

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Resources

Monday 5th November 2018

Contact Officer: Town Clerk

Subject: Staff Handbook

Background

The suite of human resources policies were last reviewed in November 2017. Since then, the Council have engaged an HR provider (ELAS). ELAS have incorporated the last policies into an updated version of the Staff Handbook in line with relevant legislation using ACAS and government guidance.

Recommendation

To review and agree the updated Staff Handbook, and to adopt with immediate effect.



BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL HANDBOOK

INDEX

1. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES	3
2. ATTENDANCE AND TIME KEEPING.....	4
3. TIME RECORDING	4
4. HOLIDAYS	4
5. MEDICAL TREATMENT	5
6. SICKNESS ABSENCE	5
7. ILL HEALTH CAPABILITY PROCEDURE.....	5
8. NON EMERGENCY APPOINTMENTS.....	6
9. ABSENCE – UNION ACTIVITIES, JURY DUTY ETC	6
10. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE.....	7
11. FAMILY RIGHTS	7
12. ACCIDENTS OR INJURY AT WORK	7
13. FIRE PRECAUTIONS	7
14. HEALTH AND SAFETY	8
15. SMOKING (including e-cigarettes).....	10
16. ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND SOLVENTS ABUSE.....	11
17. REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL.....	13
18. OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND PRIVATE TRADING – this clause does not apply to Zero Hour Contracts	14
19. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND NON SOLICITATION/ NON COMPETITION/NON DEALING	14
20. WORKING WITH COUNCILLORS.....	16
21. EXPENSES	16
22. SECURITY.....	16
23. PATENTS, COPYRIGHTS AND DESIGNS.....	16
24. GRATUITIES	17
25. PROPERTY TO BE RETURNED ON TERMINATION	17
26. SHORTAGE OF WORK/LAY OFF	17
27. TELEPHONE, COMPUTER SECURITY, INTERNET AND E-MAIL ACCESS AND MISUSE	17
28. TELEPHONE (OFFICE AND MOBILE PHONES).....	19
29. DRESS AND APPEARANCE	20
30. TRAINING AND EDUCATION	20
31. APPRAISALS - See Appraisal Performance Management Policy.....	21
32. CUSTOMER CARE	21
33. EXTREME WEATHER.....	21
34. CORRESPONDENCE	22
35. CHANGES IN TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	22
36. CHANGES IN PERSONAL DETAILS OR CIRCUMSTANCES	22
37. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY	23
38. GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE.....	23
39. DISCIPLINARY AND DISMISSAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE.....	26
40. HARASSMENT POLICY	30
41. BRIBERY ACT POLICY	33
42. WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY	36
43. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY	38
44. DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018 POLICY.....	41
45. INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY	44

1. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Whilst in the employment of the Council you will:

- Observe and adhere to the safety rules and guidance within the Council's Health and Safety Policy agreed at the meeting of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee of 19/12/2011 (min. no. 637/11).
- Act in the best interests of the Council at all times.
- Work to an acceptable level, maintaining a high standard for the delivery of services to the residents of Buckingham.
- Work with a degree of flexibility and support other members of staff wherever possible.
- Comply with the Council's Equality Policy 2011 and uphold the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy which outlines the beliefs of the Council that all individuals have the right to be treated equally and ensure a working environment that is free from discrimination and prejudice and the fear of harassment.
- Obey the reasonable and lawful instructions of the Council and to be flexible in assisting the Council to achieve its objectives.
- Be aware that any conduct that puts your own or others health and safety at risk will be treated as gross misconduct.
- Be mindful that any conduct that is detrimental to the best interests of the Council or its relations with customers/clients, suppliers or the general public will be treated as gross misconduct.
- Remain loyal to the Council and not take part in any event or activity which may adversely affect the Council's best interests.
- Respect and care for the Council's property.
- Obey the rules and regulations laid down in the Council's Health and Safety Policy at all times and report any structure or equipment that may be faulty or any operative that may be working in a dangerous manner to the relevant officer of the council as soon as possible.
- Whilst working for the Council you will devote all time and attention to Council duties during your working hours.
- You must not engage in any other business, activity or employment, either inside or outside normal working hours that interferes with this duty.
- Notify the Council as soon as possible regarding any changes to your personal details such as your name, address or telephone number.

The main Council offices are open to the public between the following times:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| • Monday | By appointment only |
| • Tuesday | 11am – 5pm |
| • Wednesday | 10am – 5pm |
| • Thursday | 10am – 5pm |
| • Friday | 10am – 3pm |
| • Saturday | Closed |
| • Sunday | Closed |

You are expected to be present at council premises, as per your contracted hours.

Your employment carries with it certain implied and assumed obligations and one of these obligations is to confidentiality. The Council expects any information of a sensitive and confidential nature to be kept confidential and will not tolerate this information disseminated on to any individual or organisation which does not need to know or is not entitled to this information. Further details on the assumed obligation of

confidentiality are contained in the Council's Confidentiality Policy which is available from your line manager.

It is your responsibility to keep abreast of any changes to your working conditions. Any change to legislation or any Council decision that will carry a significant impact to your duties will take place after consultation with you.

2. ATTENDANCE AND TIME KEEPING

- The Council expects excellent attendance and timekeeping.
- Your attendance is monitored and persistent lateness or repeated unauthorised absence is treated as misconduct and will be dealt with under the Council's Discipline (Misconduct) policy.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that you are at work on time and ready to start work at your scheduled starting time.
- If you need to come in late for any reason, this should be reported to your line manager as soon as possible.
- If you are sick or injured and cannot attend work you must comply with the Council's Sickness Absence Management Policy and report this to your line manager as soon as possible.
- If you need to leave work before your scheduled finish time you must obtain prior permission from your line manager.

3. TIME RECORDING

- You are required to complete a timesheet or a rota sheet. You should complete this daily and it should be available to your line manager in the event of your sickness or unexpected absence. This sheet forms the basis for the calculation of your pay and times must be recorded accurately.
- Timesheets used by office staff allow a degree of flexibility; this is to allow for the attendance at evening meetings and weekend working for events etc. This timesheet is designed to allow the accumulation of lieu time and the flexibility of debit if unexpected events occur.
- If you fall into a constant debit situation on your timesheet you should report this to your line manager as soon as possible and attempt to make the time up before it becomes an escalating problem.
- Your timesheets / rota must be submitted to the Deputy Town Clerk at the date specified by the Finance Officer in order to allow payroll to be completed on time.
- It is an offence to falsify your timesheet. Such action is regarded as gross misconduct and will be dealt with under the Discipline (Misconduct) policy.
- It is also an offence if your actual time worked does not reflect your recorded hours.

4. HOLIDAYS

- Your annual leave entitlement is detailed in the Council's Annual & Other Leave Policy.
- Annual leave is authorised on a first come first served basis.
- You are required to submit your annual leave request to your line manager, who will authorise or reject, before passing to the Town Clerk.
- Your Annual Leave Request Form must state your Name, Job Title, how many days / hours annual leave you wish to take, the dates of the intended annual leave and the date which you intend to return to work.
- You must have authorised annual leave before booking any holidays.

- You must give notice in line with the Annual & Other Leave policy.
- The Council will honour annual leave requests wherever possible and, providing these days do not coincide with other staffs previously booked holidays, grant the request.
- All staff must take their annual leave entitlement. This should be spread over the year in order to avoid the panic booking of annual leave in the first quarter of the calendar year.
- The Council will consider the reinstatement of annual leave on an individual case basis if you have been taken ill whilst on annual leave.
- Requests for annual leave at short notice may be refused by the Council; the minimum notice required must be at least twice as many days in advance of the intended leave as the length of the intended leave.
- Should you wish to take more than 10 consecutive working days, you must obtain express prior permission from your line manager.

5. MEDICAL TREATMENT

Appointments for visiting the Doctor or Dentist should as far as possible be made outside working hours. Where an appointment can only be made within working hours, permission in advance must be obtained from your Manager. In respect of Hospital appointments which occur during working hours, the time taken to attend such appointments will be unpaid.

6. SICKNESS ABSENCE

- Sickness entitlement and pay is detailed in your contract of employment and the Council's agreed Sickness Absence Management Policy.
- You are expected to be available to work during your normal working hours. The Council expects you to make every attempt to attend work.
- If you are ill or are injured and cannot attend work you must comply with the procedure set out in the Sickness Absence Management policy.
- Failure to notify the Council or follow these rules and the Sickness Absence Management Policy could result in payment from the Council's Sickness Pay Scheme and the Statutory Sick Pay Scheme being withheld.
- The Council reserves the right to obtain a medical report from your GP/Consultant in order to ensure that you are fit to resume your duties.
- If you are absent due to injury/accident, you must inform the Town Council of any claim made against a third party as a result as this may affect the payments made to you through the Council's sick pay scheme.
- The Town Council's Sickness Absence Management Policy is available from the online shared Employee Information folder, or from your line manager on request.
- Should there be any recurring or lengthy absences from work due to the same or other illnesses or injury, you will be referred to the Council's Occupational Health provider for an independent assessment before you return to work. This ensures that any reasonable adjustments can be recommended and considered.
- If there is a sustained period of absence or a reoccurring absence of significance there will be a requirement to supply a fit note for each period of absence

7. ILL HEALTH CAPABILITY PROCEDURE

During any excessive period of absence, whether it is long term or intermittent absences, the Council will usually request that you attend an ill health capability meeting. The Council's Occupational Health provider will be consulted at all times.

The purpose of this meeting will usually include:

- Discussing the reasons for your absence.
- Where an employee is on long term sickness absence, discussing how long the absence is likely to last.
- Where an employee has been absent on a number of occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences.
- If it has not been obtained, consider whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, consider the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required.
- To acknowledge the impact that your absence has on the Council's ability to maintain its business and services.
- Considering the employee's ability to return to/to remain in their job when taking into account both your capabilities and the Council's business needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to their job to enable them to do so.
- Referral to the Council's Occupational Health provider.
- Where you are able to return to work from long term sick leave, whether to your job or lighter duties; agreeing a return to work programme, which may include a phased return.
- If it is unlikely that you are able to return to work, whether there are any benefits for which you should be considered.
- Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a timescale for review and/or further meeting(s). You should at all stages seek to inform us as to any duties or roles that you feel you may be able to still safely undertake despite your ill health.

8. NON EMERGENCY APPOINTMENTS

- Non-emergency appointments should be made outside working hours where possible. The Council does not allow paid time off for non-emergency appointments
- Where it is not possible to schedule an appointment outside working hours, disruption must be kept to a minimum by arranging the appointment at the very start and end of the day;
- Time off for such appointments will be unpaid unless:
 - Lost time is made up with the prior permission of your line manager;
 - Time is taken as lieu of annual leave, in which case you should comply with the Council's Annual Leave Policy and the Council's Holiday rules.
- Non-emergency appointments are considered to be:
 - Dentist
 - Doctors (non-emergency)
 - Some hospital appointments
 - Opticians

9. ABSENCE – UNION ACTIVITIES, JURY DUTY ETC

The Council understands that you may have certain obligations or duties that you will require time off to perform. These are set out on the Annual and Other Leave Policy.

10. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- Any absence which does not comply with the provisions of your contract relating to annual leave or sickness or which has not been expressly authorised by the Council or your line manager will be regarded as unauthorised absence and will result in disciplinary action being taken.

11. FAMILY RIGHTS

The Council has agreed a number of Policies and procedures which make up the framework of the Council's Family & Annual Leave Policy group. These policies are detailed further and are available from your line manager, or from the online shared Employee Information folder.

They include:

- Parental Leave;
- Time off for Dependants;
- Maternity Leave (includes rights to ante natal care)
- Paternity Leave;
- Adoption Leave; and
- Flexible Working

12. ACCIDENTS OR INJURY AT WORK

- Absences which result from accidents at work will be treated as sickness absence and you must refer to the Council's Sickness Absence Management policy in all cases.
- All accidents and incidents (including near miss incidents) must be reported to your line manager as soon as possible so that the cause can be ascertained; the control measures re-evaluated and action can be taken to prevent recurrence.
- **All accidents and incidents, no matter how minor must be recorded in the Accident Book.**
- You must abide by and obey the Council's Health and Safety at work policy at all times.
- It is your responsibility as an employee of the Council to provide complete and accurate information to enable management to find out what went wrong in the event of an incident to help assess what went wrong, learn lessons and take action to prevent accidents/incidents from occurring in the future.
- First Aid kits are held in the Town Council office, the Council Chamber, Lace Hill Sports and Community Centre, the Tourist Information Centre office and the grounds maintenance vehicle. There is also a First Aid Kit available at all Town Council events and is in the possession of Council personnel present at those events. A list of First Aid trained staff is posted on the Staff Notice Board and you should familiarise yourself with both the list of trained staff and the locations of the First Aid Kits.
- All injuries that are considered serious will be assessed by the Council's Occupational Health provider at a time convenient for both parties.

13. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

- You must abide by and obey the Council's Health and Safety at Work Policy at all times.
- Generally, all employees are required to maintain a good level of housekeeping at their workplace at all times. A clean and tidy workplace is less likely to be a source of fire.

