cllr Bolanz left the meeting at 21:26

064 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024
Annual Internal Audit Report

The Council received and noted the completed Annual Internal Audit Report 2023-2024 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 3 and the final internal audit report for the year which had been carried out.

The Council noted that the report had been considered by the Finance and Governance Committee and contains no areas of concern or recommended actions.

065 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024
Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement

The Council considered and approved the statements on the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the 2023-2024 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 3.

RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement for the 2023-24 Financial Year and that the Town Clerk and the Chairperson of the Council are authorised to sign the statement.

066 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024
Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement

The Council considered and approved the Accounting Statement (Section 2) of the 2023-2024 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 3. Members noted and agreed that the Responsible Financial Officer had signed to certify that the Accounting Statement has been prepared following guidance in Governance & Accountability for smaller Authorities.

RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statement (Section 2) of the 2023-2024 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 3 and that the Chairperson of the Council is authorised to sign the statement.

Members noted that the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return will be from 1st July 2024 to 9th August 2024.

067 Reports from Outside Bodies

A Member advised the Council that St Neots Museum had acquired an Anglo Saxon brooch from British museum. This is an exciting and important part of the museum collection which will be going on display in the near future.

A Member advised that the Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre were exploring holding regular online calls for Councillor representatives every quarter as a way of improving accessibility.

068 Date of Next Meeting

Members received and noted that the date of the next Full Council meeting would be 23rd July 2024 at 7:15pm.

069 Private Session

RESOLVED In terms of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment or contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

070 Priory Centre Temporary Closure

The Council received and considered a report and recommendation from the Town Clerk and Priory and Eatons Centre General Manager on entering a short-term lease for a town centre property to facilitate the ongoing operation of hireable community space that will be lost during the Priory Centre temporary closure. Members discussed the proposal, the benefits, opportunities and challenges.

Members noted that officers had investigated several options on where to relocate the Priory Centre and Council teams to during the temporary closure of the building, along with how to support users and the community due to the pressure that the closure will put on hireable community space. The proposal presented was felt to be a sensible approach that allowed the Council to continue to operate a reduced Priory Centre offering while supporting its users and ensuring that valuable community groups and activities continue to operate in St Neots.

The Council recognised the importance of hireable space for groups and the social, cultural and health benefits they offer the community. It was agreed that the move will ensure a flexible town centre based hireable community space, remains available for the community during the redevelopment period when pressure on such space will be increased.

RESOLVED that the Council enter an 18-month lease at the rent set out in the recommendation for a town centre property for the purposes of offering an alternative community venue during the temporary closure of the Priory Centre.

RESOLVED that the Council make an offer as set out in the recommendation for the purchase of assets within the building to allow the Council to transition to and operate from the premises as quickly as is practicable.



AGENDA ITEM 3

Cou

ATTACHMENT 1

T: 01480 388911 E: enquiries@stneeds.co.uk www.stneeds.co.uk

Town Clerk – Chris Robson Town Mayor – Cllr Richard Slade

DRAFT

Environment & Emergency Committee

Present: Committee Members
Cllrs Pitt (Chairperson), Banks, Collins, Dunford, Goodman, Slade and S. Smith

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Environmental Project Officer

Absent: Cllr Bolanz, Simonis

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment & Emergency committee** held on 2nd July 2024 at 7.15pm in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public Participation

There was one member of the public present. No member of the public wished to address the Council.

050 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs Bolanz and Simonis.

ACTIONS

RESOLVED to co-opt Cllr Collins to the meeting.

051 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

052 Minutes

- i) **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Environment and Emergency Committee meeting held on 5th March 2024 as a true and accurate record.
- ii) **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Environment and Emergency Committee meeting held on 12th June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

Action List

Members received and noted the committee action list.

The Environmental Project Officer provided the following updates;

- The advisory flood leaflet was ready and would be shared with the new committee members before being distributed.
- The Biodiversity for all Grant was waiting for HDC to progress, Members noted that this needed to be done before February for seasonal planting reasons.
- The Environmental Project Officer will share plans for the old cemetery for which the funding has been awarded with the new committee members.

Energy Performance Certificates

Members received and considered the results of Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) for Council owned and/or operated buildings. The Environmental Project Officer introduced the report, which gave an overview of the recommendations arising from the assessments. The committee was advised that solar panels were not included in any of the recommendations. The Environmental Project Officer had queried this and was advised that the software produced recommendations with payback periods of less than 7 years, solar pv panels had longer pay back periods.

Members discussed the recommendations arising from the EPCs at length, commenting;

- That the Council needed them for its buildings, but it was difficult to see that the recommendations were measured against cost benefit.
- A key part of committee's work is to look at SNTC buildings and work out what could be improved. Cost benefit is an important part of this as it will give better understanding of what to prioritise.
- Eligibility of grants for heating systems could help make heat pumps more achievable on a cost basis versus benefit basis.
- Heat pumps could be more effective than solar panels for buildings such as the Gate Lodge when grants and cost benefit are taken into consideration.
- Including batteries in solar pv solutions may improve paypack periods.

Members felt that there was still value in having an external company carry out an audit of council buildings (owned and operated) and provide recommendations, action pathway and industry costs on which priorities could be based and more detailed quotes than obtained.

Members commented that it was important to understand the carbon stock and level of each council building and have cost of getting those buildings to an improved position through estimates from an auditing company. This would provide more understanding on scale of challenge.

The Environmental Project Officer expressed caution with engaging an external company to undertake such an audit based on the results of previous similar work arranged by the Council, which was not as detailed as the officer would have liked.

It was agreed that it would be better to commission reports or obtain examples of audit reports from potential companies so their value could be assessed prior to going out to engage companies.

It was agreed that the Environmental Project Officer investigate reports and quotes with other auditing companies, with Members acknowledging that they did not want to spend money on reports that don't help. Companies should be asked what information and data they produce along with examples of outcome reports.

It was agreed that the Environmental Project Officer would liaise with the Committee Chair and Deputy Chair in investigating further.

Solar panels

Members received and considered a recommendation from the Operations and Amenities Committee that the Environment and Emergency Committee further consider and recommend an approach to solar panels in the wider context of the Council's estate. This arose from a request by a tenant of a Council owned building to partner with the Council on the installation of the panels.

Members commented as follows;

- As a public body the Council should actively support tenants wanting to improve the environmental impact of their companies. However, there needed to be a clear understanding of how this would work regarding Council tenants, costs and paybacks.
- The Council should look to improve environmental credentials of all buildings in its stock irrelevant of who owns it. However, where there is a commercial tenant, the Council should recoup energy savings by increased rent. An agreement on an amount whereby the Council gets a slower pay back and the tenant makes some savings would be the best outcome. However, it was acknowledged that lease lengths and break clauses do add a complicated factor.
- The Committee should consider and be clear on where it wants to prioritise its investment, would heat pumps for example have more impact than solar panels.
- Members debated the impact of heat pumps and the value versus benefit for certain buildings, noting any actions need to be accompanied with improving insulation. It was felt that the Committee had to consider and plan for all elements, not just solar panels and there should be a decision made on best value and biggest impact.
- The Council was more likely to be successful in securing grant funding for energy improvements.

The Committee commented that if the Council wants to move all buildings towards net zero by 2030 it needs a plan that measured the benefit of several solutions and that this should include supporting tenants to make improvements. This support should be commensurate to the situation of the tenant. A default solution may be from the Council to improve the buildings efficiency with a rent review and increase to pay towards such costs, with this coming from savings made by the tenants in utilities.

It was agreed that in the case of Gate Lodge heat pumps were worth investigating, as these may be more beneficial once grant funding is taken into account. However, it must be remembered the Council has 7 buildings it needs to consider and act on.

Carbon offsetting

Members received and considered a report on carbon offsetting options that the Council may wish to use in their efforts to work towards Net Carbon Zero by 2030. The purpose of the report was to help frame discussions on whether the Council should include offsetting as part of its approach to reaching carbon net-zero.

Members discussed the report at length, key comments raised included;

- If the Council is to include offsetting into its approach it should not leave this too late but should not rush into it if more local based actions might be better than offsetting.
- If the Council is a long way off carbon net zero at a certain agreed point, it may be that we need to look at its inclusion to help reach net-zero.
- Carbon offsetting will be needed to assist reaching net zero, but it would not be a solution.
- Recommendations on what good offsetting looks like are compelling. Locally planting trees is more measurable and impactful for a community.
- Public view needs to be considered; the first thing the Council takes action on should not be carbon credits.
- Buildings and transport are biggest focuses for the Council and this is where action should focus ahead of carbon offsetting.
- Use of environmental infrastructure should be considered, particularly where there are options for wetlands, noting that any actions should not significantly alter the biodiversity of an area by creating something that wasn't historically there.

It was noted that the Environmental Project Officer was working on a carbon accounting tool to calculate the Council's base carbon level. To have carbon accounting for physical use of the buildings and running of building then have base to do timeline. Reduce our emissions by certain amount, pair with priorities in CAP and put in timeline.

The committee agreed that it needed to come up with a recommended position on offsetting and what we are going to do about it. It was felt that the Council should press forward with actions to improve its building's efficiency and measure the impact of this before reviewing and making a commitment on offsetting.

Members noted the document and the information it provided and would revisit carbon offsetting as it continued to develop and progress actions set out in the adopted Climate Action Plan.

Date of Next Committee Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next committee meeting would be 10th September 2024 at 6:15pm.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

DRAFT



Planning Committee

Present: Committee Members
Cllrs Slade (Chairperson), Collins, Cooper-Marsh, Dunford, Hitchin, Maslen and Pitt

Absent: Cllrs Terry

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Senior Administrator

Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning committee** held on **Tuesday 9th July 2024** at **6.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

022 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

ACTIONS

023 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

024 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 25th June 2024.

Admin

025 Public Participation

There were four members of the public present. Two of the members of the public addressed the Council on application 24/01012/HHFUL.

Residents raised concerns over the potential noise of the air source heat pump to which the application refers. The proposed heat pump, which requires permission due to its noise level, is right on a property boundary with a neighbouring property without any sound installation. Residents confirmed they have submitted comments to HDC. The residents addressing the Council stated that they believe the decibels of the proposed machinery exceeds regulated decibels, which should be below 42 decibels. The residents stated they were not against the principle of the proposed heat pump, but due to the noise feel its position and impact should be re-considered.

026 Schedule of Current Planning Applications

Members considered the schedule of planning applications, and their responses are appended to these minutes.

Admin

027 Street Naming and Numbering

Members noted the allocation of addressing to a new dwelling at Milestone Close, Eaton Ford which is to be known as:
1A MILESTONE CLOSE, EATON FORD, ST NEOTS, PE19 7DA



Residential Disabled Parking Bay Application

Members noted an application to install a disabled persons parking bay for a resident in Duck Lane, St Neots

Development Management Committee

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is to take place on Monday 15th July 2024 and there are no matters relating to St Neots on the agenda.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

DRAFT

Schedule of Planning Applications – 9th July 2024

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
The following application/s are for listed building consent				
The following application/s are in a conservation area				
S1	24/01034/FUL	Mr Anshul Raja 58 - 62 High Street St Neots PE19 1JQ Installation of six new rooflights.	SUPPORT	In keeping with the locality. Minimum impact on neighbours.
S2	24/00634/FUL	Andy Brown – Longhurst Group 1 - 9 Phoenix Square St Neots Replacement windows timber to uPVC/ sliding sash to standard casement but using dummy transoms to maintain appearance.	SUPPORT	Fits in with the local street scene.
S3	24/00635/FUL	Andy Brown – Longhurst Group 1A - 17B Bedford Street St Neots Renewal of windows, change of material from timber to uPVC, colour to stay the same. Change from a sliding sash to standard casement but using dummy transoms to maintain appearance.	SUPPORT JD Abstained	Fits in with local street scene.
S4	24/01089/TREE	Ms Sue Bedford 157 Great North Road Eaton Socon St Neots T1 Copper Beach - The tree is growing well over and onto the roof of the neighbouring property, affecting the light and will also start causing damage to the roof. We want to cut the smaller branches that are touching the side of the house, window, and roof back to the wall. This is about 3 meters. We also want to reduce the remaining side by 2-3 meters about a 3rd of they way up where it will joint the remaining crown. The lower section over the house sticks out 3 meters more than the rest of the tree.	SUPPORT	Subject to HDC Arboricultural Officer approval.
All other applications				
S5	24/01012/HHFUL	Mr Peter Curtis 11 Stevenson Court Eaton Ford St Neots Installation of air source heat pump	OBJECT Abstained BP, RS	Based on a lack of understanding of the specific air source heat pump and the decimals and impact this will have on noise levels to neighbouring properties.