- Any act or omission, which you believe to be a breach of the Council's Health and Safety at Work Policy, must be reported to your line manager as soon as possible in order to reduce any potential fire risk to an acceptable level.
- You must familiarise yourself with the evacuation procedure for the building and with any fire-fighting equipment which is provided.
- The main Town Council Office is housed within a facility controlled by Buckinghamshire County Council and Town Council policies and procedures in this area should not conflict with those of BCC.
- The assembly point for the building is the Staff Car Park at the end of Verney Close.
- Fire Marshalls are appointed by both the Town Council and BCC and work together to ensure that the building is thoroughly searched and evacuated in the event of a fire.
- The elevator should not be used in the event of a fire.
- All Council Members, staff, or visitors who have a disability which prevents them from using the stairs must be evacuated using the Evacuation Chairs placed on the landings of the stairs.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

15.1 The Council's Duty

The Council as an employer is required to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and welfare at work of all its employees. This duty includes:-

- The provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work, that are safe and without risk to health;
- The arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure health and safety;
- The provision and maintenance of safe places of work under their control, and access to an egress from them;
- The provision and maintenance of a working environment which is safe and without risks to health and which has adequate welfare facilities; and
- To conduct their undertakings in such a way that the health and safety of persons not in their employ (the public) is not endangered.

In recognition and acceptance of these duties, Buckingham Town Council, has adopted a series of health and safety policies. Copies of these policies can be obtained from Line Managers.

15.2 The Employee's Duty

Employees have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, other employees, and members of the public, likely to be affected by their acts or omissions.

Employees are also required to cooperate with employers and others in meeting statutory requirements and good health and safety practice. If employees fail to adhere to health and safety policies, the Council's Discipline (Misconduct) policy may also be invoked.

15.3 Accident Reporting

All accidents and dangerous occurrences (even those not resulting in personal injury), must be reported by the employee to his/her immediate Supervisor or line manager. Any accident should be logged in the accident book and information regarding potential dangerous locations or persons should be reported.

15.4 First Aid Facilities

First Aid Boxes are available within the council offices and storage buildings. Council vehicles also carry treatment for minor injuries. Employees should ensure they know where they can obtain first aid assistance and who the First Aid Officers are.

15.5 Lone Workers

The Town Council takes its responsibilities of its staff and contractors seriously and understands that this may also include contractors, agency workers, visitors and members of the public.

- **Lone Working**

Employees may be required to work by themselves from time to time. Lone workers are those employees who, at any time, work by themselves in the office, on client's premises or other locations away from the office.

Lone working may be on Town Council premises, on site elsewhere or on work related travel. Examples of lone working include:

- Opening and closing public amenities;
- Being based in a location away from other colleagues;
- Working late in the office;
- Visiting members of the public; or
- Outside contractors

Lone working may present a risk to the employee and typical examples risks may be:

- Accidents or incidents;
- Exposure to violence;
- Drunken or threatening behaviour;
- Indecent exposure; or
- Attempted criminal activity

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers have a legal obligation to care for the health, safety and welfare of their employees and contractors.

The council has a Lone Working policy, available from the online shared Employee Information folder, or from your line manager on request.

- **Employer responsibilities**

Line managers, guided by the Town Council's Health and Safety at Work Policy, are responsible for:

- Ensuring that arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working are in practice, current and effective;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the process for this is regularly monitored and is effective;
- Ensuring that all employees are aware and are familiar with this policy;
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly, implementing procedures and safe systems into practice which are designed to eliminate the risks associated with working alone;
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigation and the recording of incidents.

- **Employees responsibilities**

All employees that work alone are responsible for their own health, safety and welfare and for others that can come into contact with them whilst carrying out their work activities. All employees are expected to:

- Attend all relevant training;
- Co-operate with their line manager to ensure lone working arrangements are followed;
- Report incidents and hazards promptly and effectively to line management;
- Carry out ad hoc visual risk assessments on an ongoing basis;
- Ensure that any form of communication or equipment employees are issued with are in good working order at all times.

15.6 Health and Safety Training

Employees will be required to complete Health and Safety training which is deemed relevant to their post. If an employee feels they require additional or specific training, this should be related to their line manager for consideration.

15. SMOKING (including e-cigarettes)

- The Law which prohibits smoking in public places, including workplaces came into effect in England on 1st July 2007.
- It is the policy of the Council that all of its workplaces are smoke free. All employees of the Council are entitled to work in a smoke free environment.
- Smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace without exception. This includes Council Vehicles. This policy applies to all Council Members, employees, contractors, consultants, service users and visitors.
- Any breach of these rules will be treated as misconduct and may result in the implementation of the Council's Disciplinary procedure.

16. ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND SOLVENTS ABUSE

Drugs and Alcohol can have a severe impact on you and your colleagues and therefore this policy has been designed to ensure that you are working in a healthy and safe environment, free from the risks caused by Drugs and Alcohol as we feel this is a fundamental right of your employment.

Drugs and Alcohol impact on awareness, cohesion, reaction times and decision making. The work you do is potentially dangerous and can cause serious injury to yourself, colleagues and third parties if you conduct your tasks with Alcohol or Drugs in your system even where you may feel that you are unaffected. This policy has been designed to ensure that you are aware of your rights and duties regarding Drugs and Alcohol when you are at work and this policy is designed to protect you, your colleagues and third parties.

Drug misuse is defined as any controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 that is not possessed or used under the terms of a prescription and under advice from a Doctor, and the misuse of any drug obtained over the counter at a pharmacy, general retail medication or the use of any intoxicating substance that includes 'legal highs' and novel psychoactive substances.

Consumption of Alcohol on the Premises

Unless authorised by management, you are expressly forbidden to consume alcohol when at work, or bring it on to our premises, in our vehicles or on the premises of our clients under any circumstances.

Any breach of this rule will be treated as gross misconduct and is likely to result in summary dismissal.

Drug Misuse or Abuse and Medication on the Premises

If you misuse drugs during working hours or on our premises, in our vehicles or on the premises of our clients, you will be committing an act of gross misconduct and will thus render you likely to be summarily dismissed.

The same will apply to you if it is believed you are in possession of, or buying or selling of any illegal drugs, during working hours or on our premises, in our vehicles or on the premises of our clients.

Where you are taking medication, whether prescribed or 'over-the-counter,' you must ensure that you read the instructions and notify your manager if there are any potential side-effects. You must also exercise your own judgment in the way you are feeling and if you believe that the medication will, or is, having any effect on your work or fitness for work in any way whatsoever.

We reserve the right to alter your tasks, role or duties whilst taking such medications. We also reserve the right to deny you access to Council machines, equipment and vehicles or require you to carry your prescription at all times whilst using such medications.

Intoxicated Employees

If alcohol or drugs intoxicate an employee during working hours or on our premises, in our vehicles or on the premises of our clients except where authorised, arrangements will be made for the employee to be escorted from the premises immediately and they may be requested to undertake a test for drugs, alcohol or both at the request of a manager.

By "intoxicate" we mean that any drug is found in your urine that is above the European Workplace Drug Testing Guidelines, that you have alcohol in your breath above 22 micrograms, that you have alcohol in

your blood above 50 micrograms or that you have levels reported as positive from any UKAS accredited laboratory in any sample test. For absolute clarity, by "intoxicate" we mean the levels in your sample and in no way does this relate to your mental state or the influence alcohol or drugs are having on you.

Disciplinary action will take place when the employee has had time to become sober or recover from the effects of drugs.

Where you are found to be intoxicated as per the definition above, you will be immediately suspended from work. You will be escorted from the premises and your emergency contacts will be notified so that they can arrange for you to return home. This kind of behaviour will normally be treated as gross misconduct and likely to result in dismissal.

The Council will adopt a zero-tolerance policy to people driving vehicles above the appropriate breath alcohol level, as determined by legislation.

The following table should be used for guidance. If you are unsure as to what the appropriate level is then you should not drink alcohol and seek the advice of a manager.

The current drink drive limits are:

Level of alcohol	England, Wales & Northern Ireland	Scotland
Micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath	35	22
Milligrams per 100 millilitres of blood	80	50
Milligrams per 100 millilitres of urine	107	67

The levels in Europe vary greatly and it is the drivers' own responsibility to be aware of local laws in advance of travel. If driving in France there is a requirement to have breathalysers in the vehicle.

Testing

We reserve the right to require you to submit to a sample test at any time. Sample tests will include (but are not limited to) blood, urine, breath or saliva tests. A failure to adhere to this requirement will be considered a wilful refusal to follow a managerial instruction and adverse inferences may be drawn on your state of intoxication.

Testing will occur in one of the following situations:

1. Pre-Employment or Pre-Placement Testing
2. Random Testing
3. Reasonable Suspicion Testing
4. Post Accident Testing
5. Follow-Up Testing

Pre-Employment Testing may be required before your employment starts or during your probationary period. Pre-Placement Testing may be required before or during any temporary or permanent placement required for your employment, our clients or a third party. A failure to subject to testing or a failed test may result in the withdrawal of an offer of employment or placement or disciplinary action which in the circumstances may amount to gross misconduct.

Random testing will take place at our convenience and you may or may not be selected for testing. If you are selected, you will be expected to comply with this and we consider your co-operation a reasonable managerial instruction. Random testing will consist of a sample being taken in line with the chain of custody conditions and be sent to an accredited laboratory for analysis, the results of the tests for drugs may not immediately be known on the day.

We reserve the right to request that you comply with reasonable suspicion testing. This is where a senior or trained manager believes that you may be intoxicated as per the definition above. We believe that such a request is a reasonable managerial instruction. We may request that you submit to reasonable suspicion testing when we feel you are intoxicated and are present at our sites, the sites of our clients or engaged in activities in any other location for the purposes of your employment with us. You may also be requested to submit to reasonable suspicion testing at the request of our clients or third parties e.g. the Health and Safety Executive.

We reserve the right to request that you comply with post accident testing where an accident occurs that falls within the definition of The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and where the Council has a duty to notify the HSE.

Follow-up testing will be used in instances where the employee approaches in confidence and explains that they have a drug or alcohol problem or where an employee has a positive test and in the circumstances is not dismissed. You may be requested to undertake regular or ad hoc, frequent or infrequent testing. You may also be requested to participate in counselling, whether provided by your employer or not. These requests are considered a reasonable management instruction. Further positive tests or a wilful refusal to engage with the testing or counselling will be handled in accordance with the Council disciplinary procedure that may result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

You have the right to have any 'B Sample' tested where such a sample is taken. If you wish to exercise this right, we will not be obliged to facilitate or fund any such testing and you will be expected to do this yourself. In the event of an overturned test, we will balance all the available evidence without specific reliance on either test.

General

You are encouraged not to cover up for employees with a drink or drug problem but to recognise that collusion represents a false sense of loyalty and will in the longer-term damage those employees. If you recognise that you have a drink or drug problem, or that you are at risk of developing one, you are encouraged to come forward for confidential help. You should speak in confidence with your manager, or secure the help of a colleague in this respect.

All reasonable steps will be taken to assist where we can.

17. REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL

You are not permitted to represent yourself as an authorised agent for the Council except in the course of the proper performance of your duties or where authorised to do so. When your employment ceases you must not hold yourself out in any business context as being an employee of this Council. Should there be any misrepresentation or intention to deceive in this respect or any attempt to interfere with existing business relations between this Council and its existing or potential (customers), suppliers or agents then

the Council may take proceeding against you to prevent any recurrence and to recover any losses incurred as a result.

18. OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND PRIVATE TRADING – this clause does not apply to Zero Hour Contracts

- You are not permitted to undertake any private work when you are expected to be working for the Council.
- If you make a request to the Council to allow you to take on additional work, the Council will consider the request unless it is felt that the additional work will impact in a negative way on the performance of your normal duties with the Council.
- You must never use Council premises, vehicles or equipment to carry out any private work.
- It is your responsibility to notify the Council in writing of any other employment or business in which you engage.

19. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND NON SOLICITATION/ NON COMPETITION/NON DEALING

20(1) Confidential Information

- (a) You must not, whether during your employment with the Council or after the end of it, whether you resign or are dismissed by the Council, unless expressly authorised in writing by your Manager, disclose to any unauthorised person or use any confidential information relating to the business affairs or trade secrets of the Council. This includes any detail about the Council's products, technical data, any matter relating to the Council or its business, customers and employees, actual potential or past and all details relating to information on the Council's data base.
- (b) During the course of your employment you may have access to, gain knowledge of or be entrusted with information of a confidential nature. This shall include, but is not limited to:-
- (i) The identity, address or telephone number of any Customer of the Council.
 - (ii) The contact name within a customer.
 - (iii) Any list or lists of the Council's Customers whether in written or printed form or held in an electronic medium
 - (iv) Details of the equipment supplied to or ordered by any Customers of the Council
 - (v) The price at which the Council purchases the raw materials it purchases for its customers and/or the price at which the Council supplies its products to its customers.
 - (vi) Any discount or remainder price at which the Council may from time to time offer to its customers for all or any of the equipment or products it provides.
 - (vii) Details concerning the organisation of the business of the Council or any part of it.
 - (viii) The identity, name, address, telephone number or other personal details of the Council's sales force or any employees engaged in its sales operations or any list of the same.

You agree that you shall not either during the course of your employment or at any time after its termination, make use of for your own or another persons' benefit, or divulge to a person not authorised by the Council to receive it, any confidential information as described or referred to above concerning the Council's business which may have been disclosed to or have otherwise come into your possession in the course of your employment.

If such disclosure or misuse of information occurs during the course of your employment the Council will

treat such conduct as gross misconduct and reserves the right to terminate your employment without notice or payment in lieu. Such misconduct is described in the Council's disciplinary procedure, which forms part of your Contract of Employment.

20(2) Non-Solicitation/Non-Competition/Non-Dealing

- a. One of the most valuable assets of the Council is the contact that you will have and the relationship that you will be encouraged to build up with the Council's Customers. You acknowledge that this contact and the relationship is capable of being misused unfairly against the Council if after you have left the Council's employment it is exploited for your own benefit or that of another person in competition against the Council.
- b. For this reason you hereby agree that you will not during your employment with the Council or any associated or subsidiary companies, or for a period of six months following the termination of your employment, in respect of any aspect of the business which the Council undertakes, solicit or attempt to solicit the custom of, or sell, or deliver to or accept work for private gain and/or for any third party, from any private individual, firm or Council or otherwise deal with any person who at the date of termination of your contract is a customer or potential customer of the Council to whom you have personally sold and/or delivered the Council's products on behalf of the Council, or whom you had introduced to the Council, or approached on behalf of the Council, or with whom you had any business dealings or knowledge in the six month period immediately prior to the date of termination of your contract.
- c. After your employment has ceased (whether by your resignation or termination by the Council) you also agree that you will not except in a purely social capacity, contact, deal with, attempt to solicit custom from, any customer of the Council with whom you had any business dealings in the six months prior to the termination of your contract nor will you attempt to interfere with the existing business relations between any customers or employees and the Council nor provide whether directly or indirectly your assistance to any other person so as to enable or facilitate that other person to solicit the custom of or sell and/or delivered the Council's products and equipment on behalf of the Council to any customer of the Council.
- d. You are strictly forbidden from making any contact, whether formal or informal, written or oral to any of the Council's past current or prospective suppliers or customers for any purpose other than for the legitimate business interests of this Council. Such a purpose might include but is not limited to, an intention to set up a competing business or work for a rival after leaving this Council. Any breach of this clause may render you liable to serious disciplinary action, which will result in summary dismissal if the circumstances warrant it.
- e. If within a period of six months following the termination of your contract you shall be employed by a competitor of the Council in common employment with any other former employee of the Council who shall him/herself be subject to the same or similar restraints by the Council to those contained in paragraphs 20(1) to 20(2) above inclusive, then you will not for any period whilst those restraints on that other employee remain in force, and in respect of sale or delivery of the Council's products and equipment, solicit the custom of or sell, distribute or deliver to any customer to whom that other employee is him/herself restrained from selling, distributing or delivering.
- f. Provided whilst each of the restrictions in clause 20(1) to 20(2) above are considered by the parties to be reasonable in all the circumstances as at the date hereof, it is hereby agreed and declared that

if any one or more of such restrictions shall be judged to be void as going beyond what is reasonable in all the circumstances for the protection of the interests of the Council but would be valid if words were deleted therefrom or the period thereof reduced, or the range of activities or area covered thereby reduced in scope, the said restriction shall be deemed to apply with such modifications or restriction found in any event to be void, shall not thereby affect the validity of any other restriction contained therein.

20. WORKING WITH COUNCILLORS

- You are expected to serve the Council as a single corporate body.
- You are expected to maintain proper and effective working relationships with Councillors at all time.
- You are expected to remain impartial and undertake to keep any political views that may be contrary to Council policy to yourself.
- You will read and adhere to the Council's agreed Member/Officer Protocol at all times and report any close personal familiarity that may occur to your line manager as soon as it becomes apparent.

21. EXPENSES

- Expenses incurred on legitimate Council business will be reimbursed to you on the condition that any claim submitted for payment is accompanied by appropriate VAT receipts.
- Any employee found claiming expenses fraudulently will be investigated under the Discipline (Misconduct) policy and if found guilty will be suspended pending further enquiries and may be dismissed.
- Mileage allowances are agreed by council and the Claims expenses form will state this rate as agreed by Council.
- You are not permitted to change the Expenses Claims form to your advantage without permission of the Council.

22. SECURITY

You will be required to ensure that all documents, papers, correspondence, drawings, customer, lists price lists and other papers including private notes concerning the Council are kept secure at all times and if not held at the Council's premises are carefully locked away at night and that all security procedures are properly maintained at all times. You are not expected to take any papers or documents belonging to the Council home with you when you leave at the end of the day except where this is strictly necessary for the proper performance of your duties. Any unauthorised conduct in this respect which causes loss or damage to the Council or to any customer past present or future will be regarded as serious misconduct from which you may be dismissed should the circumstances warrant this.

In the interests of the Council and its employees, the Council reserves the right to carry out random searches of employees' personal belongings in order to ensure that none of the Council's products or property is being taken from the premises illegally.

23. PATENTS, COPYRIGHTS AND DESIGNS

Any invention or any design created by any employee during the course of his or her employment or in the course of duties specifically assigned to him or her belongs to the Council.

24. GRATUITIES

The use of Council contractors, consultants, suppliers etc.

Employees are forbidden to accept gratuities, gifts, loans or other benefits from the Council's customers or suppliers without the express written permission of their Director/Senior Manager. In addition, employees are not permitted to make use of any services or be supplied with goods on a personal basis from any customer or supplier of goods and services or employee of any customer or supplier of goods and services to the Council because of the possible conflict of interest unless full disclosure has been made and prior written permission obtained from a Director/Senior Manager. Should any such conduct come to the attention of the Council the Council reserves the right to treat this as gross misconduct for which your employment may be terminated without notice or payment in lieu.

25. PROPERTY TO BE RETURNED ON TERMINATION

You are required to deliver to the Council before the end of your employment or immediately after should your employment terminate without notice, all papers, documents, keys, mobile phones, facsimile machines, cars and all property properly belonging to the Council. Failure to do so could result in a deduction from wages for the cost of the property. You will be required to sign an undertaking that all such property has been duly returned.

26. SHORTAGE OF WORK/LAY OFF

If there is a shortage of work for whatever reason, the Council will endeavour to maintain continuity of employment wherever possible by placing people on short time working or lay off without pay other than statutory allowances to which you may be eligible. Immediately work is available again you will be notified of the date on which your work will be restarted. Where you have been laid off under this rule your employment shall, for all contractual purposes, be deemed to have been continuous throughout the period of the lay-off.

27. TELEPHONE, COMPUTER SECURITY, INTERNET AND E-MAIL ACCESS AND MISUSE

Messages sent via the email system can sometimes give rise to potential legal action against the Council. Emails must be treated as any other form of correspondence and where necessary hard copies should be retained.

Claims of defamation of character, breaches of confidentiality or contract could arise from the misuse of the system. You are reminded that all emails are disclosable in any legal action commenced against the Council.

- The Council's computer system contains an email facility which is intended to promote effective communications on matters of Council business. The email system is therefore to be used for that purpose only.
- You have no right of privacy when using the Council's computer system.
- The Council has a Computer Usage Policy which should be adhered to at all times.
- Council computers may not be used for personal business.
- Unauthorised access to the computer system will result in disciplinary action being taken against you and will be treated as misconduct.

- If you have received an emotive email which may be considered abusive, do not respond to it immediately. The Town Clerk should be informed and a considered approach to the response formed.
- Confidential information should not be sent externally via the email system if it can be avoided.
- Critical information should not be stored solely on the email system. Electronic copies should be saved to the online shared folders, and / or hard copies should be retained and it is the responsibility of the staff member issuing/receiving the email to ensure that both the electronic and the hard copy are filed adequately.
- The Council promotes face to face communication where possible. Emails should not be used as a substitute for this.

The Council reserves the right to retrieve the contents of all incoming and outgoing messages for the purpose of monitoring whether the use of the email system is legitimate, at all times and when employees are off sick or on annual leave, to find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost by computer failure or to assist in the investigations of wrongful acts or to comply with any legal obligations.

The Council reserves the right to monitor email messages sent and/or received and to monitor your use of the Internet.

Software

- The introduction of new software must be checked with the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk before general use is permitted.
- Unauthorised access to the Council's computer equipment or software by staff or visitors will not be permitted.
- Only authorised software is permitted to be installed on the Council's Computer system.

Security

- If you are permitted access to the Council's computer systems and/or email systems you are duty bound to the implied terms of mutual trust. You will be responsible for the security of the terminal installed on your work space and you will not allow the terminal to be used by an unauthorised person.
- You must keep your password confidential and can only be shared with other trusted Council staff. When leaving your terminal unattended or leaving the office, you must ensure that the terminal is secure and cannot be accessed by any unauthorised party.

General Rules

- Should you receive an email that has been delivered to you in error the email must be flagged up to the sender unless it is considered to be SPAM; in which case it must be deleted as soon as possible. If the email is of a confidential nature you must not disclose or use that confidential information. Should you receive an email that contravenes the Council's Confidentiality Policy or Data Protection Policy you must bring it to the attention of the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk as soon as possible.
- Any misuse of the computer or email systems will be treated as misconduct.
- Misuse of the email system by transmission of any material in any of the following categories will constitute gross misconduct: this list is not exhaustive.
 - Defamatory;
 - Offensive or obscene;
 - Untrue or malicious

- Discriminatory on grounds of race, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief or age;
- The Council's Confidentiality Policy or any of the Council's confidential information;
- Protected copyright material;
- Personal use, e.g. social invitations, personal messages, jokes, cartoons, chain letters or other private matters;
- On line gambling;
- Posting confidential information about other employees or Council Members, or its customers or suppliers.

Internet, Social Media or Council Websites

- The internet and social media are important communication facilities which provide contact with important resources both professional and academic and staff are encouraged to make use of them as part of their professional activities.
- Any published information must have relevance to normal professional activities before material is released in Buckingham Town Council's name.
- No personal views or opinions may be expressed when publishing material on websites, social media etc. All information which may be published on the Council's website or sent via email should be the authorised, balanced views of agreed Council policy. If there is the necessity to express your personal view, you must add a disclaimer stating that this is the case to all correspondence.
- Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright must not be compromised or infringed when publishing on the internet.
- The internet makes a large variety of information readily available to all and some information can be considered to be offensive. The use of the internet or social media to access or distribute any kind of offensive material or non-employment issues, will render you liable to gross misconduct which could lead to dismissal.
- If you are given access to the internet and social media as part of your computer system, you must use it for legitimate Council business only. Searching for, viewing or downloading web pages which could be construed as offensive, obscene, discriminatory or could contravene the Council's Equality 2011 Policy will constitute gross misconduct.

28. TELEPHONE (OFFICE AND MOBILE PHONES)

- Telephone calls of a personal nature which are received on the office telephone system should be of an urgent matter or emergency only.
- Whilst the Council understands the need to take calls on your mobile telephone during working hours is necessary in certain cases, the Council asks that these calls are kept to a minimum.
- On occasions you may be contacted by the Council outside working hours to assist with operational matters. This will be the case if there is no alternative solution and will be as a last resort.
- You may be provided with a mobile telephone in order to assist you with your duties. The mobile phone remains the property of the Council and the Council may withdraw its use at any time and it must be returned to the Council on termination of your employment. The mobile telephone is your responsibility and if it lost you may be responsible for its replacement.

- You are permitted to receive calls as part of the package if you are allocated a Council mobile telephone. You may be required to meet the cost of any calls that are not business related and if the Council suspects that there has been any improper use of the mobile telephone it will be withdrawn.
- You should not use a personal mobile telephone for council business if you have been provided with a work mobile telephone. Any costs associated will also not be met by the Council.

Use of Mobile Telephones in Vehicles

- It is unlawful to use a mobile telephone whilst driving. Time spent in the vehicle with the engine running e.g. whilst at traffic lights or in a traffic queue is still considered driving in some cases.
- All employees who are required to drive whilst carrying out their duties will be required to comply with this law. If you do not comply, you will be subjected to disciplinary proceedings. Repeated breach of this rule will result in dismissal.
- If you receive a call whilst driving you are required to stop the vehicle in a safe place, turn off the engine and deal with the call.
- Making calls on a hands-free kit is discouraged unless absolutely necessary.

All employees are required to abide by the Council's stance on the use of mobile telephones whilst driving

29. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

The Council expects an appropriate dress code whilst you are employed by the Council which reflects the Council's professional image. The Council expects that you report for work at your designated time dressed appropriately for the duties that you will be required to perform.

General Dress Code

- Office based staff are required to dress in a smart, professional manner.
- Trainers, jeans and other casual clothing are not considered to be suitable attire. If you are undertaking duties that warrant a more casual dress code, this should be arranged with your line manager.
- If you attend work inappropriately dressed, the Council reserves the right to ask you to return to your home and change. The Council will not pay you for any time lost.