Schedule of Planning Applications – 9th July 2024

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
				Noise and disturbance resulting from use.
S6	24/01102/HHFUL	Ann & Kate Knight 12 Caldecote Road Eynesbury St Neots Erection of single storey side extension to dwelling.	SUPPORT	Satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.

Chairperson

Operations & Amenities Committee

Present: Cllrs Goodman (Chairperson), Bolanz, Chapman, Collins, Cooper-Marsh, Dunford, Hitchin and Maslen

In attendance: Town Clerk, Operations Manager

Absent: Cllr Johnson

Minutes of the meeting of the **Operations & Amenities committee** held on **Tuesday 9th July** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public Participation

There is one member of the public present.

ACTIONS

025 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted from Cllr Johnson.

Admin

026 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Goodman declared an interest in agenda item 9 as an allotment plot holder.

027 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Operations and Amenities Committee held on 11th June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

The Chairperson brought agenda items 6, 7 and 8 forward to allow public and staff present to speak on those matters address the council first.

028 Action list

Members received the committee action list. Members noted the action list and raised a query about repair to the Jubilee mosaic. A Member raised a query over repairs to the jubilee mosaic and whether the artist had responded to the Operations Manager. It was confirmed that the artist had provided a cost for assessing damage to the mosaic and putting together a proposal for repair. The cost was within delegated authority from revenue budgets and officers would progress the matter.

029 Local Highways Improvement Bids 2024-25

Members received and noted an update on noncomplex LHI applications submitted as part of the 2024-25 application window, which are due to be considered by Cambridgeshire County Council in September 2024.



The Clerk would liaise with the LHI Working Group to call a meeting in August to consider 2025 applications.

030 Forget-Me-Not Memorial Garden

Members received and considered a report from the Council's senior administrator on the provision of free memorial plaques under the regulations for the Forget-Me-Not baby loss memorial garden.

A representative of the Working Group which brought forward the Memorial Garden and the supporting policy/regulations addressed the committee, outlining the matter and recommendation of the report. It was explained that the Council's policy for the Memorial Garden stated that plaques for baby loss would be offered free of charge and this had been based on a generous offer from a funeral company to provide the plaques. Unfortunately, the plaques were unsuitable and alternatives which are more appropriate for the outdoor setting and longevity have been sourced. There is a cost of £35 per plaque, but due to donations from external company's the Council can continue to offer the plaques for free during the current financial year. However, the Council will need to consider if it amends its policy for future years or continues to offer free plaques at a cost to the Council.

Members discussed the matter at length, discussing the importance of the plaques and the value and difference they make to grieving parents. However, the need for ensuring comparability with other memorials was also raised. It was suggested that a subsidised approach could be more appropriate than fully funding plaques. Members also commented that a charge doesn't balance out emotional impact and examples were shared of the positive impact the plaques had made.

It was proposed and seconded that the council continue to offer free baby-loss memorial plaques for the Forget-Me-Not Garden and that the Council budget for this in its 2024-25 budget setting process.

A point of clarification was raised around applications from outside the parish and it was noted that applications are only eligible from residents.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council continue to offer free memorial plaques for the Forget-Me-Not Memorial Garden in the future financial years and that the Council consider and budget for the provision of plaques as part of the 2025-26 budget setting process.

031 Burial Regulations

The Town Clerk introduced the draft Burial Regulations and the purpose for bringing these forward for review. The Senior Administrator advised that the aim of the policy was to clarify and be transparent in our rules and expectations for undertakers,



masons and residents. Once the regulations are approved shorter supporting versions highlighting key areas for targeted recipients will be produced.

Members considered the regulations, which were large and detailed documents. Due to the size of the documents, it was felt that more time was needed for Members to fully read and consider the regulations and their implications.

RESOLVED to defer the review of St Neots Town Council Burial Regulations until September 2024.

Members were asked to consider the documents and submit any queries or questions to the Senior Administrator ahead of the September 2024 committee meeting.

032 Memorial Bench and Tree Policy

Members received and considered a draft memorial bench and tree policy. It was explained that the policy had been amended to include memorial trees within the policy. Officers will continue to assess and develop the list of suitable locations and availability for memorial trees and benches and will update the policy in line with this. Members queried the requirement to remove items on benches or hanging from memorial trees. It was explained that while it was understood to be a very sensitive matter, benches are for public use and the Council must be careful to avoid health and safety risks that arise from things such as string lights, ribbons etc. These also cause maintenance issues and can pose a risk to wildlife.

A Member commented that the Council needs to strike a balance between a desire for benches and ensuring cemeteries and public spaces are attractive.

RESOLVED to defer the review of the Memorial Bench and Tree policy until September 2024.

Members were asked to consider the policy and submit any queries or questions to the Senior Administrator ahead of the September 2024 committee meeting.

033 Allotments

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk on concerns raised by an allotment holder in relation to plot rent increases and areas of maintenance.

Members noted the following points;



Mowing of paths

Concern had been raised that mowing of allotment paths at the Cemetery Road site had been reduced to only mowing the main path between the two entrance gates and not paths between plots.

It was explained that section 2.1 of tenancy agreements schedule stated; “The Tenant shall keep every hedge that is planted on their allotment properly cut and trimmed, all pathways between plots trimmed and well maintained up to the nearest half with by each adjoining tenant.”

The Operations Manager advised that the Council stopped cutting in between paths some time ago following a meeting with Allotment Association at the time (at an AGM) where the association requested the Council only cut the main pathway.

The Council is not able to use a push mower on the paths between the lots due to the narrow width of the paths. The Council did use to trim between the paths but received a lot of complaints about damage to plants/crops and property as a result of the strimming.

The main path through the allotment site is cut at the same time the St Neots cemetery is cut, meaning it would usually be cut every 2 to 3 weeks during the cutting season.

Lack of security

Concern had been raised over a lack of security at the Cemetery Road allotment site and that the fencing line has a lot of gaps.

The committee previously considered costs for installing perimeter security fencing at the site, which was quoted at approximately £15,000 for which there was no agreed budget. The Operations Manager confirmed he would address gaps in fencing by using stakes, wires and planting hedges which can help improve security and add to wider improvements in planting and biodiversity on council sites.

Vacant Plots

There have been a number of empty plots which left untended spread weed seeds to other areas. Plots may not be vacant, but unattended by the allotment holder who is still paying rent for that plot. Members heard that there is a process that must be followed to evict allotment plot holders who are not tending their plots, which must include suitable notice periods and opportunities for the allotment holder to act.

It was confirmed that there are currently four vacant plots and two which are being allocated to community groups. All four allotment plots have been offered to



interested persons on the waiting list and confirmations on taking up the plots are awaited.

Rent Increase

Concern had been raised regarding the large percentage rent increase for allotment rents from 2024/25. Members noted that the Council like all organisations is facing increases across its budgets, including utilities and staffing. The committee felt that rather than implementing smaller, incremental increases year on year, it is more practical and transparent to have one larger increase, helping stabilise the fees for a longer period. This was in part due to the requirement to write to allotment holders annually to advise of rent increases, which incurred costs higher than the actual rent increase itself.

Members debated the period in which the rent should be stabilised and it was proposed and seconded that the Council do not look to review and increase the allotment rents again in the life of this Council, which would mean the earliest the rates will be reviewed would be 2027.

RESOLVED that following that large increase in allotment rents in 2024 the committee does not review and put forward further increases during the life of the current Council, assuming there are no major specific capital costs incurred in relation to the allotments.

034 Brickhill Play Area

- i) Members received and noted a report on the installation of a new inclusive seesaw at Brickhills, which the Council had resolved to purchase and install. It was noted that work was currently scheduled to start on 29th July 2024. Works would take approximately a week and a half. Members requested that notices be displayed at the site during the works which advise residents of what is happening and the estimated timeframes.
- ii) Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk and Operations Manager on surfacing for an accessible picnic bench. Members noted that costs of the surfacing for two options, one permeable tarmac and one for rubber mulch. The costs for both options were similar, but the rubber mulch was cheaper than other similar safety matting solutions due to it being included in works by the contractor installing the seesaw, who would already be on site.

Members commented that the Council needs to look at the best environmental options for such works, not necessarily the cheapest.

RESOLVED that officers progress with rubber mulch surfacing and connecting paths for the Brickhills accessible picnic table within delegated play park maintenance budgets.



035 Tree Maintenance Policy

Members received and considered a draft tree maintenance policy for comment. The Clerk commented that the purpose of the policy was to guide the Operations team and residents on how and when the Council would maintain its tree stock. It was not the intention that this policy would cover planting of trees, which would be look at separately under the Climate Action Plan. The Environmental Officer had reviewed the policy. A Member commented that they thought the policy was sensible and proposed it be recommended to Council for adoption.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the draft Tree Maintenance Policy.

036 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next Operations and Amenities Committee would be on 10th September 2024 at 7.15pm.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Personnel Committee

Present: **Committee Members**
Cllrs Simonis (Chairperson), Collins, Johnson, Mascarenhas

In Attendance: Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk

Absent: Chapman, Dundas-Todorov, Kumar, Pitt, Slade

Minutes of the meeting of the **Personnel Committee** held on **Tuesday 16th July 2024** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public participation

There were no members of the public present.

027 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Dundas-Todorov, Kumar, Pitt and Slade.

ACTIONS

028 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

029 Election of Deputy Chairperson

The Chairperson called for nominations for the role of Deputy Chairperson of the Personnel Committee.

Cllr Chapman was nominated and seconded.

Cllr Mascarenhas was nominated and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr Mascarenhas be elected to serve as Deputy Chairperson of the Personnel Committee for the 2024/25 Council year.

030 Minutes

RESOLVED that to approve the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 5th March 2024 as a true and accurate record.

031 Clerk's Management Panel

The Committee noted the terms of reference for the Clerk's Management Committee.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Smith be appointed to act as the third member of the Clerk's management panel along with the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee and the Chairperson of the Council.

032 Youth Worker Policies

Members received and considered the following draft policies brought forward by the Council's Engagement and Participation Youth Worker.

- i) Worker (Volunteer) supervision policy
- ii) Behaviour Policy – Youth Provision

Members highlighted the need to check terminology in both policies and ensure these correctly reflect the set up of the Council and the role of the Clerk in both policies.

Members discussed the Behaviour Policy and queried how this would address digital forms of communication. It was explained that the policy on the agenda was focused on the delivery of youth sessions and the behaviour at those sessions. A separate policy was to be brought forward which includes digital and online communication (texts, emails etc). The Deputy Town Clerk was working with the Council's Youth Worker to ensure the policies worked with and supported existing Town Council communications policies.

It was requested that reference be made in the Behaviour Policy to the digital communication policy.

Members discussed the disciplinary stages set out in the Behaviour Policy, which did not read well and needed some amendments to ensure the policy was clear and easy to implement correctly. The policy refers to use of a red/amber/green system, while also referring to 'four colour coded disciplinary stages. It was suggested this was because a 'Verbal Challenge' was not recorded and therefore not part of the red/amber/green system. Clarity would be sought, and the policy amended accordingly.

Members feedback would be given to the Engagement and Participation Youth Worker and amended policies would be taken to the Finance and Governance Committee.

033 Staffing Appointments

Member received and noted a report from the Town Clerk on recent appointments to the Town Council staffing team. Members noted;

- The appointment of a Sessional Youth Worker on a part time fixed term contract in a role developed by the Personnel Committee and agreed by the Full Council.
- The appointment of a Project Development Manager on a full-time permanent contract in a role developed by the Personnel Committee and agreed by the Full Council.
- The offer of employment to a Maintenance Technician who is due to start in July to fill a vacancy in the team.
- That there remains a Maintenance Technician vacancy in the operations team which continues to put pressure on resource.

The committee noted the staffing organisational chart for St Neots Town Council.

034 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next scheduled Personnel Committee meeting would be 6:15pm on 16th July 2024.

035 Committee in Private Session



RESOLVED that in terms of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

036 Priory Centre Redevelopment

Members received and noted a verbal report from the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk on the progress of staff consultations linked to the temporary closure of the Priory Centre as part of proposed refurbishment works. The consultation was nearing its conclusion and the next steps were underway with the Council's HR provider.

Committee Chairperson

Finance & Governance Committee

Present: Cllrs Chapman, Collins, Goodman, Cooper-Marsh (Chair), and Hitchin

Absent: Cllrs Banks, Kumar, Maslen and Pitt.