Protective Clothing and Equipment

- Any uniform you are issued as part of your duties is issued to you in order to prevent any damage to any personal clothing. This includes clothing, footwear and any protective clothing such as safety goggles, face masks, gloves and high visibility jackets.
- When necessary you are required to wear all work wear, footwear and protective clothing which are appropriate to the duties you are performing. This is for your protection and the requirement to wear protective clothing is entrenched in the Council's Health and Safety at Work Policy.
- If you fail to wear appropriate protective clothing for the duties you will be undertaking this will be treated as misconduct and you will be subject to the Council's Discipline (Misconduct) policy.
- Where the Council has provided uniform for you free of charge, you are expected to maintain it to an acceptable level. It is your responsibility to ensure that the uniform is laundered.
- Any uniform that the Council has purchased will be expected to be returned to the Council upon termination of your employment.

30. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The Council believes that as its biggest assets, its staff should be properly trained to carry out the duties that their posts require. Each post will be assessed on an individual basis and any training will be considered and recommended as a valuable part of the post holders' job development.

- As great believers in investment in people, the Council commits to the training of its staff to equip them fully to deliver the services that the Council provides to the residents of Buckingham.
- Whilst this is the case with the Councils commitment to its staff, the Council asks that staff understand that the Council will need to protect its investment in some way.
- If you undertake any professional training of which the Council meets the cost and which exceeds £500.00, the Council will expect you to repay the fees of any course if you terminate your employment with the Council within a year.
- Any training needs which become apparent during the year can be brought up during your yearly appraisal

31. APPRAISALS - See Appraisal Performance Management Policy

- You will receive a staff appraisal once a year, before the end of October that will objectively assess your performance over the year.
- The appraisal system will be used to monitor workloads and performance and be a gauge to plan for the year ahead.
- You should see the appraisal system as an opportunity to talk through any problems that may have arisen through the year with a view to solving issues and creating self-sustaining strategies to bring recurring issues under control, though you are encouraged to bring any issues that may arise to the attention of your line manager as soon as they arise.
- Agreed standardised appraisal forms will be used to record all formal performance appraisals and you will be provided with a self-assessment form to prepare for the appraisal. This helps you to bring all points to the attention of your line manager and the Council should you feel the need.
- The Council will agree SMART targets with you if the need arises and discuss how the targets can/will be accomplished. SMART:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Attainable
 - Relevant
 - Timely
- Any agreement which is made at your appraisal will be recorded and copied to you as a record of your appraisal.
- Appraisals will be conducted by your line manager.

32. CUSTOMER CARE

It is essential that at all times you remember the importance of customer relations. It is important that all visitors to the Council are made to feel welcome and that a friendly, professional image is presented at all times.

33. EXTREME WEATHER

- The Council will endeavour to be open for business on every normal working day regardless of weather conditions.

- In the event that you cannot attend work due to weather extremes such as snow or flooding etc. you must inform your line manager within 30 minutes of your scheduled starting time, or as soon as is practicable.
- You must take the day as an unpaid workday, annual leave or time off in lieu.
- If you are able to work from home and are given permission to do so from your line manager, you will be paid at your normal hourly rate.
- Lost time will be unpaid or must be made up with the prior agreement of your line manager.
- If the Council decides that, in the interests of health and safety, you should be permitted to leave for home before the end of your working day due to weather conditions, you will be paid at your basic rate as if you had stayed until the end of your normal working day.

34. CORRESPONDENCE

All employees are prohibited from authorising the use of the Council's address for private correspondence. The Council cannot be held responsible for the safe delivery of any correspondence, which is sent to an employee at the Council's address.

35. CHANGES IN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

From time to time your main terms and conditions of employment may be subject to change (e.g. by mutual consent). Should any change be agreed, this will be confirmed, within one month from the change taking effect, by individual written notification.

36. CHANGES IN PERSONAL DETAILS OR CIRCUMSTANCES

The Council needs to keep up-to-date information of your home address and telephone number, together with the name, address and telephone number of your next of kin (or other such person) who can be contacted in cases of emergencies. You must also ensure that you inform the personnel department of any changes to these details.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

37. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

We are an equal Opportunity Employer. The aim of our policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, age, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or political opinion or any other protected category nor should they be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which are neither justified nor relevant to the job. Selection criteria and personnel procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are recruited, promoted and treated in all other ways purely on the basis of merit and ability to do the job for which they have applied.

It is the employer's policy to endeavour, on request, to alter an employee's working pattern so that breaks can be granted at times that coincide with his/her needs for religious observance. Alternatively, the employer will, where appropriate, endeavour to grant employees reasonable time off during working hours for religious observance insofar as this is possible and practicable, taking into account the needs of the business and whether or not such arrangements might cause disturbance or disruption to other members of staff and/or their work or work patterns.

However, where an employee requests time off at a particularly busy time or at a time when the employee's absence would otherwise cause difficulties for the business or his/her department, or where the amount of time off requested is unreasonable or excessive (taking into account the needs of the business), the employer reserves the right to refuse to grant some or all of any of the time off requested. The Employee must comply with the procedure for requesting time off which is set out in this handbook.

All employees, whatever their religion or belief, will be treated equally in respect of requests for time off for religious observance or requests for alterations to their working patterns for religious reasons.

In addition, it is the employer's policy to ask all employees, on a voluntary basis, to disclose their religion or belief to it so that any religious needs can be assessed and fair consideration given to what facilities and arrangements it might reasonably provide for staff. While no employee is obliged to disclose his/her religion, belief or religious practices to the employer, employees are encouraged to do so for this reason.

38. GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY

The Council aims to ensure that any grievance an employee has relating to their employment is dealt with efficiently through effective communication and consultation.

It is the intention of the Council that employees should be encouraged to have direct contact with management to resolve their problems. If an employee has an individual problem or complaint about their work or concerning an employee or employees, the following procedure shall be applied.

Please note that the Council requires an employee who has any concerns regarding their employment to use this grievance procedure. Failure to do so may result in penalties against the employee should this matter proceed to an Employment Tribunal.

PROCEDURE

- (a) The employee should refer any grievance in the first instance to their immediate Supervisor or to a more Senior Manager, if the grievance relates to the said Supervisor. Everything possible will be done to resolve the problem informally.
- (b) If an acceptable solution cannot be found through informal discussions, then the employee must refer the matter in writing to their immediate Supervisor or to a more Senior Manager if the grievance relates to the said Supervisor. The employee must detail the nature of their complaint and submit their grievance within 5 working days of any such grievance arising.
- (c) The grievance will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of receipt and will confirm the date, time and location of the meeting, which will be held to discuss the grievance. At this meeting, the employee will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a fellow member of staff or Trade Union representative. The employee must confirm their attendance at the meeting by telephone.
- (d) Employees will be allowed to explain their grievance and how they think it might be resolved. The meeting will give the Supervisor/Senior Manager an opportunity to identify whether any investigation is necessary for example, discussions with other employees. If the Supervisor/Senior Manager feels that an investigation is appropriate, the employee will be informed of this at the meeting.
- (e) Within 5 working days of the grievance meeting or as soon as is reasonably practicable, depending on any necessary investigation, the employee will receive a written decision from the Supervisor/Senior Manager who held the meeting with the right of appeal. Minutes of the meeting will be available on request.
- (f) If the employee wishes to appeal the decision, any such appeal should be made in writing to another Senior Manager or Director within 5 working days of receiving the written decision.
- (g) The appeal will be acknowledged in writing and an appeal hearing will be scheduled. Depending on the availability of a Senior Manager or Director, all efforts will be made to ensure, that the appeal hearing takes place within 5 working days of receiving the employees appeal request. At this hearing the employee will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a fellow member of staff or a Trade Union representative. The employee must confirm their attendance at the hearing by telephone.
- (h) Within 5 working days of the appeal hearing or as soon as is reasonably practicable, the employee will receive a written decision from the Senior Manager or Director who conducted the appeal which will be the Council's final decision on the matter. Minutes of the hearing will be available on request.

Please note that any grievance, which is brought to the Council's attention after the termination of an employee's contract, the Council reserves the right to deal with the matter in written form only.

Investigation

In many grievance cases investigations are essential. Any necessary investigations will take place in accordance with paragraph (d) above. In such cases witnesses will be interviewed and statements obtained.

Minutes will be taken at all meetings copies of which, including any statements taken will be sent to the employee making the complaint for consideration. A further meeting may be arranged to discuss with the employee the statements obtained.

39. DISCIPLINARY AND DISMISSAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY

There may be times when the Council feels that disciplinary action towards an employee may be necessary and in such cases the Council operates a procedure to ensure that formal notification and discussion takes place.

There may be other times when an employee's contract of employment may be terminated on non-disciplinary grounds, e.g. ill health, individual redundancy or retirement. In such cases, the Council operates a separate procedure to deal with this.

The focus of both procedures is to follow a three-stage process:

- To communicate in writing to the employee the reasons for the disciplinary action or dismissal.
- To meet and discuss the matter and inform the employee in writing of the Council's decision and also advise of the appeal process.
- To hold an appeal hearing if requested, the outcome of which will be confirmed in writing.
- At all times, the Council will conduct a thorough investigation and will ensure that all of the facts are considered before a decision is made.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Council does not intend to impose unreasonable rules of conduct on its employees, but certain standards of behaviour are necessary to maintain order and discipline in the interests of all employees and the Council.

We prefer discipline to be voluntary and self imposed and in the great majority of cases, this is how it works. From time to time, however, it may be necessary to take action towards individuals whose behaviour or performance is unacceptable.

This procedure has been established to ensure the fair and consistent treatment of employees who have failed to meet the expected standards with regard to conduct, attendance and job performance.

Minor faults will be dealt with informally. In cases where informal discussion does not lead to improvement or where the matter is more serious, this process must be followed:

The employee will be invited to a disciplinary hearing to have a formal discussion. At least 48 hours notice will be given and the time, date and location of the hearing, and the question of disciplinary action will be confirmed in writing. The employee will be given the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting by another colleague or Trade Union representative.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the hearing and must confirm their attendance by telephone.

Within 5-10 working days, the Council's decision will be confirmed in writing with the right of appeal. The employee will receive a copy of the minutes of the hearing.

If the employee wishes to appeal the decision, then any such appeal should be made in writing to another

Senior Manager or Director within 5 working days of receiving the written decision. An appeal hearing will then be scheduled. Depending on the availability of a Senior Manager or Director, all efforts will be made to ensure the appeal hearing takes place within 5 working days of the employee's appeal request. The employee will be given the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting by another colleague or Trade Union representative.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the hearing and must confirm their attendance by telephone.

The decision of the Director or Senior Manager will be final and will be confirmed in writing within 5-10 working days of the appeal hearing. The employee will receive a copy of the minutes of the hearing.

It should be noted that an employee's behaviour is not looked at in isolation but each incident of misconduct is regarded cumulatively, with previous occurrences. Taking this into consideration, the following stages will be invoked:

Informal Stage 1

A formal oral warning will be issued in cases of minor breaches of Council discipline such as misconduct, performance, poor timekeeping and persistent absence. The employee will be notified for the reasons for the oral warning, and that it is the first stage of the disciplinary procedure. A note of the oral warning will be noted on the employee's personal record but will be nullified after 6 months subject to satisfactory conduct and only if there are no further instances of disciplinary action for whatever reason.

Formal Stage 2

If conduct or work performance does not improve, or if the employee commits an act, which is a more serious breach of Council discipline, a first written warning may be given. This will give details of the complaint and the likely consequences, (that is a final written warning), if the terms of the warning are not complied with. This warning will also be noted on the employee's personal record but again will be nullified after a maximum of one year, subject to satisfactory conduct and only if there are no further instances, which invoke this procedure for whatever reason.

Formal Stage 3

Failure to improve in response to the procedure so far, or a repeat of action or misconduct for which a warning or warnings have been previously issued, or a first instance of further misconduct, may result in a final written warning. This will give details of the complaint, the length of any probationary period and notification that dismissal may result if the terms of the warning are not complied with. This warning will be noted on the employee's personal record and will only be nullified at the Director's discretion.

Formal Stage 4

Failure to meet the requirements set out in the final written warning will normally lead to dismissal with appropriate notice. A decision of this kind will only be made after the fullest of possible investigations.

Gross Misconduct

Offences under this heading are so serious that an employee who commits them will normally be summarily dismissed. In such cases, the Council reserves the right to dismiss without notice of termination or payment in lieu of notice.

Examples of gross misconduct are:

- Theft and unauthorised possession of Council property. Deliberate falsification of records or any other form of dishonesty.
- Wilfully causing harm or injury to another member of staff or other person on the premises.
- Performing an action that is likely to cause injury to other people or damage to Council property.
- Breach of the Council's confidentiality, competition and non-solicitation policies.
- Gross insubordination e.g. wilful refusal to obey a reasonable instruction.
- Incapacity due to alcohol or drug abuse. Possession or administration of drugs or alcohol on the Council's premises.
- Discrimination or harassment of any kind.
- Driving a Council vehicle whilst using a hand-held mobile telephone or a hand-held device whilst the car is in motion or stationary with the engine running.
- Unacceptable, abusive or violent behaviour to members of staff, customers, clients or other persons who have cause to have contact with the Council.
- Any act, conduct or omission, which the Council considers being in breach of the Council contract or which brings the Council into disrepute.
- Breach of the Council's health & safety rules.

This list is intended only as a guide and is not exhaustive.

Please Note that depending upon the severity of the offence, this procedure may be invoked at any stage considered appropriate to deal with the offence in question.

Suspension

In the event of misconduct, which cannot be immediately investigated and considered, an employee may be suspended on full basic pay, whilst an investigation is carried out. Such suspension, which does not imply guilt or blame, will be for as short a period as possible.