In attendance: Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer

Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance & Governance committee** held on **Tuesday 16th July** at **7.30pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public Participation

There was one member of the public present.

ACTIONS

026 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Banks, Kumar, Maslen and Pitt.

Admin

027 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

028 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the 18th June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

029 St Neots Library Grant

Members heard from St Neots Library on an application for funding towards the summer reading challenge, which last year had 648 children take part during the summer holidays. The library arranges events through the holiday which are affordable for local families. There is no budget, and the Council has historically supported the initiative through grant funding.

Members queried the use of funds. The applicant explained that the County Council funds the core activities and medals, and the Town Council funding would be used for additional resources, craft and enhancements.

RESOLVED to grant £500 to St Neots Library for the summer reading challenge.

030 Payments

Members received and noted payments for May 2024.

031 Public Works Loan

Members received and noted the outstanding balance of a public works loan for the building of the Eatons Community centre along with the most recent settlement figure.

The RFO explained that the reference to £7,500 per year repayment is actually £15,000 year paid off the principle. There is £26,000 in the budget for repayment of the loan principle and the annual interest. It was explained that the end of repayment

year is due to be 2039 and if the Council continue to repay over that period the total interest would be £70,515. If the loan was to be repaid based on 1st July 2024 figures (when last valuation was taken) then the interest would be approximately £10,000. It was explained that the current CCLA interest level was higher than the fixed interest at present.

A Member queried whether the interest rate from the CCLA was taxed. The RFO stated that none of the interest paid had been taxed and that the Council is exempt from corporation and income tax. The RFO would investigate further and report back to the committee.

A Member commented that the Council should look to earmark reserves for the repayment of the loan to ensure that it kept appropriate reserves to cover repayment in the event that the Council were in financial difficulties. The RFO commented that the Council precept for the annual repayment of the loan and the question would be as to whether the Council wished to continue to do this.

A Member stated that they felt it was important that the amount due on the loan be recognised on the balance sheet and highlighted in the Council's reserves if the Council has the funds to discharge it but chooses not to. They felt the funds should not be thought of as an excess of general reserve limits which are then freely available for allocation to other expenditure. The RFO will seek further advice on the matter.

032 St Neots Skatepark

Members received and noted an update on the St Neots Skatepark refurbishment project for which the Council has awarded grant funding. The Council awarded £50,210 to the project based on costs presented to it at the time an application was made. Following the awarding of funding the applicant was able to agree lower project costs as a result of the contractor bringing in new machinery which allows the job to be done more efficiently. As a result, the Council's contribution to the project would be lower than resolved at £35,343. This would secure the same outcome and standard as originally quoted.

033 Forget-Me-Not Memorial Garden

Members received and considered a recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee on providing Council funded plaques for the Forget-Me-Not Memorial Garden.

RESOLVED to RECOMMENDED that that the Council continue to offer free memorial plaques for the Forget-Me-Not Memorial Garden in the future financial years and that the Council consider and budget for the provision of plaques as part of the 2025-26 budget setting process.

034 Financial Regulations

Members received and considered model Financial Regulations which had been amended to reflect St Neots specific practices. The RFO presented the policy and highlighted areas where there had been changes, however overall, the policy remained in line with the existing financial procedures for the Town Council. There had been updates under petty cash to reflect that the Priory Centre required more

than the Council offices, and the Engagement and Participation Youth Worker had been added as a credit card holder with a limit of £1,500.

A Member queried section 5.14 of the regulations which set out the number of Councillors who can approve expenditure over £2,000, noting delays in orders can be made if approvals are not sent quickly enough. It was suggested that the number of councillors appointed to approve payments be increased to any two of four named members to cover periods when members may not be available.

A Member raised a concern around the need to seek approval for orders of £2,000 when a committee or the Council had already approved the expenditure and there was a resolution supporting this. The purpose of the system was for managers to seek approval of expenditure over £2,000 from officer delegated revenue budgets.

It was proposed and seconded that the Council adopt the updated financial regulations subject to increasing the number of councillors who can approve expenditure over £2,000 to four by adding the Deputy Chairperson of the Finance and Governance Committee and excluding the need to officers to seek such approvals when expenditure has already been approved by a committee or the Council.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the updated Financial Regulations as presented subject to the following amendments;

- 1) Section 5.14 be amended to include the Deputy Chairperson of the Finance and Governance Committee as a Councillor who can approve expenditure over £2,000, resulting in approval needed from two of any four named councillors.
- 2) Section 5.14 be amended to exclude the need for approval of expenditure of £2,000 by nominated councillors when the expenditure has been approved by a committee or the Council and a minuted resolution is in place.

Members discussed the need to test that restoring data from back ups was working. The Chairperson of the Committee and Cllr Goodman agreed to send details to the RFO who would check with the Council's IT provider.

Members noted the need for a Councillor who was not on the Bank Mandate to check bank reconciliations on a quarterly basis. It was agreed that Councillor Hitchin would act in this capacity.

035 Tree Maintenance Policy

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the proposed Tree Maintenance Policy.

036 Freedom of Information Policy

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council adopt the Freedom of Information Policy subject to amending section 5.1 to read "including, but not limited to:"

037 Burial Regulations

Members received and noted draft Burial Regulations which were deferred by the Operations and Amenities Committee to allow further time for consideration. Due to the length and detail of the regulations they were highlighted to the Finance and Governance Committee ahead of further consideration in September 2024 to allow time for Members to review. Members were asked to read the regulations before the next committee meeting and put any questions through to the Senior Administrator.

038 Approval of Payments

Members noted Cllr Goodman had been appointed as a third member who is able to approve payments/purchase orders over £2,000 in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

Members noted that a recommendation had been put to the Full Council to increase the number of Councillors who can approve payments to four by including the Vice Chairperson of the Finance and Governance Committee.

039 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next scheduled Finance and Governance Committee meeting would be 17th September 2024 at 7:15pm.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL

Committee	FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Date:	23 rd July 2024
Title:	FORGET-ME-NOT GARDEN MEMORIAL PLAQUES
Contact Officer/S:	OPERATIONS MANAGER/ SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide the committee with a recommendation from the Operations and Amenities Committee and Finance and Governance Committee on the provision of baby loss memorial plaques in future financial years.

2. Recommendation from Finance and Governance Committee

- 2.1 **RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Council continue to offer free memorial plaques for the Forget-Met-Not Memorial Garden in the future financial years in line with the existing policy and that the Council consider and budget for the provision of plaques as part of the 2025-26 budget setting process.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Forget-Me-Not Garden was created in St Neots New Cemetery following a resolution by the Council to renovate an existing area within the cemetery as a dedicated baby loss memorial garden. The garden was opened in October 2023.
- 3.2 As part of the initial project planning and engagement with local businesses, Co-operative Funeral Services offered to provide memorial plaques free of charge. The Council approved and published a policy and regulations for the memorial garden which included the provision of free memorial plaques to applicants.

4. Information

- 4.1 Three memorial plaque applications were received and processed earlier this year. On receipt of the completed plaques, the working group were concerned that the chrome finish, which is highly reflective, would make it difficult to read the inscription. The working group also had concerns about the longevity of this type of plaque provided. Officers approached Co-operative Funeral services, who had generously provided the plaques to enquire if they were able to provide a different finish, which unfortunately they are not able to do.
- 4.2 Officers contacted the applicants to inform them of the concerns with the current style plaque and to reassure them that these concerns were being addressed. Applicants were advised that the plaques would be replaced with a new style plaque once an alternative was sourced and a decision by the working group had been reached. All applicants were very understanding and happy to wait.
- 4.3 A local business which provides plaques for Huntingdonshire District Council, including memorial benches is able to provide alternative options for memorial plaques at a cost of £35 (including engraving).
- 4.4 Urban and Civic/Wintringham have generously donated £450 towards the cost of purchasing plaques this financial year, along with AJ Mills Stone Mason who have donated funds for three plaques.

- 4.5 To date we have received 14 enquiries for a memorial plaque for the garden, 7 of these have submitted applications which are currently being processed using the existing available funding. The current secured funding will provide 15 memorial plaques.

5. Future Provision

- 5.1 The Council's policy for the Memorial Garden states that plaques will be provided free of charge. This was based on the generous offer from Cooperative Funeral Services. However, as the plaques which are available are not suitable the Council is having to source appropriate plaques at a cost. The generous donations of local organisations will cover the current plaque applications.
- 5.2 The Operations and Amenities Committee heard from a representative of the Working Group who established the policy, considering future provision and whether it amends its policy to reflect the cost of the memorial plaques for future years, or if it looks to continue to provide free plaques and the costs associated with these.

Option 1 – The Council amends its policy to include that future applications for memorial plaques will be required to fund the cost of £35 for the installation of a plaque.

Option 2 – That the Council continue to offer free memorial plaques in future years in line with the current policy and include funding provision within the 2025-26 budget.

Option 3 – That the Council continue to offer free memorial plaques in future years in line with the current policy and that the Working Group look to secure external grant funding on an annual basis to support these costs. That the Council acknowledge there is a risk funding will not be able to be secured through external donations.

- 5.3 The committee recognised the impact the policy has and the benefits it provides for grieving parents. The Committee resolved to recommend Option 2.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The current available funding sourced by Officers is £525. The funding was sourced as a short-term solution to be able to continue to offer families plaques at no cost in line with the policy at the time they made an application. This funding will provide 15 plaques to families who have suffered the loss of a little one.
- 6.2 The cost of a brushed stainless-steel plaque with inscription is currently £35.
- 6.3 Officers predict, given the number of applications received to date, that the available funding will be sufficient to provide plaques for the 2024/2025 financial year.
- 6.4 Currently no budget has been allocated by the Council to provide the memorial plaques free of charge to applicants for future financial years. If the Council were to do this it would need to consider budgeting £525 in future budgets.



ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2024

**Reviewed by Finance and Governance
Committee on 16 July 2024**

For FC Approval on 23 July 2024

CLERK'S NOTE

Sections highlighted in **yellow** are areas where the model code has been amended to reflect St Neots existing regulations.

Sections in **blue** are amendments put forward by the Finance and Governance Committee on 16th July 2024

ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on 23 July 2024.

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**
 - **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
 - **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**

- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;

2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk, with the RFO, shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk assessment register for all activities of the council. These risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk with managers shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:
- ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
 - ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
 - prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
 - allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
 - identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and
 - ensure division of responsibilities.
- 2.6. At least, once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than a bank mandate signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and crosscheck balances to original bank statements as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Finance and Governance Committee.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored online as per the council's IT Policy. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

AGENDA ITEM 5

ATTACHMENT 8

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
 - **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
 - is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;

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- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the personnel committee at least annually in October for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of personnel committee. The RFO will inform the Personell committee of any salary changes before they consider the draft salary budget.
- 4.3. The RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year to be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee no later than the end of November each year.
- 4.4. Unspent funds for uncompleted/partially completed projects may only be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the council.
- 4.5. Departmental managers must formulate and submit proposals to the relevant committee in respect of revenue and capital expenditure including the use of reserves and sources of funding for the following financial year no later than the end of September each year.
- 4.6. Each committee must review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance and Governance Committee not later than the end of October each year.
- 4.7. The draft budget with all committee proposals, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be included in the draft budget to be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee and a recommendation made Full Council. The Full Council must review the draft budget not later that the end of December each year.

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- 4.8. Having considered the proposed budget, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. **The council shall set a precept for this amount in line with the deadline set by HDC each year.**
- 4.9. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.10. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.11. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.12. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in **paragraph 5.11** obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed **£30,000 including VAT**, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of**

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

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contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.

5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 (excluding vat) but lower than £30,000 (including VAT) the appropriate manager must strive to obtain 3 fixed-price quotes;

5.9. For contracts and purchases, smaller than £3,0000 (excluding vat) all managers shall seek to achieve value for money.

5.10. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

5.11. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

5.12. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.13. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

5.14. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- Departmental managers or Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT.
- The council can nominate any two out of four of chairperson of the council, chairperson of Finance and Governance Committee, vice-chairperson of Finance and Governance Committee and one other member of the Finance and Governance Committee to approve expenditure over £2,000 (excluding vat) excluding regular payments and excluding expenditure already approved by a committee. The nominated members shall be contactable during working hours and able to approve such payments within set time limit to ensure Council business is not impacted by delayed response.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council and Chair of Finance and Governance Committee may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. The Clerk must report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- in respect of grants, any payments not in excess of £5,000 must be made following a resolution made by the grants sub-committee.

- grants in excess of £5,000 must be approved by Full Council following recommendation made from grant sub-committee.

Such authorisation must be supported by minutes (in the case of council decisions).

5.15. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

5.16. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council except in an emergency.

5.17. In cases of emergency repairs that exceed £5,000, if there is a significant risk to personal safety, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure, the Clerk and the chair of finance & governance committee can authorise a payment to make safe at a minimal cost. The deputy Clerk can deputise for the Clerk; the chair of Full Council can deputise for chair of finance & governance Committee. For full repairs exceeding £5,000, an extraordinary Full Council meeting must be called, with full information provided in the agenda pack.

5.18. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the Finance and Governance Committee is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.19. An official purchase order shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £2,000 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with invoices received upon receipt of goods/completion of services.

5.20. A purchasing ordering system shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking and payments

6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. The online payments made through Barclays.net require more than one person to be involved, by having a person who is a bank mandate signatory to authorise a payment. This is required even where a purchase has been authorised. In cases of cheque payments, signing is to be made in accordance with the approved bank mandate.

6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being signed off by each manager and subsequently reviewed by the RFO.

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- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), for the council to note.
- 6.6. A list of all monthly payments, excluding those made by petty cash, shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee for members to note.
- 6.7. The Clerk, deputy Clerk and RFO have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:
- i. any payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. payments of over £2,000 excluding VAT within budget subject to purchase approval or grant resolution as detailed in 5.14.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils' bank accounts can be made by the Clerk or RFO, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the finance and governance committee. Transfers to long-term investments should be made in accordance with Investment Strategy and with prior approval of the Finance and Governance Committee.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk or RFO, shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.
- 7.2. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the Finance and Governance Committee.
- 7.3. The Finance assistant is responsible for setting up all payments made through Barclays.net. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be provided to the RFO or Clerk for authorisation.
- 7.4. In the absence of the finance assistant, the RFO shall set up any payments to be authorised by the Clerk.
- 7.5. A full list of all payments made in the previous month shall be provided to the next Finance and Governance Committee meeting.

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7.6. Regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, salaries and pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit (and BACS for salaries, pensions and PAYE and NIC). The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

7.7. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS should be made in accordance with bank mandate.

7.8. If thought appropriate by the RFO, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed in line with the bank mandate and any payments are included in the monthly payments reports presented to Finance and Governance Committee. The approval of the use of a banker's standing orders shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

7.9. Account details for supplier payments should be cross checked to their invoices by the RFO. If no bank details are shown on the invoices, a written confirmation of these by the supplier is to be provided. A notification received for change of bank details should be verified by contacting the supplier beforehand to check that change is genuine.

7.10. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated in line with IT policy.

8. Cheque payments

8.1. Cheques shall be signed by in accordance with bank mandate – under £1,000 one signatory on the mandate, over £1,000 – 2 signatories need to sign.

8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

8.4. Any cheque payments shall be reported as part of the monthly payments to the Finance and Governance Committee at the next convenient meeting.

9. Payment cards

9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Finance and Governance Committee as part of the monthly payments report.

9.3. A corporate credit card opened by the council, with a monthly limit spent per cardholder of £1,500, will be provided to be used by the Clerk, managers, communication and events officer and engagement and participation youth worker. Automatic direct debit repayments of total credit card balance is to be set up to settle

credit balance in full each month. Each cardholder is to provide vat receipts on a monthly basis to the RFO in support of each card transactions shown on the cardholder's statement.

9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff may be used for business travel and subsistence expenses or in exceptional circumstances of up to £1,000 including VAT. These will then be reimbursed by the RFO upon submission of signed by manager expenses claim.

9.5. A trade card account can be provided to the operations team to use for topping up council's vehicle with petrol or diesel. Each officer is to provide a receipt to the operations manager to cross check to the supplier invoice.

10. Petty Cash

10.1. The council shall maintain a petty cash floats of £500 (£200 – Town Council and £300 for Priory Centre) so that petty cash can be provided for café purchase by the Priory Centre and to other officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

- a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment and petty cash should be reconciled by the finance assistant and checked by the RFO on a monthly basis.
- b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float will be shown on the monthly schedule of payments presented to the Finance and Governance Committee.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

11.1. As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.

11.2. Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.

11.3. Changes shall be made to employees' gross pay in accordance with NALC pay scale awards. Change of terms and conditions of employment will require prior consent of the personnel committee.

11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.

11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.

11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the RFO to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the Full Council.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the Full Council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the Full Council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council will have an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk and/or departmental managers.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO before being written off. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.

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- 13.7. Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that appropriate control procedures are in place with segregation of duties and that there is a reconciliation of cash to other records such as tickets issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. The officer in charge of each department shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.
- 15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified by each departmental manager at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).
- No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with

any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £2,000. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.

17.2. The Clerk and each departmental manager shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

17.3. The Clerk and RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and the Clerk shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.

17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as approved annually in the risk register.

18. Charities

18.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

19.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of Clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

19.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.

19.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18.d and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

TREE MAINTENANCE POLICY

Reference	SNTC/	Adopted by
Prepared by	C Robson (Town Clerk)	Adopted date
Monitored by	Town Clerk	Minute reference
Monitoring Review	Every four years	Review date

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a policy for dealing with tree management across the land in St Neots Town Council's ownership and management. This policy does not cover trees on other authorities land, or land in private ownership which are outside of St Neots Town Council's control. Trees in private ownership are the responsibility of the private landowner. The policy also does not cover Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas or high hedge legislation which is administered by Huntingdonshire District Council.

This Policy is intended to act as a point of reference for the public, Councillors, officers and professionally interested people to enable informed decision making and to establish a clear, consistent and more structured approach to the issues affecting trees.

Trees are a highly valued feature in the landscape and are of immense environmental and aesthetical value to the Town and its residents. They make a contribution to the character and beauty of our parks and open spaces, provide a habitat for wildlife, enrich the biodiversity, act as the Town lungs and help to reduce rising temperatures caused by climate change. Some trees in the Council's ownership may help absorb traffic noise in built-up areas and can help limit noise pollution; as such they act as a screen, increasing privacy in residential roads and gardens. St Neots Town Council recognises these benefits, seeking to preserve healthy trees.

We recognise that although trees are a positive feature, they can be the cause of a range of problems, from being a nuisance or inconvenience to potentially causing serious injury or even death. As a tree owner we have a direct responsibility for ensuring our trees do not pose a danger to the public or property and are managed appropriately. This policy sets out our approach to tree management.

The overall aim of the tree policy is to ensure that our tree stock is retained whilst ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the public and property.

2. LEGISLATION

We have a responsibility to maintain trees within our ownership / management to ensure they are in a safe condition and not causing an unreasonable danger or actionable nuisance.

As the owner and manager of trees, St Neots Town Council has a legal duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that any foreseeable hazards can be identified and made safe. This duty is laid down in the Occupiers Liability Act 1984 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Section 3.

Tree works shall be carried out whilst ensuring adherence to all wildlife and conservation laws are observed including:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1995)
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- The Town and Country Planning (Trees) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2008
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997.
- Highways Act 1980

3. INSPECTION OF TREES

The Town Council works to a risk-based approach to tree management: a programme of inspection identifying and prioritising potential hazards. The cycle of inspection for trees will be set according to their location and area of risk. A full inspection of all tree stock will happen every 5 years. Inspections are carried out by appropriately qualified individuals following the Council's financial regulations.

This inspection programme is designed to assess the trees' condition and health whilst highlighting any work that may be required to ensure the tree is retained in the best possible condition.

The decision to prescribe work to a tree is calculated on a risk basis. Risk is calculated through the process of a visual tree assessment. An evaluation of the tree takes into account many factors including:

- Location
- Size
- Species
- Presence of structural decay or defects
- Relationship of any fungal infection relative to species.

Tree defects likely to cause a hazard are identified, categorised and the appropriate work is undertaken where appropriate to remove the hazard.

In bad weather even the healthiest of trees can become hazardous. St Neots Town Council will take prompt action in such emergencies, to ensure that everything possible is done to protect road users, residents and property.

When the level of risk has been established by surveying the tree any works required will be dependent on reducing the risk to an acceptable level. The legal framework does not require the elimination of risk altogether, but that the risk is minimised to an acceptable level.

If a tree is highlighted to be dead, dying, diseased or dangerous and is posing an unacceptable risk to

public safety, it will be identified for felling.

There may be exceptional occasions when a higher risk may be acceptable for example if there is a tree of particular additional value or for reasons of heritage. In these circumstances the advice from an independent consultant will be sought. In addition to this further arboricultural advice or investigations into the condition of the tree may be sought.

4. TREE MAINTENANCE / MANAGEMENT

The Town Council will ensure that tree maintenance work will be conducted as a result of information gathered during tree inspections. However, reactionary tree maintenance will always form a key element of overall tree maintenance operations and normally originate from enquiries from councillors, residents, council officers, contractors or utility companies.

We receive requests and complaints regarding trees. It is important that individual issues are dealt with consistently and that decisions are balanced against the positive contribution that trees make to the environment and enjoyment of the area by local residents and visitors. Many of the complaints received involve minor or seasonal issues that are generally considered to be foreseeable or social problems associated with living near trees, which can potentially be minimised through careful pruning and careful species selection when planting.

In all cases, consideration will be given as to whether the tree in question meets the necessary criteria for protection. We will respond positively to tree issues raised regarding safety and endeavour to undertake works to alleviate damage to property, though it is not possible or desirable to undertake all works requested. Some requests would not alleviate the problem whilst others would only be a temporary measure which could not be repeated due to restricted budgets. Pruning can be to the detriment of many trees and can have the adverse effect of accelerating additional growth.

To ensure that requests for works to trees are dealt with efficiently, consistently and fairly, our policy in relation to the more common types of request is outlined below.

5. OVERHANGING TREES/BRANCHES

The Council has no legal obligation to prune overhanging trees unless they are causing direct damage to an adjacent property or are dangerous. The Council will not prune trees that overhang neighbouring properties unless the trees are dangerous or are causing an actionable nuisance. This reflects the Council's position as an owner of a large tree stock and the resources available.

Adjacent landowners are entitled to prune encroaching tree branches or roots back to the boundary of their property providing that the works do not unbalance the tree or do other damage to it. Legally, they are required to retain the prunings and offer them back to the Council, but the Council is not obliged to accept them.

Where access to the Council's land is required in order to undertake tree works, the adjacent landowner must seek the permission of the Council to enter their land. This will not be unreasonably refused.

It is a requirement that all Contractors working on Council land are suitably qualified to undertake the proposed work. It is also a requirement that adequate public liability insurance (a minimum of £5m or £10m when adjacent of a highway) is in place and that appropriate risk assessments and method statements have been completed. The Council will request evidence of this before permitting access.

6. PRUNING TREES FOR LIGHT IMPROVEMENT

A common complaint about urban trees is that they block light from properties or shade gardens. However, the seriousness of this effect is variable and often removal of the tree will have little effect on the amount of sunlight reaching the house or garden. An example of this is where the house is north facing and the tree is small or at a distance.

There is no right to light under the law and therefore the Council has no legal obligation to abate this perceived nuisance.

However the Council will consider taking action (pruning or felling) in the following circumstances:

- Trees over 12m in height – distance between base of the tree and the window of the nearest habitable room is less than 5m.
- Trees smaller than 12m high – distance between base of the tree and the window of the nearest habitable room is less than half the height of the tree.
- Where the separation between the edge of the tree canopy and a vertical line through that window is less than 2m. A 'habitable room' means a dining room, lounge, kitchen, study or bedroom but specifically excludes WCs, bathrooms, utility rooms, landings and hallways.

It is recognised through the preparation of the Equalities Impact Assessment that there are exceptional circumstances in which this approach needs to be more flexible. Where it can be established that the presence of trees is causing a detriment to the health of residents, further consideration will be given to the management approach of trees. This consideration will also take in to account the quality and importance of the tree in question. This approach is important as the presence of trees also has a beneficial impact on other residents and the reduction in the number or size of trees may have a greater impact than on just one original enquirer.

Where a situation falls within these guidelines cases will be prioritised according to proximity and account will also be taken of the orientation of the affected window. The results of any consultation exercise may modify decisions if it appears that any work would be by and large unpopular with the rest of the community.

7. PRUNING TREES TO IMPROVE TELEVISION, SATELLITE OR RADIO, RECEPTION

Interference with television or satellite reception can be a cause for frequent complaints. Interference is worse when leaves are on trees and in bad windy and rainy weather. Satellite reception is more sensitive to interference than television reception. Some Councils have seen an increase in these complaints in recent years with the advent of this new technology and increased numbers of subscribers.