Investigation

Where applicable, witnesses will be interviewed and statements taken. An investigatory hearing may also be required with the employee concerned as a fact-finding exercise.

Minutes will be taken at all meeting copies of which, including any statements obtained will be sent to the employee concerned prior to any disciplinary hearing.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

In the event that the Council considers termination of employment on grounds not connected to disciplinary issues, the procedure will be as follows:

The employee will be invited to a meeting to have a discussion on the matter. The letter will confirm the time, date and location of the meeting, and the reasons for dismissal. The employee will be given the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting by another colleague or Trade Union representative.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting, and must confirm their attendance by telephone.

Within 5-10 working days, the outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee with the right of appeal.

If the employee wishes to appeal the decision, then any such appeal should be made in writing to another Senior Manager or Director within 5 working days of receiving the written decision. An appeal hearing will then be scheduled. Depending on the availability of a Senior Manager or Director, all efforts will be made to ensure the appeal hearing takes place within 5 working days of the employee's request of appeal. The employee will be given the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting by another colleague or Trade Union representative.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting, and confirm their attendance by telephone.

The decision of the Director or Senior Manager will be final and will be confirmed in writing within 5-10 working days of the appeal hearing.

Contractual Disciplinary Sanctions

In addition to any disciplinary sanctions specified in the Statutory Codes of Practice, as issued from time to time, the Council may also apply the following sanctions where the Council believe that the merits of the case and the seriousness of the offence render them appropriate either as an alternative or in addition to those included in the Statutory Codes.

- Demotion
- Transfer to another department or job
- A period of suspension without pay
- Loss of seniority
- Reduction in pay
- Loss of any future pay increment or bonus
- Loss of overtime

These additional sanctions require the employee's agreement before confirmation. If no agreement is made with the employee, issue a disciplinary warning as per the normal disciplinary process. Failure to obtain agreement from the employee could result in a breach of contract claim in the Employment Tribunal.

40. HARASSMENT POLICY

All employees have a legal and moral right not to be subject to harassment and we intend to ensure that you all can work in an environment free from offence, intimidation, hostility and humiliation. We do not wish for any of our employees to go through this and we encourage you to approach us if this is the case.

We prohibit all forms of harassment on the grounds of:

- gender (including sex, marriage, gender re-assignment)
- race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- disability
- sexual orientation
- religion or belief
- age

Harassment and discrimination is any unwanted conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment. The Council will deal with any such complaints confidentially and sensitively.

The Informal Stage

This stage is appropriate where you simply want the behaviour to stop and do not want to take any further action. You can seek to resolve matters informally by: -

- Approaching the alleged harasser directly, making it clear to the person(s) harassing the employee that the behaviour in question is offensive and should be stopped. This can be done verbally or in writing.
- Approaching the alleged harasser with the support of a colleague or a trade union representative.
- Approaching the alleged harasser with the support of a supervisor/manager or designated advisor.
- Where an employee seeks the support of a supervisor/manager or designated advisor, he/she will be sensitively informed that their role at the informal stage can only be one of support. The employee will also be advised.
- A formal investigation and possible disciplinary action can only take place if the complaint is investigated under the formal procedure.

We assure you that:-

All reported incidents of harassment will be monitored and in the event of any patterns emerging management may wish to initiate its own formal investigation and take action where this proves to be necessary.

A written record of the action taken will be made to assist with any formal proceedings, which may arise if the behaviour does not stop. Failure to maintain such a record will not prevent proceedings at the formal stage.

Making A Formal Complaint

If the behaviour continues or if it is not appropriate to resolve the problem informally, it should be raised through the formal complaints procedure:-

- Your manager will have overall responsibility for harassment complaints. Individuals may raise complaints with this Manager or if appropriate, another member of management or directly to Human Resources.

- You should raise complaints as soon as possible following an act of alleged harassment or discrimination so that the matter can be dealt with swiftly.

While it is preferable that a complaint should be made in writing to the Manager (or any other Manager as appropriate) this will not preclude the investigation of a complaint made verbally.

The Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and arrange to meet you within 5 working days.

Clarifying The Complaint

The Manager will meet you to:

- Clarify and informally record the nature of the complaint and that it is being handled under the formal procedure
- Ensure that you are aware of the next stage of the procedure.

We may extend the right to be accompanied at this meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague.

Where a case of serious harassment has been alleged, consideration will be given to precautionary suspension of the alleged harasser to enable investigations to proceed. An individual who is going to be suspended will be advised of this at a meeting with the Manager concerned.

In other cases of alleged harassment, the Manager will take appropriate action to avoid unnecessary contact between the Complainant and Alleged Harasser.

Investigation

- The Manager will meet with the alleged harasser to: -
- Outline the nature of the complaint.
- Confirm that it is being handled under the formal procedure
- Ensure that the individual is aware of the next stages of the procedure.
- Consider suspension and communicate this if appropriate.
- Take the alleged harasser's version of events at this juncture if it is appropriate in the circumstances.

The Manager will meet again with you and consider both what they have to say and any other related matter. We may extend the right to be represented by his/her trade union representative or work colleague if appropriate.

The Manager will then meet the alleged harasser and hear what he/she has to say about the alleged incident if the Manager has not yet already taken his/her version of events. The alleged harasser may be given the right to be represented by his/her trade union representative or work colleague if appropriate.

The Manager will then meet any other person who may assist with the investigation. Each individual will be asked to outline what happened and if appropriate, provide a statement.

The Outcome

Having obtained all the information possible, the Manager will consider whether your complaint is sustained.

The Manager will then prepare a written report outlining the facts, indicating his/her findings and whether a case of harassment or discrimination is substantiated. If so, the Manager will consider whether:

- To initiate the Council's agreed disciplinary procedure against any party as appropriate; or
- To take no further action or to take any other appropriate management action e.g. the provision of training or counselling.
- To consider whether mediation would be an appropriate way to attempt to resolve the issue between the parties.

Having made a decision, this will be communicated to you and the person against whom the complaint was made, subject to the duties of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to have completed the procedure without undue delay.

Action following complaint:

Should the Alleged Harasser remain in employment with us, consideration may be given to the transfer of one of the employees concerned where it is reasonably practicable to do so. In any event, every effort will be made to avoid unnecessary contact between the parties.

Counselling will be offered to the person who has been harassed and to the harasser. This will be provided by a trained member of staff or by an external provider.

The Manager will meet with you on a regular basis to offer support and to ensure that no harassment or victimisation has occurred.

The Manager of the harasser will be responsible for ensuring that the harasser is made fully aware of the Council's policies on equal opportunities and harassment or discrimination.

41. BRIBERY ACT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

We recognise that the vast majority of staff meet or exceed the demands of their roles and responsibilities. We are liable if you commit an act of bribery and you can be held personally liable too.

The purpose of this policy is to provide support to you where your position or role/responsibility could mean you fall foul of Bribery legislation. It may mean that the role requires that you procure/ purchase or tender for contracts or sell, negotiate deals that are beneficial to one party over and above another.

There are 4 possible offences:

- Bribing another person.
- Being bribed.
- Bribing a foreign Public Official.
- Failing to prevent bribery.

We have undergone risk assessments and the outcome has indicated that the Council may benefit from having a dedicated policy in place.

You are forbidden to accept gratuities, gifts, loans or other benefits from our customers or suppliers without the express written permission of your Manager. In addition, you are not permitted to make use of any services or be supplied with goods on a personal basis from any customer or supplier of goods and services or employee of any customer or supplier of goods and services to the Council because of the possible conflict of interest unless full disclosure has been made and prior written permission obtained from your manager. Should any such conduct come to our attention we reserve the right to treat this as gross misconduct for which employment may be terminated without notice or payment in lieu.

Responsibilities

Managers have a responsibility to address any allegation or issue as quickly as possible and take the appropriate action. Management will, make assessments of risk, deal with decisions where potential for bribery exists and receive and investigate reports of bribery. Managers also have a responsibility to keep accurate records of discussions and agreed actions during tender or purchase procedures or where gratuities have been offered.

You therefore have a responsibility for your own actions in regard to gifts and performance and continued development to meet new challenges at work. You are also responsible for bringing any problem to the attention of your Manager that may have an effect on you personally or us. You are also expected to co-operate with your manager in investigating and tackling concerns.

Hospitality

In relation to occasions on which hospitality is offered or accepted by you, issues may arise as to the line between a proper public relations exercise and intention to induce improper performance of a relevant function.

It is not unlawful to promote or market us to improve our image or to establish cordial and professional relationships or to maintain them so long as it is reasonable and proportional.

In order to make an assessment of any particular hospitality event, which is to be offered to a client or prospective client, your manager will have to be supplied with information. This will include the cost and nature of the hospitality, the name and details of the person to be entertained and the purpose of the event. Your manager will be required to approve the event or make suggestions for modifying it.

The following is a list of examples of unacceptable behaviour:

- Taking a customer or supplier for a working lunch at a restaurant whose prices would be considered extravagant under normal circumstances.
- Providing alcohol with the meal that is excessive or extravagant.
- Running special offers or promotions that involve benefits that are not for use by a customer or their employees in their business.
- Paying for a customer to go to an event that is not work-related or without the permission of their employer.

Similar examples apply where the hospitality is being extended to you.

Tendering

In relation to awarding of contracts for services we have provisions for competitive tendering in place. However, as an additional requirement and as a requirement in awarding contracts, which are not required to go out to tender, an issue of bribery might arise.

Charitable Donations

In relation to charitable and political donations care should be exercised to avoid the suggestion of soliciting favours.

Expenses

Expense forms and expense claims should be submitted to accounts in the normal way however must clearly detail the customers' name and Council name for any business entertaining. The receipt must be the original receipt detailing what has been purchased and not the debit/credit card receipt. Expenses will not be paid if this information is missing.

Procedure

In order to prevent behaviour which might unwittingly give rise to the suspicion of bribery and to prevent any associated person purporting to act on its behalf in a manner that brings suspicion on us or its employees, the following measures have been adopted as appropriate and proportionate to the risks it faces

It is important that EVERYONE address concerns and report any attempt at bribery that comes to their attention, whether it consists of a direct approach to him or herself or an act done by an associated third party. In the first instance report this directly to your manager immediately. The aim of this approach is to try to resolve any problems quickly and informally with a view to resolving the matter before it becomes a serious issue.

Under no circumstances will a person who reports a suspicion of bribery will be subject to victimisation for making a bon fide report, whether or not the suspicion turns out to be justified.

Management Support

- Bring concerns regarding performance to your attention

- Undertake any necessary investigation as to the allegations
- Review your roles and responsibilities
- Re-affirm the standards that are expected of us
- Provide any necessary training (internal or external)
- Record in writing any actions taken, confirm the outcome in writing to you and retain a copy on your personnel file.

What are the penalties for committing an offence?

The offences of bribing another person, being bribed and bribing a foreign public official are punishable by an unlimited fine, imprisonment of up to ten years or both. Both we and you could be subject to criminal penalties. Failure to prevent bribery is punishable on indictment by an unlimited fine.

Businesses that have been convicted of corruption could find themselves permanently debarred from tendering for public-sector contracts. We may also be damaged by adverse publicity if we are prosecuted for an offence

42. WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Public Interest Disclosure 'Whistle-blowing'

We operate a strict policy in relation to wrongdoing (which will be regarded as a disciplinary offence) and will not tolerate actions which may amount to a criminal offence or breaches of legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, danger to health or safety or which may damage the environment ("wrong doing"). All employees are expected to maintain the highest of standards of integrity and good faith. Under Part IVA of the Employment Rights Act 1996 employees who report wrong doings to certain parties are protected. However, it is our policy that any wrongdoing that has occurred should be reported to us. Accordingly, we have devised the following policy in order to encourage you to report any matters that you believe are of concern to our business and to reassure you that you will be protected in respect of any such disclosure.

You may be concerned about the repercussions to you in reporting matters that are of concern. We assure you that you will be protected and will not be subjected to any detriment because you have reported a matter that you believe in good faith to amount to wrongdoing or potential wrongdoing.

However, you must note that if you make any allegation which you do not believe or which is made maliciously or for some ulterior motive (i.e. a grudge against a fellow worker) then this may be treated as a disciplinary matter and we may invoke the disciplinary procedure.

Reporting Wrongdoing

In the first instance you may wish to raise the matter with your Supervisor on an informal basis and discuss with him or her what steps should be taken to report the matter to more senior management.

You may at any time raise the matter formally with your Supervisor, whether orally or in writing and he or she will pass on the matter to the appropriate level of Management.

If your concern is about your Supervisor or someone at a higher level of management then you should feel free to raise the matter with whatever you consider to be the appropriate level of management.

At all stages, all statements that you make will remain confidential unless you express a contrary wish or it becomes necessary to divulge such statements during the course of an investigation.

Investigations

You must recognise that a complaint about wrongdoing may lead to us wishing to carry out an investigation into the allegations of wrongdoing. In these circumstances you will be informed before any of the matters that you have raised are put to the alleged wrongdoer and you will be protected by your employer who will ensure that your work environment is not affected because you disclosed the matter to us.

You will be informed of the outcome of any investigation and what action has been taken.