There is no right to good reception and in many cases it is possible to resolve issues of poor reception by finding an engineering solution.

The Council will only consider requests to prune trees to improve reception where all the following conditions are true:

- Efforts have been made to find an engineering solution to the problem and have not been successful;
- The work required is consistent with good arboricultural practice and will not unduly affect the amenity or health of the tree;
- The work required can be executed within financial resources available.

8. PRUNING FOR CLEARANCE OF OVERHEAD POWER CABLES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

In accordance with Schedule 4 of the Electricity Act 1989, electricity suppliers are empowered to remove obstruction to their equipment. This applies where any tree is or will be in such close proximity to an electric line or electrical plant that it will obstruct or interfere with the installation, maintenance or working of the line or plant; or constitute an unacceptable source of danger to the public. In accordance with Schedule 3A of the Communications Act 2003, telecoms operators may require trees to be lopped to prevent obstruction or interference.

9. PRUNING TO PREVENT DIRECT DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Trees or branches proven beyond reasonable doubt to be the cause of serious structural damage to buildings as identified by a competent professional assessor may be removed by the Council. We endeavour to provide a 1.5 metre clearance from overhanging trees to a dwelling house (not property boundaries).

The Council will cut back trees from properties where they touch windows, walls, roofs or gutters. This will ensure that damage to property such as aerials, tiles or gutters is avoided.

Cases of direct root damage will be considered on an individual basis. A balance will be struck between the nuisance experienced by individuals and the benefits offered by the tree to the wider community.

The Council will not normally take action in response to complaints that Council trees are damaging drains. Trees do not have the capacity to break into a sound drain, but they will ruthlessly exploit any existing fault. The removal of one tree will not prevent other vegetation from exploiting the same

opportunity. The Council's presumption is that the appropriate way to deal with tree root blockage of drains is for the property owner to ensure that the drains are watertight.

It is often possible to rebuild or repair garden walls and fences to take account of adjacent trees. This can be achieved in a number of ways (for example installing a section of railing or bridging foundations around the base of a tree). Therefore where trees are considered to be causing damage to walls or fences, we will only consider tree removal if the walls or fence are irreplaceable and of exceptional importance e.g. a retaining wall or of historical interest, or if there is a risk to public health in leaving the tree which cannot otherwise be mitigated. If a damaged wall or fence was constructed after planting of the tree, it may mean that the design or construction has failed to take the presence of nearby trees into account and will not be considered appropriate for replacement.

It is often possible to repair paths to take account of adjacent trees and tree roots. Where roots protrude they can be root pruned, or the path re-laid around the tree with flexible materials such as asphalt to provide a smooth surface. Where trees are considered to be causing damage to paths or footpaths, we will not normally consider tree removal except where there is a risk to public health which cannot otherwise be mitigated.

10. PRUNING TO PREVENT GENERAL NUISANCES

The Council will not fell or prune Council owned trees solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/or seasonal phenomena, which are largely outside of their control.

There are a variety of potential nuisances associated with trees, most of which are minor or seasonal and considered to be social problems associated with living near trees. Examples of such problems are:

- Falling leaves, sap, fruit, nuts, bird droppings or blossom;
- Reduction or increase of moisture to gardens;
- Suckers or germinating seedlings in gardens;
- Leaves falling into gutters, drains or onto flat roofs;
- The build-up of algae on fences, paths or other structures.

Clearing of leaves from gutters and pathways and weeding of set seeds are considered to be normal routine seasonal maintenance which property owners are expected to carry out.

As with leaves, honeydew is not readily controllable by pruning and cleaning of affected surfaces can be considered to be routine maintenance. Pruning will not normally be considered solely as a way of alleviating problems with honeydew.

Tree works WILL take place in the following situations:

- Dead, dying or dangerous trees and branches that are or likely to be a danger public safety;
- Trees or branches creating unreasonable obstructing to a public highway, public right of way or access to property;
- Trees obstructing established essential fixtures and services situated in the highway;

Tree works MAY take place in the following situations:

- Trees deemed by the Council to be an inappropriate species for their situation;
- Trees in an area which is designated for development or redevelopment;
- To maintain historic or important vistas or in the interest of preservation of heritage or locally important structures;
- Re-pollarding or re-coppicing on a regular cycle;
- Trees giving rise to justifiable fears about risk of crime, or trees that have provided access and/or cover for criminal activity;
- Trees and branches restricting other grounds maintenance operations;
- Trees which need formative pruning to shape or train them during the early years;
- Thinning of trees where it will benefit adjacent specimens or those of more favourable species;
- The tree is a species which is known to ultimately outgrow its location and in doing so unreasonably restricts the use of the area;
 - To protect or enhance biodiversity;
 - To improve the aesthetics of the designed landscape;
 - Self-set trees on boundaries where they are a significant nuisance;

The Council will not undertake tree work operations which may be to the detriment of the tree. Tree works WILL NOT be carried out in the following situations or for the following reasons:

- Because trees are perceived as being too large by a member of the public;
- Obstruction of views from private residence;
- Where tree roots have entered gardens;
- To allow construction of new access or driveway to property;
- Erection of fencing, walls, play areas and sports pitches
- To facilitate the implementation of non- essential underground or over ground works.
- The tree 'moves in the wind'

11. OTHER FACTORS CONSTRAINING WORK TO TREES

Birds

Under the Wildlife & Conservation Act 1981 (as amended) it is an offence to kill, injure or take wild birds, their young, their eggs or nests. Non-urgent major tree work involving tree removal / reduction and hedge cutting operations should not normally be undertaken during bird nesting / breeding season, which is considered to be from 1st March to 31st July.

Bats

Bats are a European Protected Species and are protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Causing damage to a roosting / nesting site is a criminal offence which can lead to imprisonment. Trees displaying signs of roosting bats will be referred to an Ecologist before any work commences. Any trees supporting roosting bats will not be worked on until Natural England is consulted.

12. VANDALISM AND DAMAGE TO COUNCIL OWNED/MANAGED TREES

Vandalism is an increasing pressure on trees. Usually, it is young newly planted trees that are damaged; however, mature trees are often damaged too. There are various ways in which vandalism can be counteracted, but none of these are 100% effective against determined attack.

The main methods of deterring vandals are to plant large numbers of very young trees, known as whips, or to plant larger robust trees depending on the site. Another method is to put guards or fencing around trees, but these must be large enough and strong enough to offer real protection.

This latter approach tends to be the most expensive method and only appropriate in very high-profile positions. In the long run, increasing environmental awareness within schools and communities should help reduce vandalism.

We will investigate any reports of vandalism or damage to trees in our ownership/ management and try to repair any damage where we can. Where appropriate, we will take legal action against the person(s) causing the damage.

Any felling or heavy pruning of Council trees on Council land is deemed as criminal damage. The perpetrator will be investigated and under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 a Community Protection Notice may be issued, breach of which would result in a fine of up to £2,500 for an individual and £20,000 for a body.

13. RECORD KEEPING & APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The Council, or its contractor, will retain adequate records of the details of inspection and maintenance regime for all trees.

Although, we believe this policy to be as comprehensive as possible, we acknowledge it does not cover every situation. St Neots Town Council reserve the right to exercise discretion in application of this policy when to do so commit to be in the best interests of the Council and residents.

All enquiries regarding trees on St Neots Town Council land should be directed to the Council on 01480 388911 or enquiries@stneots-tc.gov.uk.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST POLICY

Reference	SNTC/AD024	Adopted by
Prepared by	Town Clerk	Adopted date
Monitored by	Town Clerk	Minute reference
Monitoring Review	Every 4 Years	Review date

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) provides the public with a general legal entitlement to view all recorded information held by the Town Council subject to certain exemptions. The public will have rights to view:
 - All information held in line with the Council's Publication Scheme ensuring transparency
 - To request all recorded information held by the Council, regardless of when it was created, by whom, or the form in which it is now held.
- 1.2 The Council wishes to show that it is an 'open' organisation committed to delivering the best possible public service. Openness helps the public to trust and have confidence in the Council's ability to deliver services.
- 1.3 Failure to comply with this policy could have serious consequences for the Council, in the release of inappropriate material or illegally withholding information with adverse publicity and possible legal censure.
- 1.4 The implementation and enforcement of this policy in association with the terms and conditions of employment is intended to protect employees, Councillors, members of the public and the Council.
- 1.5 There is a need to manage information and requests for information to ensure that the rights under the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act 2018 are fulfilled.

2. Aims and Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all the recorded information that the Town Council holds, that is information created, received, and maintained by members and officers in the course of their work.
- 2.2 The policy is intended to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibility under the Freedom of Information Act.

3. Guidelines

3.1 Non adherence or disregard to any points below will be seen as a breach of this policy and the disciplinary procedure will be invoked which could result in dismissal.

St Neots Town Council will:

- i) Comply with the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004.
- ii) Maintain a comprehensive Publication Scheme that provides information which is readily accessible without the need for a formal FOI request and ensures transparency.
- iii) The publication scheme can be accessed on the Town Council's website; [AD016-Publication-Scheme-October-2022.pdf \(stneots-tc.gov.uk\)](#)
- iv) Respond within 20 working days to straightforward written requests. However, if necessary, this timescale will be extended to give full consideration to the request. If the deadline is not expected to be met the applicant will be advised of the reasons for the delay and the anticipated reply date.
- v) Continue to protect the personal data entrusted to us, by disclosing that information only in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- vi) Keep on file a copy of the request and response.
- vii) Apply the exemptions provided in the FOI Act and, where qualified exemptions exist, disclose the information unless the balance of public interest lies in withholding it.
- viii) Pro-actively publish and make information readily available on the Town Council's website to provide transparency.
- ix) Review complaints about the release or of the misuse of information by referring them to the Town Clerk and remind requestors that they can appeal such decisions to the Information Commissioner.
- x) Ensure that all staff and elected members are aware of their obligations under FOI and will include FOI training in the induction of new staff and newly elected members.
- xi) Charge for information requests in line with FOI Fees Regulations or other applicable regulations, including the Data Protection Act 2018.
- xii) Apply the "appropriate limit" in the regulations. Where the cost of complying with the request exceeds this, we will issue a refusal notice inviting the requestor to refine their request.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Council has the responsibility to make its recorded information available in accordance with the Act.
- 4.2 Staff and Members must ensure that all such data is always handled properly and confidentially, irrespective of whether it is held on paper or by electronic means.
- 4.3 Staff and Members should familiarise themselves with this policy and the Freedom of Information Act guidance which is available on the web.
- 4.4 Staff and Members will comply with all the conditions set out within the Act.
- 4.5 Staff must ensure that data protection is not breached and must refer to the Town Council's Information and Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 4.6 The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of the Freedom of Information Act and that they adhere to the guidelines within this Policy.
- 4.7 The Town Clerk will assist staff with advice when a complex request is received in conjunction with the Deputy Town Clerk.

5. Exemptions

- 5.1 Information can be exempt for several reasons, [including but not limited to](#):

- It is personal information that is covered by the Data Protection Act
- It is covered by the Environmental Information Regulations
[What are the Environmental Information Regulations? | ICO](#)
- It is confidential
- It will be published in the future
- It is accessible by other means, such as the publication scheme
- It is prohibited by law
- It is about law enforcement
- It is about investigations and proceedings conducted by the council

6. Data Protection

- 6.1 The Data Protection Officer is responsible for gathering and disseminating information and issue relating to information security, the Data Protection Act and other related legislation.
- 6.2 St Neots Town Council's Data Officer is the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils.

ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL

Date:23rd JULY 2024

Title:FULL COUNCIL PROJECT STATUS OVERVIEW

Contact Officer:TOWN CLERK

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide a summary for note of the status of key projects ahead of the August break in Council meetings.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Council note the information provided.

3. Background

3.1 The purpose of the report is to provide a status update on key live projects with matters of action over the summer council meeting break. It is acknowledged that there are a lot of other projects and activities which are covered by Council’s committees which are not included in this document. These will continue to be reported through their relevant committees and action lists in September 2024.

4. Information

4.1 The table below provides a project summary of key live projects with actions or progress to note.

PROJECT	STATUS	NEXT ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	BUDGET	
Brickhills Play Area	• Council resolved to install accessible seesaw as a final piece in completing the revamped and inclusive play area.	Engage contractor and issue purchase order	Complete	£24,495.60	Funded from EMR for play provision
		Site meetings and preliminaries	Complete		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors have been engaged and project documents (insurances, risk assessments etc) provided. Officers were instructed to progress with additional work on installing a rubber mulch path for an inclusive picnic table. Budgets and any alternative options are being investigated by the Operations Manager as he progresses the matter. 	Installation Works	W/O 5 th August '24		
		ROSPA inspection and sign offs	W/O 19 th August '24		
		Opening of new equipment and publicity	W/O 19 th August '24		
		Installation of path for accessible picnic bench	TBC		
Moores Walk Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Groups plans for improving the community space approved by HDC. The funding to carry out the proposed works has been approved by HDC and funding agreement is in place. Preferred contractors identified by HDC and site meetings carried out. Working Group met with horticultural contractor to discuss plant types and schemes. Working Group to work with contractor and volunteer group on maintenance plan for the site 	Contractor to provide timeline for works along with risk assessments, insurances etc	Completed	£16,675	HDC Grant Funding
		Transfer of funds for project to SNTC	Completed		
		Meeting of working group to be arranged to consider planting options with contractor	Completed		
		Confirmation of planting options and schemes to be feedback to Working Group from contractor	E/O July 2024		
		Permissions for tree work approval to be submitted	Complete		
		Approval of Tree Work Permission	August 2024		
		On site works to commence	19 th August '24		
		Completion of onsite works and planting	30 th August '24		
		Opening and publicity	September '24		
		Liaising with volunteer group on maintenance of the site	Ongoing		

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Changing Places Riverside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolution in place for SNTC to provide funding to deliver the refurbishment of Riverside toilets and the inclusion of a Changing Places facility Project is led by HDC, who own the asset Construction work began in April 2024 and the toilets were closed to facilitate works SNTCs share of the cost of the project has been confirmed. Temporary toilets are in place during the closure. Work expected to be completed by the end of July 2024 	Start of construction work	14/4/24	£103,817	Resolved to fund from CIL Reserve
		SNTC to display advisory information on Changing Places and the improvements	Completed		
		Town Clerk to liaise with HDC and stakeholders on progress and delivery of the project	Ongoing		
		Clerk to raise concerns of temporary toilet provision and seek solutions/improvements.	Completed		
		Clerk to liaise with HDC and Access in St Neots over directional Changing Places signage	Ongoing		
		Completion of construction work	E/O July 2024		
		Inspections and sign offs, including of Changing Places toilet by qualified body.	E/O July 2024		
		Proposed new lease and ongoing operating of building to be formally considered by Council.	September 2024		
Priory Centre Refurbishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning application has been submitted and validated. Plans submitted are based on SNTC design priorities and consultation process. Potential funding contribution from the Town Council towards the project budget was considered in May 2024. Council resolved to provide additional funding to the project from its CIL reserves in principle, subject to final designs tendering and costs. Outcome of Planning Permission still awaited. Design team responding to consultee 	SNTC to consider potential provision of funding towards the project and letter of intent	Completed	-	HDC Budget in place for refurbishment Option for SNTC to contribute to increase available budget.
HDC Managed project		Planning permission to be considered and approved by Planning Authority. Design team to address conditions or issues that arise	Ongoing September 2024		
		Tendering for contractors (process being considered as part of planning process)	Ongoing		
		Design team considers and value engineer design to lower potential costs and bring a scheme within deliverable budget. Dependent on tendering process	Ongoing		

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	<p>comments and considering any amendments to planning as part of that process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender process to commence with direct involvement of SNTC PDM. Process under consideration by HDC. 	BDG group to be involved in process in finalising design for tendering.	Ongoing		
		Site works expected to commence (Internal preliminaries- non planning related)	September 2024		
		Town Council to consider funding position	Dependent on BDG meetings and planning progress		
		Completion of works	Anticipated 12 month build		
Museum Repair Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council commissioned a historic building survey of the museum building which resulted in a high level of recommendations for repair and maintenance work to the building. The Council agreed to go to tender for a specialist building contractor to provide recommendations, costs and phasing for the works highlighted. The PDM has reviewed the building survey and results and agreed with the museum the key areas of work which need to be undertaken to ensure the museum building works for the museum. The focus of work and resource will be on doing those works required, with the future development of the museum and non-urgent works becoming a separate matter to be explored with the museum trustees. 	Review of survey recommendations, site meetings and inspections by specialist contractor	Complete	TBC	<p>Est. £15,000 priority works to be undertaken by April 2024</p> <p>Community building EMR</p>
		Initial agreement with museum on approach to priority works	Complete		
		Project plan for priority works, costs and phasing	July 2024		
		Urgent works emerging from plan which can be taken within delegated budgets to be actioned	August 2024		
		Report/Approval of Operations and Amenities Committee on approach recommendations/actions outside of delegated budget	September 2024		
		Undertaking of works outside of delegated budgets	By the end of November 2024		

		Future non urgent works and approach to the museum to be considered by trustees	Ongoing		
Temporary Priory and Office Relocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Council resolved that the Town Council offices would temporarily relocate to the Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Centre during the Priory Centre ClosureThe Council resolve to rent a town centre space to continue a reduced Priory centre offering during the closure of the Priory CentreA license to occupy is in place for the new temporary Priory Centre premises as a lease is drawn up	License to occupy for new premises	Complete	-	Budget of £50,000 in place for temporary closure of Priory Centre
		Lease for new premises	August 2024		
		Internal works and set up of new premises for use by hirers	July 2024		
		Utility set up for new premises	Complete		
		Opening of new premises	W/C 5 th August 2024		
		Internal works and set up of temporary offices at Steve Van de Kerkhove Centre	July 2024		
		Connectivity set up for both sites	July 2024		
		Relocation of Council offices to Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Centre	September 2024		
EXTERNAL PROJECTS WITH FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS					
Revamp the Ramp Enhancement of St Neots Skatepark ramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This project is external to the Council but sits within its strategy.The Council resolved to award £50,210.88 in funding towards enhancing the skatepark.Following the Council’s resolution the applicant was able to agree to a large reduction in the cost of the refurbishment work with the preferred contractor. The total cost of the project was reduced from £75,210.88 to £43,450.00 +VAT.	Engaging of contractor by HDC	Complete	£50,210.88	Funding awarded from CIL Reserves
		Confirmation of work commencement date by contractor	Complete		
		Implementation of refurbishment Work	19 th August ‘24		
		Completion of works and sign offs	Pre-30 th August ‘24		
		Invoicing of project costs and Town Council CIL contribution between HDC, SNTC and Revamp the Ramp.	September 2024		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reduction in project cost means only £35,343 in Town Council CIL funding will need to be drawn down to complete the project. This funding sits alongside other project funding secured by Revamp the Ramp. 				
Splash Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council resolved to 'reserve' £650,000 in CIL reserves for the St Neots Splash Park Project. Release of any funding is subject to the negotiation and agreement of formal agreements and conditions set out within those documents which will require meeting to the Council's satisfaction. Such documents and conditions are to provide assurances and protection on the investment of public funds and the long term viability of the project. Discrepancies highlighted by Councillors in the Splash Park business to be reviewed and updated. The Councillor's Trustee on the CIO is taking the lead on Business Case review. Release of any funding is also dependent on confirmation from the Charity Commission that amendment of the Trust Deed to permit the building of a splash park is approved. All relevant applications have been made by the CIO and the outcome is awaited. The Clerk is seeking advice on points/conditions Councillors have fed through as part of drawing up a draft grant agreement with solicitors with a view to agreeing a clear set of points and areas where conditions and agreements will address risks and provide assurance on operation and sustainability. SNAL CIO engaging professionals to draw up formal agreements with proposed operator of the site. The CIO is liaising with the Town Clerk with regard to the required documents. Resolved Vesting Declaration ratification including indemnity assurances has been negotiated by solicitors and will be shared with Councilors by the Town Clerk. Two Councillors are required to sign the Vesting Declaration in line with the Council's resolution. 				Previous funding request of £650,000 to be considered

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02/06/2024

St Neots Town Council

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ASSET LIST BY GROUP AND LOCATION

User: TK

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
Buildings - Town Clerk				
BD001	Royal British Ledgeon -ex-service club in Eaton Socon	95,000.00	95,000.00	1,200,000.00
BD002	Magistrates Court (Perhaps Coffee Shop)	87,500.00	87,500.00	0.00
BD003	Magistrates Court Museum	262,500.00	262,500.00	1,650,000.00
BD004	Gatelodge Cemetery Lane Kingfisher (incl kitchen)	81,670.00	81,670.00	309,868.87
BD005	Old Mortuary Store Room Eaton Socon Cemetery	1,335.00	1,335.00	135,000.00
BD006	Old Mortuary Store St Neots Cemetery Lane	3,900.00	3,900.00	77,487.40
BD007	Eatons Centre	1,026,960.00	1,026,960.00	2,246,224.62
BD008	Priory Centre (building inusred by HDC)	834,722.00	834,722.00	0.00
BD009	Town Council Offices	141,380.00	141,380.00	219,543.98
BD010	The Lock up (Cage) - Eaton Socon	1.00	1.00	84,233.44
BD011	South Street Public Convenience	73,224.00	73,224.00	270,000.00
BD012	Steve Van de Kerkhove (former Red Cross)	3,712.00	3,712.00	240,000.00
BD013	Steve Van de Kerkhove (former SJA)	48,410.00	48,410.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Buildings - Town Clerk		2,660,314.00	2,660,314.00	6,432,358.31
Bus Shelters - Operations Manager				
BS001	Andrew Road bus shelter	1,296.00	1,296.00	3,560.17
BS002	Great North Rd bus shelter	2,100.00	2,100.00	3,523.74
BS003	Eaton Socon Green bus shelter	6,850.00	6,850.00	11,383.25
BS004	Monarch Road bus shelter	2,800.00	2,800.00	4,476.94
BS005	Bushmead Road bus shelter	2,128.00	2,128.00	3,467.51
BS006	Standfield Road bus shelter	1,373.00	1,373.00	2,236.07
BS007	Hewitts Gardens bus shelter	1,623.00	1,623.00	2,643.36
BS008	Hardwick Road bus shelter	1,373.00	1,373.00	2,236.07
BS009	Queens Road 2 bus shelters	4,597.00	4,597.00	6,458.98
BS010	Potton Road bus shelter	1.00	1.00	3,663.97
BS011	Market Square 4 bus shelters	21,851.00	21,851.00	27,816.80
TOTAL FOR Bus Shelters - Operations Manager		45,992.00	45,992.00	71,466.86
Cemetries - Operations Manager				
BE003	Memorial benches - brough forward	6,345.00	6,345.00	0.00
BE005	Westminter Bench	729.00	729.00	0.00
LO038	Footpath resurfacing - Cemetery Road	15,260.00	15,260.00	0.00
MG001	Forget Me Not bench	643.00	643.00	0.00
MG002	Water feature & paving	2,854.87	2,854.87	0.00
MG003	Water feature - Solar unit & pump	1,148.29	1,148.29	0.00
MG004	Build cost	10,690.04	10,690.04	0.00
TOTAL FOR Cemetries - Operations Manager		37,670.20	37,670.20	0.00
Civic - Deputy Town Clerk				
CV001	Gavel	75.00	75.00	0.00
CV002	Mayoral Board x 2	184.00	184.00	0.00
CV003	Civic Regalia (chain and badge) x 3 with engraving	7,385.00	7,385.00	12,322.39
CV004	Town Crier's Uniform	3,672.00	3,672.00	4,933.01
CV005	Town Mace (donated from Councillor)	1.00	1.00	7,416.00
CV006	Civic Regalia (robe Mayor)	1.00	1.00	7,416.00
CV007	Civic Regalia (robe Deputy Mayor)	1.00	1.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Civic - Deputy Town Clerk		11,319.00	11,319.00	32,087.40
Defibrillators - Operations Manager				
DF001	Defib-ES football club	1.00	1.00	0.00
DF002	Defib-Love's Farm House	1.00	1.00	0.00
DF003	Defib-Priory Centre	1.00	1.00	0.00
DF004	Defib-St Neots Ambulance Station	1.00	1.00	0.00
DF005	Defib-Montagu Square Day Nursery	1.00	1.00	0.00