If you have any concern or complaint about the manner in which you feel you are being treated because you made the disclosure, whether by the alleged wrongdoer or any co-employees you should raise this with whatever level of management you consider to be appropriate and this may be dealt with as a

disciplinary matter in relation to such individuals.

If you are unhappy about the manner in which your disclosure was treated by the person to whom it was reported, or you consider that it has not been properly investigated then you should report the matter to whatever level of management you consider appropriate which may include a Director of the Board of Directors.

At all times our intention will be to resolve the allegations that have been made and to ensure that wrongdoing has not occurred or, if it has occurred it is dealt with appropriately. However, we will not hesitate to report wrongdoing to the appropriate body if we consider that this is the correct approach to adopt in the circumstances.

43. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

The growth in social media, particularly social networking sites has created increased opportunity for media communications that have an impact upon the business.

The term "social media" is used to describe dynamic and socially interactive network information and communication technologies, for example Web 2.0 sites, SMS text message and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs, other online journals and diaries, bulletin boards, chatrooms, micro blogging and the posting of videos on You Tube and similar media. Social networking also includes permitting or not removing postings by others where a player or employee can control the content of postings such as on a personal profile or blog.

This policy applies to social networking whilst both on and off duty.

The purpose of these social media guidelines is as follows:

- To encourage good practice
- To protect the business, its staff and clients.
- To clarify where and how existing policies and guidelines apply to social media.
- To promote effective and innovative use of social media as part of the business's activities.

General Guidelines

All current policies concerning staff apply to the use of social media these include, but are not limited to:

- Human resources: policies, procedures and codes of practice where applicable.
- Guidelines for the use of IT facilities.
- Data protection policies.
- Managing electronic mail and using e-mail wisely.
- Electronic information security policy and best practice in electronic information security.

Corporate Brand Guidelines

Staff should take effective precautions when utilising social networking sites to ensure their own personal safety and to protect against identity theft.

Staff who engage in social networking should be mindful that their postings, even if done off premises and while off duty, could have an adverse effect on the business's legitimate business interests, for example the information posted could be the business's confidential business information. In addition some people who view this information may consider you as a spokesperson for the business. To reduce the likelihood that your networking will have an adverse effect on the business, staff should observe the following guidelines when social networking.

- Staff should not engage in social networking by using any of the business's electronic resources or when they are supposed to be working.
- Managers should not send "friend" requests to subordinates at any time while on or off duty.

- Any member of staff may reject a “friend” request from any other member of staff without repercussion.
- All requests for references or recommendations, even those that are received through social networking should be handled strictly in accordance with the business’s standard policy for responding to such requests.

If the social networking of any member of staff includes any information relating to the business, the following must be adhered to:

- It should be made clear to contacts and those who view social media that the views expressed are those of the member of staff alone and do not reflect the views of the business, by stating for example “the views expressed in this post are my own. They have not been reviewed or approved by the business”.
- The business’s performance, products or services or the products or services of its sponsors, vendors or other businesses must not be discredited or defamed in any way. Customers, clients, business partners and suppliers must not be mentioned without the prior approval of the business’s management team.
- Inaccurate, distasteful or defamatory comments are prohibited. In addition, the use of, or the accessing of or the sending of offensive, obscene or indecent material is strictly prohibited.
- The business’s logo, trademark or proprietary graphics or any photographs of the business premises or products or those of any other team must not be used at any time.
- Personal or contact information or photographs of any other member of staff or any Director or manager must not be posted or used at any time without permission.
- The business has spent substantial time and resources building its reputation and goodwill. These are valuable and important corporate assets, which need to be enhanced and preserved. Before any member of staff engages in any social networking activity which identifies that member of staff as an employee of the business, or that identifies the business in any way, it should be considered whether the social networking activity is damaging the business’s reputation or potentially could damage the business’s reputation. If there is any doubt or any uncertainty, the member of staff should refrain from posting any information. Remember, a post lives forever! Staff must think before they type.
- Any complaints about work should be resolved by speaking directly to your respective managers, rather than by posting complaints on the Internet through any method of social media. If any complaints or criticism of the business or other members of staff is posted on any method of social media, any comment that may be defamatory or damaging to the business or any other employees should be avoided. REMEMBER - Disciplinary action can be taken for this activity.
- Social networking sites are prime targets for malware distribution, and third-party applications should never be downloaded.

- Any incidences of inappropriate behaviour, information posting, phishing or suspected malware should be reported immediately to the business' Management team.

The business reserves the right at all times to continually review the use of social media and may modify its policies should the status of particular social media sites change, for example if changes are introduced or changes made to the way content is used or the terms of use of sites are changed or if a site closes down.

The business will in its sole discretion review the social networking activities of any member of its staff. This policy applies even if the social networking activity of any member of staff is anonymous or under a pseudonym. If such networking activity is engaged in, members of staff should be aware that in appropriate circumstances the business will take steps to determine the identity of the individual concerned.

The business may request in its sole and absolute discretion that any member of staff should temporarily confine their respective social networking activities to matters unrelated to the business if the business determines that it is necessary or advisable to ensure compliance with regulations or other laws.

If clarification is required on any aspect of this policy, members of staff should contact the business's management team. All members of staff should note that failure to comply with any aspect of this policy may lead to disciplinary up to and including termination, and if appropriate the business will pursue all available legal remedies to protect its reputation, products, logo, trademark or proprietary graphics. The business reserves the right in addition to report any suspected unlawful conduct to the appropriate law enforcement authority.

44. DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018 POLICY

This policy applies to:

- All employees of this Council;
- All regional staff or home workers operating on behalf of this Council.

This policy is operational from 25 May 2018.

The purpose of this policy is to enable the Council to:

- Comply with our legal, regulatory and corporate governance obligations and good practice
- Gather information as part of investigations by regulatory bodies or in connection with legal proceedings or requests
- Ensure business policies are adhered to (such as policies covering email and internet use)
- Fulfill operational reasons, such as recording transactions, training and quality control, ensuring the confidentiality of commercially sensitive information, security vetting, credit scoring and checking
- Investigate complaints
- Check references, ensuring safe working practices, monitoring and managing staff access to systems and facilities and staff absences, administration and assessments
- Monitor staff conduct, disciplinary matters
- Market our business
- Improve services

This policy applies to information relating to identifiable individuals e.g. staff, applicants, former staff, clients, suppliers and other third-party contacts.

We will:

- Comply with both the law and good practice
- Respect individuals' rights
- Be open and honest with individuals whose data is held
- Provide training and support for staff who handle personal data, so that they can act confidently and consistently

We recognise that its first priority under the GDPR is to avoid causing harm to individuals. In the main this means:

- Complying with your rights,
- Keeping you informed about the data we hold, why we hold it and what we are doing with it,
- Keeping information securely in the right hands, and
- Holding good quality information.

Secondly, DPA aims to ensure that the legitimate concerns of individuals about the ways in which their data may be used are taken into account. In addition to being open and transparent, we will seek to give individuals as much choice as is possible and reasonable over what data is held and how it is used. This includes the right to erasure where data is no longer necessary and the right to rectification where the data is incorrect. Full details are available in the Privacy Notice issued at the point of gathering the data.

The Council has identified the following potential key risks, which this policy is designed to address:

- Breach of confidentiality (information being given out inappropriately).
- Insufficient clarity about the range of uses to which data will be put — leading to Data Subjects being insufficiently informed
- Failure to offer choice about data use when appropriate
- Breach of security by allowing unauthorised access.
- Failure to establish efficient systems of managing changes, leading to personal data being not up to date.
- Harm to individuals if personal data is not up to date
- Insufficient clarity about the way personal data is being used e.g. given out to general public.
- Failure to offer choices about use of contact details for staff, clients workers or employees.

In order to address these concerns, to accompany this policy, we have an Information Security policy and we will issue Privacy Notices to explain what data we have, why we have it and what we will do with it. The Privacy Notice will also explain the data subject's rights. We will offer training to staff where this is necessary and appropriate in the circumstances to ensure compliance with DPA. Such training will vary according to the role, responsibilities and seniority of those being trained.

We aim to keep data only for so long as is necessary which will vary from according to the circumstances.

We have no intention to transfer data internationally.

The person responsible for Data Protection is currently Paul Hodson with the following responsibilities:

- Briefing the board on Data Protection responsibilities
- Reviewing Data Protection and related policies
- Advising other staff on Data Protection issues
- Ensuring that Data Protection induction and training takes place
- Notification
- Handling subject access requests
- Approving unusual or controversial disclosures of personal data
- Approving contracts with Data Processors
- Ensuring Data is stored securely
- Maintain a Data Audit and keep this up to date
- Reporting breaches to the Information Commissioners Office and the relevant Data Subject(s)

Significant breaches of this policy will be handled under the Council's disciplinary procedures which may amount to gross misconduct.

Subject Access Request

Any subject access requests will be handled by Paul Hodson

Subject access requests must be in writing. All staff are required to pass on anything, which might be a subject access request to [[name]] without delay. The applicant will be given their data within 1 month

unless there are complexities in the case which justify extending this to 2 months. You will be notified of any extensions to the deadline for response and the reasons as soon as possible.

We have the right to refuse a subject access request where data is requested at unreasonable intervals, manifestly unfounded or excessive. You will be notified of the reasons as soon as possible.

Where the individual making a subject access request is not personally known to Paul Hodson their identity will be verified before handing over any information.

The required information will be provided in a permanent and portable form unless the applicant makes a specific request to be given supervised access in person.

You have the right to request the information we hold is rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete. You should contact Paul Hodson and provide with the details of any inaccurate or incomplete data. We will then ensure that this is amended within one month. We may, in complex cases, extend this period to two months.

You have the right to erasure in the form of deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing. We have the right to refuse to erase data where this is necessary in the right of freedom of expression and information, to comply with a legal obligation for the performance of a public interest task, exercise of an official authority, for public health purposes in the public interest, for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific research, historical research, statistical purposes or the exercise or defence of legal claims. You will be advised of the grounds of our refusal should any such request be refused.

45. INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

We provide employees with access to various computing, telephone and postage facilities ("the Facilities") to allow them to undertake the responsibilities of their position and to improve internal and external communication.

SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies to all individuals that use or operate within our IT Systems, including networks, Laptops, desktops, telephones or any other facility that is provided for communication purposes.

This Policy applies to the use of:

- local, inter-office, national and international, private or public networks (including the Internet and Intranet) and all systems and services accessed through those networks;
- desktop, portable and mobile computers and applications (including personal digital assistants (PDAs));
- mobile telephones
- electronic mail (Email) and messaging services.

Observation of this Policy is mandatory and forms part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment. Misuse of the Facilities will be treated as gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal.

PURPOSE

This Policy sets out the Council's policy on the use of the Facilities and it includes:

- Responsibilities and potential liability when using the Facilities;
- The monitoring policies adopted by the Council; and
- Guidance on how to use the Facilities.

This Policy has been created to:

- Ensure compliance with all applicable laws relating to data protection, information security and compliance monitoring;
- Protect the Council and its employees from the risk of financial loss, loss of reputation or libel; and
- Ensure that the Facilities are not used so as to cause harm or damage to any person or organisation.

COMPUTER FACILITIES - USE OF COMPUTER SYSTEMS

To comply with this policy it should be noted that unless written prior authorisation has been received by departmental managers, the Facilities must be used for business purposes only.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of information held on or transferred via the Council's Facilities, security measures are in place and must be followed at all times. A log-on ID and password is required for access to the Council's network. Despite the use of a password, the Council reserves the right to override passwords and obtain access to any part of the Facilities.

Individuals are ultimately responsible for keeping passwords secure. They must not give it to anyone, including colleagues, except as expressly authorised by the Council. Passwords should be changed every 90 days.

Individuals are expressly prohibited from using the Facilities for the sending, receiving, printing or otherwise disseminating information which is the confidential information of the Council or its clients other than in the normal and proper course of carrying out duties for the Council.

IT SECURITY PROCEDURES

In order to ensure proper use of computers, all individuals must adhere to the following practices:

- Anti-virus software must be kept running at all times;
- All users accessing domain joined computer must seek IT permission to be able to use USB storage on the Council network. If this permission is not requested, USB/CD media will be rendered un-accessible.
- Obvious passwords such as birthdays and spouse names etc. must be avoided. The most secure passwords are random combinations of letters and numbers. Password minimum complexity requirements are in force when creating/updating existing passwords;
- When you are sending data or software to an external party by Data storage media always ensure that the disk has been checked for viruses by the Group IT Support Department and password protected if required, before sending it;
- All files must be stored on the network drive which is backed up regularly to avoid loss of information; and
- Always log off the network before leaving your computer for long periods of time or overnight.

SOFTWARE

Software piracy could expose both the Council and the user to allegations of intellectual property infringement. The Council are committed to following the terms of all software licences to which the Council is a contracting party. This means, in particular, that:

- Software must not be installed onto any of the Council's computers unless this has been approved in advance by the Group IT Support Department. They will be responsible for establishing that the appropriate licence has been obtained, that the software is virus free and compatible with the computer Facilities; and
- Software should not be removed from any computer nor should it be copied or loaded on to any computer without the prior consent of the IT Department.