St Neots Town Council
ASSET LIST BY GROUP AND LOCATION

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
DF006	Defib-ES Green	1.00	1.00	0.00
DF007	DEfib - Queens Gardens	1.00	1.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Defibrillators - Operations Manager		7.00	7.00	0.00
Eastons Centre FFE - Centres Manager				
EC001	George (wet/dry) vacuum cleaner	141.00	141.00	0.00
EC002	Mach Numatic Twin Tech floor scrubber	864.00	864.00	0.00
EC003	Tables (30) and chairs (200)	5,847.00	5,847.00	0.00
EC004	Bottle cooler (bar fridge)	1,198.00	1,198.00	0.00
EC005	Kitchen fridge	1.00	1.00	0.00
EC006	Storage Container	1,800.00	1,800.00	0.00
EC007	Vacuum cleaner (Ken Booth)	180.00	180.00	0.00
EC008	Terrace furniture	3,836.00	3,836.00	0.00
EC009	Armchairs Ikea	317.00	317.00	0.00
EC010	Mocrowave - Argos	92.00	92.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Eastons Centre FFE - Centres Manager		14,276.00	14,276.00	0.00
Events Equipment - Operations Manager				
EV001	Bespoke TC Gazebo	1,057.00	1,057.00	0.00
OE059	Market sound equipment	1,167.00	1,167.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Events Equipment - Operations Manager		2,224.00	2,224.00	0.00
Land and open spaces - Operations Manager				
LO001	Village Green Eaton Ford	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO002	Village Green Eaton Socon	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO003	Village Green Eynesbury	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO004	Sydney Banks Filed	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00
LO005	Shady Walk play area and car park land	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
LO006	Saxon Gate play area land	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
LO007	Riversmead play area, Air Cadets and Tabel Tennis land	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00
LO008	Ackerman Street play area land	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00
LO009	Brickhills play area land	80,000.00	80,000.00	0.00
LO010	Swift Close play area land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO011	Nelson Road play area land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO012	Chamberlain Way play area land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO013	Dukes Rd/Kings Road play area land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO014	Balmoral Way play area land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO015	Barford Road Eynesbury open space	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO016	Bevington Way play area land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO017	Garden of Rest Tan Yard	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO018	Hallards open space	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO020	Duck Lane land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO021	The River Bridge	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO022	Arnhem Close Eaton Ford land	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO023	Cemetery Road allotments	35,000.00	35,000.00	0.00
LO024	Hardwick Road allotments	7,500.00	7,500.00	0.00
LO025	Eaton Socon cemeteries	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO026	Cemetery Road cemeteries (left and rtight)	2.00	2.00	0.00
LO027	Howitts Lane Eynesbury cemeteries	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO028	School Lane Eynesbury cemeteries	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO029	Fox Brook half land on Churh Meadow side	1.00	1.00	0.00
LO030	Jubilee Gardens Mosaic and railings	11,250.00	11,250.00	13,250.40
LO031	Cemetery Lane footpath	40,065.00	40,065.00	0.00
LO032	Cemetery Lane railings and wall	115,267.00	115,267.00	0.00
LO033	Moorings barrier fence	2,640.00	2,640.00	0.00
LO034	River frontage PC decking	23,832.00	23,832.00	0.00
LO035	Red Cross Fence	1,772.00	1,772.00	0.00

St Neots Town Council
ASSET LIST BY GROUP AND LOCATION

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
LO036	Footpath/Carriageway Eaton Socon Cemetery	8,355.00	8,355.00	0.00
LO037	Footpath resurfacing Eynesbury Cemetery	9,387.00	9,387.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Land and open spaces - Operations Manager		610,089.00	610,089.00	13,250.40
Land and open spaces - Town Clerk				
LO019	Eatons Centre land	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Land and open spaces - Town Clerk		15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
Monuments - Operations Manager				
MN001	New Day Column	69,198.00	69,198.00	99,336.35
MN002	Millenium CLOCK	4,524.00	4,524.00	7,120.31
MN003	The Round House Wooden Structure St Neots Cemeteries	1.00	1.00	9,220.64
TOTAL FOR Monuments - Operations Manager		73,723.00	73,723.00	115,677.30
Office equipment and furniture - Deputy Town Clerk				
OF001	Large desks x 2	537.00	537.00	0.00
OF002	Office furniture - 4 desks and 2 key safes, st pedestal x 7	3,140.00	3,140.00	0.00
OF003	Conferece table	250.00	250.00	0.00
OF004	Conference chairs x 2	100.00	100.00	0.00
OF005	Book cases	300.00	300.00	0.00
OF006	Projector	925.00	925.00	0.00
OF007	Steel filing cupboard x 1	163.00	163.00	0.00
OF008	2 Drawer Fireproof Caninet	1.00	1.00	0.00
OF009	4 drawer filing cabinet x 1	250.00	250.00	0.00
OF010	2 drawer filing cabinet x 2	75.00	75.00	0.00
OF011	Firesafe cabinets x 2	1,246.00	1,246.00	0.00
OF012	Air conditioning	3,325.00	3,325.00	0.00
OF013	Xerox printer	121.00	121.00	0.00
OF014	Binder Espo	109.00	109.00	0.00
OF015	Office chairs ESPO	111.00	111.00	0.00
OF016	Office drawer unit ESPO	107.00	107.00	0.00
OF017	Audio system TC	10,895.00	10,895.00	0.00
OF018	Shelving and storage units	423.00	423.00	0.00
OF019	Desks x 2	411.00	411.00	0.00
OF020	Office chairs x 7	1,195.00	1,195.00	0.00
OF021	Office chair excecutive	279.00	279.00	0.00
OF022	Filing cabinet ESPO	225.00	225.00	0.00
OF024	IT Hardware-2laptops, 2 firewalls, 2 network switch	2,715.00	2,715.00	0.00
OF026	Mobile phone x 3 (187460240)	887.00	887.00	0.00
OF027	Vostro lap tops x 11 1 HP Prodesk monitors and cables	12,234.00	12,234.00	0.00
OF028	Headsets x 4	450.00	450.00	0.00
OF029	Microwave	150.00	150.00	0.00
OF032	Mobile phone	152.14	152.14	0.00
OF033	Mobile phone	152.14	152.14	0.00
OF034	Mobile phone	152.14	152.14	0.00
OF035	Storage shelves TC	112.50	112.50	0.00
OF038	Iphone 11	254.99	254.99	0.00
OF039	Iphone SE2020	129.99	129.99	0.00
OF040	Motorla phones x 8	599.94	599.94	0.00
OF041	IPhone 11	429.99	429.99	0.00
TOTAL FOR Office equipment and furniture - Deputy Town Clerk		42,607.83	42,607.83	0.00
Office equipment and furniture - Operations Manager				
OE074	Dewalt 18v Combi Drill	116.66	116.66	0.00
OF023	PAT Tester	945.00	945.00	0.00
OF036	2 x Mitsubishi air con units	3,270.00	3,270.00	0.00

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
OF037	Smoke Cloak - vertical mount	6,500.00	6,500.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Office equipment and furniture - Operations Manager		10,831.66	10,831.66	0.00
Operations tools and equipment - Operations Manager				
OE001	Water pumps x 6 (2505)	255.00	255.00	0.00
OE002	Strimmer x 2 (2601)	261.00	261.00	0.00
OE003	Safety Gear	150.00	150.00	0.00
OE004	Ground maintenance tools (1501816)	1,966.00	1,966.00	0.00
OE005	Workmate bench	100.00	100.00	0.00
OE006	Electric drill	250.00	250.00	0.00
OE007	Ladders/steps	100.00	100.00	0.00
OE008	Sundry small tools	500.00	500.00	0.00
OE009	Tool chest	970.00	970.00	0.00
OE010	Tree equipment	552.00	552.00	0.00
OE011	Gravedigging equipment	11,570.00	11,570.00	0.00
OE012	Combi drill	227.00	227.00	0.00
OE013	Mulching kit	135.00	135.00	0.00
OE014	Pressure washer - petrol and diesel	1,497.00	1,497.00	0.00
OE015	Cement mixer	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE016	Barriers for events x 58	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE017	Compressor for pumping tires	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE018	Generators x 2 small	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE019	Generators x 1 big	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE020	Mountfiled toler	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE021	Western H250PW Waterer x 2 (27501)	2,751.00	2,751.00	0.00
OE022	Western Telescopic Lance	85.00	85.00	0.00
OE023	Crowd barriers	1,025.00	1,025.00	0.00
OE024	Hazardous cabinets x 4	557.00	557.00	0.00
OE025	Various tools	935.00	935.00	0.00
OE026	Honda Tiller	475.00	475.00	0.00
OE027	STIHL Backpack blower	345.00	345.00	0.00
OE028	Aluminium tower	1,111.00	1,111.00	0.00
OE029	Rotavator for allotments	1,190.00	1,190.00	0.00
OE030	Shredder/chipper	3,100.00	3,100.00	0.00
OE031	Speed indicator device	2,400.00	2,400.00	0.00
OE032	Hammer drill	150.00	150.00	0.00
OE033	Orbital action jigsaw	130.00	130.00	0.00
OE034	New alarm centre	450.00	450.00	0.00
OE035	Grass trimmer x 2	248.00	248.00	0.00
OE036	Ventillation control (HFR Banks)	1,098.00	1,098.00	0.00
OE038	Cordless Hedge Trimmer	214.00	214.00	0.00
OE039	STIHL Cordless Pruner	360.00	360.00	0.00
OE040	STIHL Hedge Trimmer x 5	1,223.00	1,223.00	0.00
OE041	STIHL Chainsaw	253.00	253.00	0.00
OE042	STIHL Chainsaw M Tron	496.00	496.00	0.00
OE043	STIHL Brushcutter x 2 2 belt and battery (11041256)	2,360.00	2,360.00	0.00
OE044	STIHL LI Hedge Cutter x 2 (333.75346.5)	680.00	680.00	0.00
OE045	Security gate	900.00	900.00	0.00
OE046	Portable staging and handrails for events (ins value)	4,882.00	4,882.00	0.00
OE047	Gazebos for events	9,512.00	9,512.00	0.00
OE048	Hedgecutter attachment	217.00	217.00	0.00
OE049	Drill	242.00	242.00	0.00
OE050	Trade furniture	1,666.00	1,666.00	0.00
OE051	Grave digging equipment Telshore	3,025.00	3,025.00	0.00
OE052	STIHL Blowerand battery (Arthur Ibbett)	641.00	641.00	0.00
OE053	Vault Liner Telshore	632.00	632.00	0.00
OE054	Shoring equipment Telshore	996.00	996.00	0.00

ASSET LIST BY GROUP AND LOCATION

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
OE055	Lifebuoy housing rope	238.00	238.00	0.00
OE056	STIHL hand pruner (Arthurr Ibbett)	145.00	145.00	0.00
OE057	Charging points Podpoint	1,746.00	1,746.00	0.00
OE060	Catenary wires for Christmas Lights	1,238.00	1,238.00	0.00
OE061	Genartor small donated	1.00	1.00	0.00
OE062	STIHL BR430 Backpack Blower	380.00	380.00	0.00
OE063	STIHL BG86 C-E Blower x4	960.00	960.00	0.00
OE064	STIHL SH86 c-e SHREDDER VACC	140.00	140.00	0.00
OE065	STIHL BR700 BACKPACK BLOWER X 2	1,270.00	1,270.00	0.00
OE066	STIHL CULTIVATOR	565.00	565.00	0.00
OE0067	3000L STIHL BATTERY AND CARRY SYS	1,354.50	1,354.50	0.00
OE068	STIHL SHSA 94 HEDGE CUTTER	373.50	373.50	0.00
OE069	STIHL HTA 86 POLE PRUNER	439.98	439.98	0.00
OE070	STIHL Battery Chainsaw	251.25	251.25	0.00
OE071	Dewalt 18V Circular Saw	104.17	104.17	0.00
OE072A	Dewalt 125 mm Ro Sander	166.65	166.65	0.00
OE073	S1KM FCB Bent	99.34	99.34	0.00
OE075A	Dewalt 18v 1/4" Router/Trimmer	266.66	266.66	0.00
TOTAL FOR Operations tools and equipment - Operations Manager		72,627.05	72,627.05	0.00
Play Areas Equipment - Operations Manager				
PA001	Saxon Gate Musgrave play equipment	58,098.00	58,098.00	78,676.34
PA002	Balmoral Way play equipment	16,833.00	16,833.00	22,072.13
PA003	Kings Road Dukes Rd play equipment	33,768.00	33,768.00	35,449.18
PA004	Swift Close play equipment	8,239.00	8,239.00	11,576.12
PA005	Ackerman Street play equipment	45,629.00	45,629.00	55,199.20
PA006	Nelson Road play equipment	14,149.00	14,149.00	20,281.25
PA007	Brickhills play equipment	53,973.00	53,973.00	54,000.00
PA008	Riversmead play equipment incl fencing	73,960.00	73,960.00	74,140.00
PA009	Shady Walk play equipment incl fencing	37,503.00	37,503.00	43,790.39
PA010	Duck Lane play equipment	58,805.00	58,805.00	83,467.74
PA011	Bushmead play equipment	1.00	1.00	85,145.44
PA012	Chamberlain Way play equipment	23,428.00	23,428.00	24,000.00
PA014	Bevington Way play equipment	1.00	1.00	21,012.00
PA015	Sydney Banks gym equipment	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
PA016	VIPPY See Saw Depot - Kings Road	885.00	885.00	0.00
PA017	Bushmead - Self closing Gate	1,438.04	1,438.04	0.00
PA018	Brickhills Inclusive Play Area Equipment	79,991.83	79,991.83	0.00
TOTAL FOR Play Areas Equipment - Operations Manager		507,701.87	507,701.87	608,809.79
Priory Centre FFE - Centres Manager				
PC001	Tiered seating GH	51,073.00	51,073.00	0.00
PC002	Marquee	4,224.00	4,224.00	0.00
PC003	Curtains GH	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
PC004	Carpets and flooring	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00
PC005	Adjustable steps (approx 5)	1,386.00	1,386.00	0.00
PC006	Lighting and controller (stage)	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00
PC007	Glass washer (downstairs bar)	1,972.00	1,972.00	0.00
PC009	Folding tables (Great Hall)	1,400.00	1,400.00	0.00
PC010	Fixed leg tables (Great Hall)	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00
PC011	Round tables (Great Hall)	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
PC012	Tables and chairs (Guest Hall)	2,800.00	2,800.00	0.00
PC013	Folding tables (Guest Hall)	1,140.00	1,140.00	0.00
PC014	Folding Tables (Moot)	2,754.00	2,754.00	0.00
PC015	Furniture (Foyer and bar)	7,100.00	7,100.00	0.00
PC016	Visual aid (Main Office)	2,020.00	2,020.00	0.00
PC017	Furniture (Managers office)	600.00	600.00	0.00

St Neots Town Council
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Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
PC018	Furniture (Cash office)	250.00	250.00	0.00
PC019	Safe (Cash Office)	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00
PC020	Sound Equipment (hi-fi, large speakers etc)	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
PC021	Televsison/dvodeo (coffee bar)	600.00	600.00	0.00
PC022	Storage cupboards	500.00	500.00	0.00
PC023	Bingo equipment (Guest Hall)	500.00	500.00	0.00
PC024	Toddlers Gym equipment (Guest Hall)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
PC025	Floor polisher (store cupboard)	575.00	575.00	0.00
PC026	GAMKO Bottle Fridge -(upstairs bar)	1,142.00	1,142.00	0.00
PC027	Till (upstairs bar)	1,400.00	1,400.00	0.00
PC028	New cooling system cellar	2,450.00	2,450.00	0.00
PC029	New signage	3,351.00	3,351.00	0.00
PC030	New kitchen	45,230.00	45,230.00	0.00
PC031	New bar fridge/freezers	1,508.00	1,508.00	0.00
PC032	CCTV camrears (with installation)	7,022.00	7,022.00	19,669.09
PC033	Disco lights	1,501.00	1,501.00	0.00
PC034	Vax vacuum cleaner	180.00	180.00	0.00
PC035	Henry vacuum cleaner	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC036	Vax carpet cleaner	458.00	458.00	0.00
PC037	Fire alarm system building	9,675.00	9,675.00	0.00
PC038	Terrace furniture	2,988.00	2,988.00	0.00
PC039	Evacuation chair upstairs	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC040	Large decorative wooden chairs x 4 (donated by Councillor)	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC041	New chairs 200 (Great Hall)	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00
PC042	Tables (café)	825.00	825.00	0.00
PC043	Chairs (café)	1,235.00	1,235.00	0.00
PC044	Podium ladder	375.00	375.00	0.00
PC045	Curtains to windows and stage (Great Hall)	7,700.00	7,700.00	0.00
PC046	Blinds (Guest Hall)	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC047	Blinds (Moots)	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC048	Blinds (Cloisters)	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC049	Stage equipemnt upgrade	1,878.00	1,878.00	0.00
PC050	Tableware and cuttlery	1,354.00	1,354.00	0.00
PC051	IKEA desk and shelves	476.00	476.00	0.00
PC052	IKEA cabiner and shelves	242.00	242.00	0.00
PC054	Drill and saw	208.00	208.00	0.00
PC055	Switches steam cleaner	184.00	184.00	0.00
PC056	Multimeadia player	236.00	236.00	0.00
PC057	Scrubber dryer	1,247.00	1,247.00	0.00
PC058	Potato oven (café)	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC059	Panini machine (café)	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC060	Telephones	150.00	150.00	0.00
PC061	George (wet/dry) vacuum cleaner	1.00	1.00	0.00
PC062	Glasswasher upstairs	866.63	866.63	0.00
PC063	Tiered Seating Pull handles	510.30	510.30	0.00
PC064	Combi Microwave - Cafe	116.38	116.38	0.00
PC065	Pie Cabinet - PC Kitchen	179.99	179.99	0.00
PC066	Refrigerated Prep Counter	943.99	943.99	0.00
PC067	Cellar Cooling Sysyem	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Priory Centre FFE - Centres Manager		220,735.29	220,735.29	19,669.09
Street Furniture - Operations Manager				
BE001	Public seats and benches brough forward x 31	6,097.00	6,097.00	8,425.22
BE002	WW1 Bench	1,951.00	1,951.00	2,558.29
BE004	Commemorative seat Plat Jubilee	1,086.00	1,086.00	0.00
BR001	Bike racks - Market Square	6,294.00	6,294.00	0.00

ASSET LIST BY GROUP AND LOCATION

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
FE001	Fencing various sites	9,563.00	9,563.00	0.00
LB001	Litter bins x 18	6,039.00	6,039.00	0.00
LB002	Litter bins x 4	1,180.00	1,180.00	0.00
NB001	Notice Boards brough forward x 15	14,398.00	14,398.00	25,321.99
NB002	Heritage Notice Boards	2,572.00	2,572.00	3,372.52
NB003	Notice board Bripat	890.00	890.00	0.00
NB004	Notice board Bripat- 2 PC and 2 Market Square	468.00	468.00	0.00
PL001	Parklets Market Square with planters	19,406.00	19,406.00	20,245.68
PL002	Self watering meter	1,227.00	1,227.00	0.00
PL003	Planters x 25	25.00	25.00	0.00
PS001	Play area signs x 26	2,141.00	2,141.00	0.00
SH001	Youth Shelter Monarch Road	4,663.00	4,663.00	6,955.66
VS001	Village sign Eaton Ford	2,000.00	2,000.00	3,560.17
VS002	Village sign Eaton Socon	2,000.00	2,000.00	3,560.17
VS003	Village sign Eynesbury	2,000.00	2,000.00	3,560.17
VS004	Jubilee Gardens wooden sign	1.00	1.00	3,323.76
VS005	Mancave sign	170.00	170.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Street Furniture - Operations Manager		84,171.00	84,171.00	80,883.63
Street Lights - Operations Manager				
SL001	Streel Lights brough forward	63,898.00	63,898.00	0.00
SL002	Street Lights 12 added	26,791.00	26,791.00	0.00
SL003	Street Lights Marchioness Way	2,548.00	2,548.00	0.00
SL004	Street Lights Trafalgar Road	10,057.00	10,057.00	0.00
SL005	Street Lights Church Yard	3,437.00	3,437.00	0.00
SL006	Street Lights outside priory Centre	2,069.00	2,069.00	0.00
SL007	Street Lights Navigation Wharf	17,875.00	17,875.00	0.00
SL008	Street Lights Cemetery Lane	32,399.00	32,399.00	0.00
TOTAL FOR Street Lights - Operations Manager		159,074.00	159,074.00	0.00
Vehicles, mowers, trailers - Operations Manager				
MV001	Peugeot van	8,100.00	8,100.00	0.00
MV002	Ford Ranger	10,790.00	10,790.00	0.00
MV003	Blue trailer (same as paxton)	717.00	717.00	1,545.00
MV004	Trailer Bateson	2,115.00	2,115.00	3,239.12
MV005	Trailers - 1 Plant and 1 tipper	4,962.00	4,962.00	9,737.90
MV006	Bateson 1064 trailer	1,988.00	1,988.00	3,239.12
MV007	A Paxton Trailer (same as Blue trailer)	1.00	1.00	1,545.00
MV008	Nissan Navara	16,091.00	16,091.00	0.00
MV009	Etesia Hydro 100D mower	9,400.00	9,400.00	0.00
MV010	Sickle Bar Mower	1,040.00	1,040.00	0.00
MV014	Grasshopper mower	8,820.00	8,820.00	0.00
MV016	AS Mulch mowers	634.00	634.00	0.00
MV017	Stihl Combi L-ion	248.00	248.00	0.00
MV018	AS Mulch mowers	753.00	753.00	0.00
MV019	Stihl heated handles chainsaw	650.00	650.00	0.00
MV020	John Deere JX90 mower	1.00	1.00	0.00
MV021	STIGA Multichip mower	1.00	1.00	0.00
MV022	ETESIA Pro50 mower	1.00	1.00	0.00
MV023	Toro Hover mower	1.00	1.00	0.00
MV024	Marshall Ford Transit	19,446.00	19,446.00	0.00
MV025	Shellplant excavator (Kubato digger)	15,250.00	15,250.00	21,426.86
MV028	Greenmech Toad Tow Chipper (wood chipper)	13,400.00	13,400.00	18,827.54
MV030	Grasshopper mower	12,100.00	12,100.00	0.00
MV032	Stihl mowers (electric)	4,949.00	4,949.00	0.00
MV034	Nissan NV400	23,470.00	23,470.00	0.00
MV035	Nissan E-NV200	22,263.00	22,263.00	0.00

Asset Code	Description	Original Cost	Current Value	Insurance Value
MV036	S8 Multiclip	595.00	595.00	0.00
MV037	Nissan Navara	23,220.00	23,220.00	0.00
MV038	M3GRASSHOPPER MOWER	14,400.00	14,400.00	0.00
MV039	M3GRASSHOPPER MOWER	16,300.00	16,300.00	0.00
MV040	M3GRASSHOPPER MOWER	16,300.00	16,300.00	0.00
MV041	3 MOWER LIGHTING KIT	2,400.00	2,400.00	0.00
MV042	MULCH MOWER	1,062.50	1,062.50	0.00
TOTAL FOR Vehicles, mowers, trailers - Operations Manager		251,468.50	251,468.50	59,560.54
TOTAL		4,819,831.40	4,819,831.40	7,433,763.32

ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL

Committee	FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Date:	23 rd July 2024
Title:	LEASE HIRE AGREEMENT
Contact Officer/S:	GENERAL MANAGER PRIORY AND EATONS CENTRES

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek the Council's approval of a lease hire agreement for a storage container to support the temporary closure and relocation of the Priory Centre and Council offices.

2. Recommendation from Finance and Governance Committee

- 2.1 That the Council approve the Priory Centre General Manager enter into a hire lease for a 40ft container to be located at the Eatons Centre at a cost of £2.50 per day for an initial period of three months followed by a monthly renewal on the basis of need as the Priory Centre redevelopment progresses.
- 2.2 That the cost associated with the storage hire is allocated to the Council's temporary closure budget.

3. Background

- 3.1 As part of the redevelopment of the Priory Centre it is necessary to close and empty the building. As part of this process contents will be moved where practical to other council operated locations, or where applicable disposed of if it has reached the end of its life. However, there is a need for temporary storage for a lot of Council and Priory Centre contents, including some newly purchased contents as part of the Council's temporary Priory Centre relocation.
- 3.2 The General Manager of the Priory and Eatons Centres has identified a storage container located at the Eatons as the most practicable, flexible and cost-effective option.
- 3.3 The Council's financial regulations state that the Council must approve entering into any purchase or hire agreements.

4. Information

- 4.1 The hire agreement is based on the following;

Provision of a static storage container with the following dimensions;
40ft long x 8ft wide x 8ft 6in high
Hire charge of £2.50 per day
Inclusion of locks and keys which are to be returned at the end of hire period
Initial minimum hire contractor of 90 days
Renewable on a monthly basis following initial 90 day period

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The initial 90 day hire cost will be £225 +VAT
- 5.2 It is anticipated the storage container will be required for a 12-month period dependent on the Priory Centre redevelopment timeframes. Based on the 12 month hire period the total cost would be £912.50 + VAT
- 5.1 The Council has a budget of £50,000 for cost associated with the temporary closure of the Priory Centre and Council offices. This budget is able to accommodate the costs of the storage hire which were included in costs previously presented to the Council when it considered and approved temporary rental of alternative Priory Centre space.