LAPTOP COMPUTERS

At various times during employment with the Council, individuals may use a laptop. These computers, along with related equipment and software are subject to all of the Council's policies and guidelines governing non-portable computers and software (see two paragraphs in software section above). However, use of a laptop creates additional problems especially in respect of potential breaches of confidentiality. When using a laptop:

- Individuals are responsible for all equipment and software until it is returned. The laptop must be kept secure at all times;
- It should only be used by the person authorised to use the equipment and software;

- Individuals must not load or install files from any sources without the Group IT Support Department inspecting such files for viruses;
- All data kept on the laptop must be backed up regularly in order to protect data against theft or mechanical failure or corruption;
- Individuals should password protect confidential data on disks or on the hard drive to protect against theft;
- If individuals become aware of any mechanical, electronic, or software defects or malfunctions, they should immediately bring such defects or malfunctions to the attention of the Group IT Support Department;
- Upon the request of the Council at any time, for any reason, Individuals will immediately return any laptop, equipment and all software to the Council; and
- If for any reasons individuals are using their own laptop to connect with the Council's network or to transfer data between the laptop and any of the Council's computers it is essential that they ensure that they you have obtained prior consent from the Group IT Support Department, and their Department Head in order to comply with its instructions and ensure that any data downloaded or uploaded is free from viruses.

E-MAIL (INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL USE)

Internet e-mail is not a secure medium of communication – it can be intercepted and read. Do not use it to say anything that the Council or individuals would not wish to be made public. If individuals are sending confidential information by e-mail this should be sent using password protected attachments.

E-mail should be treated as any other documentation. If an individual would normally retain a certain document in hard copy you should retain the e-mail.

Do not forward e-mail messages unless the original sender is aware that the message may be forwarded. If you would not have forwarded a copy of a paper memo with the same information do not forward the e-mail.

E-mail inboxes should be checked on a regular basis.

As with many other records, e-mail may be subject to discovery in litigation. Like all communications, individuals should not say anything that might appear inappropriate or that might be misinterpreted by a reader or bring the Council into disrepute.

Individuals should not use the Council email system for private messages during the course of work activities unless absolutely necessary and in these circumstances the following message should be contained within the email that is sent:

“This e-mail does not reflect the views or opinions of our organisation”

Use of e-mail facilities for personal use is permitted during lunch breaks providing that:

- Such e-mails do not contain information or data that could be considered to be obscene, racist, sexist, otherwise offensive and provided that such use is not part of a pyramid or chain letter; and
- Such e-mails are not used for the purpose of trading or carrying out any business activity other than Council business.

In the event that individuals are away from the office and use e-mail as an external means of communication they must ensure that the autoreply service is used to inform the sender that they are

unavailable. Failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action. If there is any doubt as to how to use these Facilities please contact the Group IT Support Department.

Viewing, displaying, storing (including data held in RAM or cache) or disseminating materials (including text and images) that could be considered to be obscene, racist, sexist, or otherwise offensive may constitute harassment and such use of the Facilities is strictly prohibited.

NB: The legal focus in a harassment case is the impact of the allegedly harassing material on the person viewing it, not how the material is viewed by the person sending or displaying it.

INTERNET

Use of the Internet, or Internet services, by unauthorised users is strictly prohibited. Individuals are responsible for ensuring that they are the only person using the authorised Internet account and services.

Downloading any files from the Internet using the computer Facilities is not permitted. If there is a file or document on the Internet that is required, the individual should contact the Group IT Support Department to make arrangements for it to be evaluated and checked for viruses. It will be at the discretion of the Group IT Support Department on whether to allow such download.

Viewing, downloading, storing (including data held in RAM or cache) displaying or disseminating materials (including text and images) that could be considered to be obscene, racist, sexist, or otherwise offensive may constitute harassment and such use is strictly prohibited.

NB: The legal focus in a harassment case is the impact of the allegedly harassing material on the person viewing it, not how the material is viewed by the person sending or displaying it.

Posting information on the Internet, whether on a newsgroup, via a chat room or via e-mail is no different from publishing information in the newspaper. If a posting is alleged to be defamatory, libellous, or harassing, the employee making the posting and the Council could face legal claims for monetary damages.

Using the Internet for the purpose of trading or carrying out any business activity other than Council business is strictly prohibited.

Subject to the above you are allowed to use the Internet for personal use during your lunch break. Use of the Internet for personal use at any other time is strictly prohibited.

For the avoidance of doubt the matters set out above include use of 3G/4G Data.

MONITORING POLICY

The Policy of the Council is that we monitor use of the Facilities.

The Council recognises the importance of an individual's privacy but needs to balance this against the requirement to protect others and preserve the integrity and functionality of the Facilities.

The Council may from time to time monitor the Facilities. Principle reasons for this are to:

- Detect any harassment or inappropriate behaviour by employees, ensuring compliance with contracts of employment and relevant policies including the health and safety, ethical and sex discrimination policies;

- Ensure compliance of this Policy;
- Detect and enforce the integrity of the Facilities and any sensitive or confidential information belonging to or under the control of the Council;
- Ensure compliance by users of the Facilities with all applicable laws (including Data Protection), regulations and guidelines published and in force from time to time; and
- Monitor and protect the well-being of employees.

The Council may adopt at any time a number of methods to monitor use of the Facilities. These may include:

- Recording and logging of internal, inter-office and external telephone calls made or received by employees using its telephone network (including where possible mobile telephones). Such recording may include details of length, date and content;
- Recording and logging the activities by individual users of the Facilities. This may include opening e-mails and their attachments, monitoring Internet usage including time spent on the Internet and web sites visited;
- Physical inspections of individual users computers, software and telephone messaging services;
- Periodic monitoring of the Facilities through third party software including real time inspections;
- Physical inspection of an individual's post; and
- Archiving of any information obtained from the above including e-mails, telephone call logs and Internet downloads.

If at any time an employee wishes to use the Facilities for private purposes without the possibility of such use being monitored they should contact their Department Head or the nominated deputy. This person will consider such request and any restrictions upon which such consent is to be given. In the event that such request is granted the Council (unless required by law) will not monitor the applicable private use.

The Council will not (unless required by law or in receiving legal or professional advice):

- Allow third parties to monitor the Facilities; or
- Disclose information obtained by such monitoring of the Facilities to third parties.

The Council may be prohibited by law from notifying employees using the Facilities of a disclosure to third parties.

BUILDING SECURITY

Confidential and sensitive data is secured in the building. This is both in paper form (such as files of paperwork) and electronically (such as computers, storage devices and servers).

To improve the security and confidentiality of information, we require the following:

1. Do not allow entry to our premises to any unknown person
2. Ensure all visitors are signed in and are issued with an appropriate visitors' pass and that they are advised to wear these passes visibly at all times
3. If you see someone you do not recognise and you cannot see that they are wearing a pass, ask to see their pass
4. If you see someone you do not recognise and they cannot show you a pass, immediately escort the person to reception to be signed in
5. Do not allow visitors to access roam the premises without being accompanied

6. Ensure you collect your visitors from reception
7. Ensure passes are returned and the visitor is signed out
8. Do not hold door open for people you do not recognise
9. Clock in and clock out in the instructed manner
10. Report anything suspicious to your manager

CLEAR DESK

To improve the security and confidentiality of information, we have adopted a Clean Desk Policy for computer and printer workstations.

This ensures that all sensitive and confidential information, whether it be on paper, a storage device, or a hardware device, is properly locked away or disposed of when a workstation is not in use. This policy will reduce the risk of unauthorised access, loss of, and damage to information during and outside of normal business hours or when workstations are left unattended.

Whenever a desk is unoccupied for an extended period of time the following will apply:

1. All sensitive and confidential paperwork must be removed from the desk and locked in a drawer or filing cabinet. This includes mass storage devices such as CDs, DVDs, and USB drives.
2. All waste paper which contains sensitive or confidential information must be placed in the designated confidential waste bins. Under no circumstances should this information be placed in regular waste paper bins.
3. Computer workstations must be locked when the desk is unoccupied and completely shut down at the end of the work day.
4. Laptops, tablets, and other hardware devices must be removed from the desk and locked in a drawer or filing cabinet.
5. Keys for accessing drawers or filing cabinets should not be left unattended at a desk.
6. Printers and fax machines should be treated with the same care under this policy:
 - a. Any print jobs containing sensitive and confidential paperwork should be retrieved immediately. When possible, the "Locked Print" functionality should be used.
 - b. All paperwork left over at the end of the work day will be properly disposed of.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

Never leave any equipment or data (including client files, laptops, computer equipment, mobile phones and PDAs) unattended on public transport or in an unattended vehicle.

Observation of this Policy is mandatory and forms part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment. Misuse of the Facilities or a breach of this policy may be treated as gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal.

I hereby confirm that I have received a copy of the Council Handbook and accept that it forms part of my Contract of Employment

.....
Employee's Name

.....
Employee's Signature

.....
Date

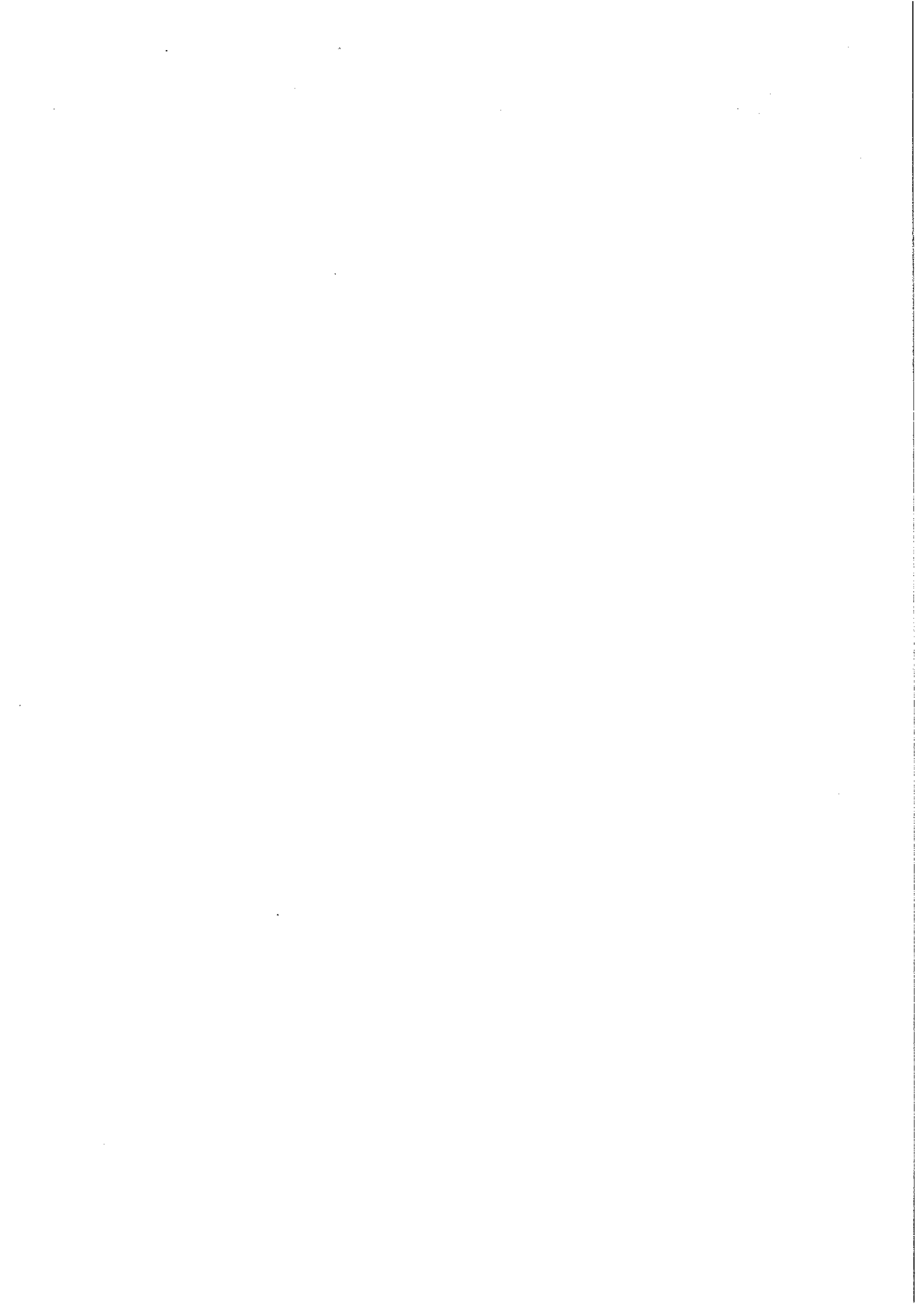
I hereby confirm that I have received a copy of the Council Handbook and accept that it forms part of my Contract of Employment


.....
Employee's Name

.....
Employee's Signature

.....
Date

(To be returned to the Council and kept on the employee's personnel file)



 <p>Buckingham Town Council Financial Risk Assessment</p>	<p>Date Agreed: Minute Number: Prepared by: Date for review:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Paul Hodson</p>
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RISK AREA	RISK IDENTIFIED	MITIGATION	NOTES
To provide and maintain standards for Town Council services to the residents of Buckingham	The risk of legislative change which will have an impact on the Town Councils powers, duties and funding	Town Clerk & staff keep appraised of developments, including through SLCC and NALC membership.	
	The protection of physical assets owned by the Town Council including buildings and equipment (loss or damage)	All physical assets insured All assets checked regularly Assets recorded and managed through RBS asset tool from April 2019	
	The risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the Town council providing services (public liability)	Public liability insurance renewed annually	
To provide a safe and fulfilling working	Insufficient staff or other resources to deliver the service needs	Staff have general awareness of other team member's essential tasks and can provide cover when required. Town Clerk to formally monitor and review staff and work levels. Any concerns regarding this to then be brought to Council	1
	Employees contravene H & S Regs	H & S & First Aid training, insurance, Risk Assessments regularly checked and updated	

environment for staff	Potential legal proceedings up to corporate manslaughter	Employers Liability insurance Employee training and awareness	
	Staff retention issues	Staff training where appropriate. Annual appraisals review four year goals and where appropriate plans put in place.	
To maintain financial records that are correct and comply with all recommended accounting practice	Adverse audit reports, legal action and loss of confidence in Town Council	Clerk keeps up to date with legislative changes, discusses latest requirements with internal and external auditors.	
	Loss of income through error or fraud	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance	
To ensure that all actions taken by the Town Council comply with all current Legislation	Non-compliance with legislation or practice result in Council being 'Ultra Vires'	Town Clerk continually review controls and current procedures	
Cemetery	Inadequate space to meet demand	Town Clerk to keep up to date with changes in legislation, seek advice from SLCC, BMKALC, NALC and others as necessary.	
	Loss of income	Internal and external audit process.	
Employment Contract	Compensation claims from employee for contractual employment defects (including statutory failure)	Review of options to extend capacity of current cemetery to be provided by end of 2018.	
		New land identified, Current Negotiations with Land owner and planning being sought.	
		Contract of employment in place	
		Matters relating to staff discussed in confidential session and discussed by personnel committee	
		Town Clerk to keep up to date with employment law and seek HR advice where appropriate	
		Contract with LSA in to quality assure polices and processes and provide expert advice as required	

		Other policies in place	
	Compensation claim from employee for contractual employment defects (including statutory failure)	Legal insurance in place	
Staff	Impact of staff loss	By distributing knowledge and roles ensure, so far as reasonably practical, that loss of any one employee does not cause unrecoverable damage to business	
	Loss of key staff trained in financial systems, process or rules	Staffing arrange so that knowledge is distributed between RFO and at least two other staff Use of common systems and retention of detailed manuals.	
Financial Control	Inappropriate expenditure made	Payments reported to Resources committee for review and corrective action if necessary Financial procedures ensure no individual has unique access to expenditure	
	Financial Regulations become out of date with change in technology, regulation or business	Council to review financial regulations once a year Annual internal audit to comment on any need to make updates The RFO and Clerk react to any changes in legislation or other areas in order to ensure the regulations are fully compliant and also provide a strong framework compatible with Council's practices	
	Lack of budgetary overview/overspend against budget	Quarterly review of nominal ledger Monthly review of income and expenditure	

		Seven week review by Resources Committee	
	Lack of finance to meet unbudgeted, urgent commitments (with safety or other critical implications)	Contingency included in budget Reserves equivalent to at least three month's spend available	
Systems & Record	Accounts The RBS Omega accounts system is used which is an accepted accounts package	A back up is also made to the main server at the end of each day, this is then backed up to a cloud server offsite. Hard copies linked to council reports are held on file together with bank reconciliation reports, invoices/receipts/payments and cheques issued All cheques issued from the main account are authorised and signed by 2 Councillors with retrospective approval by the Resources Committee Documents are retained for 12 years	
	Vat The RBS Omega system incorporates a Vat schedule which is an accepted package which allows differentiation between tax rates etc. which is itemised in a full report relating back to the original item within the accounts	Vat is applied to all mileage payments at the rate applicable at the time as advise by HMR&C Vat returns are lodged on a quarterly basis in line with accepted procedures Procedures have been inspected by HMR&C every three/four years and have been approved	
	Payroll / Pension The Sage payroll system is used which is an accepted payroll package	The Clerk authorises any overtime, mileage or special duty payments act, on a monthly basis Back-ups are made to the server Hard copies linked to pay roll reports are held on file together with payslips, BACs payments and cheques issued to the	

<p>Banking Arrangements & Procedures</p> <p>Banking Security/Access to Finances</p>		<p>pension fund and HMRC</p> <p>The associated Sage printouts which show loading references are maintained on file</p> <p>All BACs payments and cheques to the pension fund & HMRC are authorised by council on a meeting cycle basis</p> <p>The monthly pay is issued via BACs payments which have been established for some time with the bank and special monthly password are required which are held by the Finance Officer</p> <p>Payments can only be issued for the nominated employees, which must be authorised in advance of the payment, with accuracy checked by a further officer.</p> <p>Documents are retained for 12 years</p> <p>Annual pension and year end payroll returns are issued in a timely manner to the appropriate bodies that inspect the information & highlight and discrepancies</p> <p>The Council agrees the salary scales for the Town Council staff</p>
	<p>Lloyds Bank is used which offers no Bank charges</p> <p>Accounts</p> <p>Cheques</p>	<p>One bank account used daily with RFO, Finance Officer & DTC</p> <p>Reviewing how much is placed into a higher rate deposit account to maximise income while not affecting cash flow</p> <p>Each cheque from the main account must be signed by 2 Councillors as detailed on the back mandates (which are amended when required to ensure that sufficient signatories are available at all times)</p>

	<p>Transfers</p>	<p>Transfers to the higher rate deposit which are done via telephone by RFO via online banking.</p>	
<p>Bank Reconciliation</p>	<p>All accounts are reconciled using the RBS Omega system within 5 days of receipt of any statement</p> <p>Any discrepancies are immediately reported to the bank for investigation</p> <p>All petty cash accounts which do not have statements are reconciled on a monthly basis by the Finance Officer against the cash held and any discrepancies are immediately reported to the Clerk</p>		
<p>Separation of Duties</p>	<p>The office has established separation of duties to ensure that no one person has access to the bank balances or cash wherever possible as two Councillor's signatories are required</p>		
<p>Access to the main bank accounts</p>	<p>As detailed under Banking arrangements & Procedures above, no one person has access to monies held in the main accounts.</p> <p>Any new bank accounts would require agreement from the Town Council</p> <p>All invoices are checked by the Finance officer in advance of payment and if related to an order, this has passed through the ordering procedure which has numerous stages of authorisation to ensure that fraudulent activities are not taking place (please refer to the Ordering Procedure section)</p>		
<p>Access to petty cash accounts</p>	<p>The Financial Regulations specify maximum balances to ensure that individuals do not have access to large amounts of money.</p> <p>The petty cash is kept in a locked drawer and access is</p>		

	restricted to Finance Officer and DTC.	
Cheques	All invoices will either have a Purchase Order or are authorised by either Clerk, DTC or Estates Manager. They are paid via cheque which requires 2 Councillor's signatories. Councillors also see the related invoice and authorise this with their signature	
Petty Cash – Cash Payments	All payments made in cash must be substantiated by an invoice etc. which has been authorised by the Responsible Finance Officer All payments are reported to Resources with a full reconciliation report for sign-off	
Hire Charges	Council agree the charges The office must abide by these rates and any requests for preferential rates must be made by the hirer to Council for their approval All bookings must be paid for in advance to avoid bad debts other block bookers are invoiced or given the option of paying the sites on a weekly basis	
Hire charges received within the office	All post is logged by an Officer and any payments received are itemised & given to the Finance Officer for processing All cash received from hirers that visit the office is itemised on the Accounts system	
Cash collected from community events	All cash collected at events is collected by appointed staff and volunteers in approved charity buckets which are allocated at	

		<p>the start of the event</p> <p>Any buckets are locked securely in the Town Council office or Chamber and at the end of the event</p> <p>At the office the cash is emptied and counted manually at the latest on the following working day by at least two members of staff</p>	
	<p>Processing and banking</p>	<p>When the money is received it is balanced within the office against any receipts/invoices and any discrepancies are followed up</p> <p>When the monies have been balanced, it is input onto the RBS Omega system and all entry references are printed out and retained</p> <p>The hire charges are banked when received</p> <p>The cash element is usually below £500</p> <p>A unique pay in reference is applied to each batch of banking which is loaded onto the RBS Omega system which is then checked against the bank reconciliation</p> <p>This is a strict routine that ensures that any booked hire cannot proceed without receiving the payments and guarantees that all monies are accounted for</p>	
<p>Financial Administration</p>	<p>Records non-compliant or inadequate</p>	<p>Internal auditor reviews record keeping annually</p> <p>Advice taken from internal auditor, external auditor, accountant, SLCC + NALC on changes in regulation</p>	

	<p>Expenditure/income coded incorrectly</p> <p>Standing Orders</p> <p>Standing orders are reviewed and approved by Town Council on an annual basis</p> <p>Non-compliance with statutory deadlines for the completion/approval/submission of accounts and other financial returns</p> <p>Invoice payment without authority</p> <p>Incoming cash and cheque misappropriation</p> <p>Theft of funds</p> <p>Incorrect entries by bank</p> <p>To avoid fraud and ensure authority of expenditure</p>	<p>RFO checks nominal ledger every quarter</p> <p>Items are coded</p> <p>The Clerk reacts to any changes in legislation, requests from Town Council or other areas in order to ensure the regulations are fully compliant and also provide a strong framework compatible with Council practices</p> <p>Programme of meetings to meet statutory deadlines</p> <p>All payments reviewed against purchase order. Town Clerk authorises invoices for payment, two Councillors sign cheques and Resources Committee review all payments</p> <p>Individual receipts to be issued for all cash payments and for cheque payments on request</p> <p>Bank statements reconciled monthly, Fidelity Insurance in place against theft of funds by staff, Councillors and other persons</p> <p>Cash and cheques stored securely and banked within 5 working days of receipt</p> <p>Bank statements reconciled monthly</p> <p>A comprehensive ordering system was established which ensures that all orders are requested in writing, correctly authorised by the Clerk or approved by council & are within acceptable budget limits</p> <p>This system incorporates job numbers/minutes and RBS Omega</p>	
Ordering Procedure			

		<p>codes so that any order can be traced from origin to finish across a variety of systems</p>	
<p>Annual Budget & Precept Calculations</p>	<p>The annual budget and precept calculations</p>	<p>The annual budget and precept calculations are initially calculated in October/November based upon the performance of the prior year and incorporating projected requirements which have been lodged by the office and council members</p> <p>The Town Clerk also completes a mid-year review in October for the current year to calculate possible year end surpluses which may be incorporated within the future budget. The actual precept level is then calculated from the balance sheet assuming that the remainder of the current year's budget will be utilised in order to estimate the year end bank balance</p> <p>The new budgeted income, expenditure and reserves are then set against this balance in order to calculate a budget shortfall on which the future precept is based</p> <p>The new budget is discussed and fine-tuned through the October, November and December Council and Committee meetings after the up to date number of band D properties have been confirmed by AVDC discuss & amend any highlighted budget levels in order to best achieve, an acceptable precept level</p> <p>Comprehensive minutes are recorded at each stage to substantiate the budget development</p> <p>The final budget is approved in January and AVDC is immediately advised of the precept</p>	

Monitoring of Budgets	Comprehensive budgets	Comprehensive budgets are set for each committee & these are loaded onto RBS Omega accounts system at the start of the new financial year	
	Monitoring	<p>On-going daily expenditures have already been incorporated within the budget and the RFO monitors invoices etc. against the budget schedule to confirm that they are within the limits</p> <p>All orders are checked against the accounts system to verify expenditure within the account code to date and the remaining budget</p> <p>Any over expenditure is highlighted and brought to the attention of the Clerk</p>	
	Reporting	<p>A full report of expenditures against budget is lodged with council at each Resources meeting</p> <p>This incorporates a print out of the income and expenditure against each annual budget and the cashbook extract</p> <p>Any that do not meet the budget levels are highlighted by member if needed along with committed expenditure</p>	
Insurable Risks	Public Liability	Insurance cover	
	Employer's Liability	In addition, weekly, annual checks of play equipment	
	Theft of money by third party	Insurance cover	
	Theft of money by employee or member	Fidelity Guarantee cover	

Property	Cover for buildings & contents All risks cover for selected items	
Officials Indemnity	Continue with existing cover (£250k)	
Libel and Slander	Continue existing cover (£250k)	
Personal Accident	Continue with existing cover (scale benefits)	
Legal disputes	Cover for specified legal disputes	
Long term sickness of employee	Not covered	
Business interruption	Liability limited by contract	
Loss/destruction of financial records	Potential alternative premises, IT back-up off site and ability to restore onto hired equipment etc Cover in place for excess costs	
Loss of Records	Key financial data held electronically and backed up off site All electronic documents backed up daily offsite	
Asset List	Deeds and other legal documents relating to real estate stored in the office, historic stored at the depot An asset list is maintained by the Town Council Office on an excel spread sheet. This will be updated to use the RBS asset package from April 2019. This is updated throughout the year from new assets. In addition, a schedule of road furniture/bins/dog bins/bus shelters play area equipment etc., is kept on a secondary list	

	Maintained	<p>The asset list is circulated to staff on an annual basis to ensure that all items are correct</p> <p>The Town Council has a scheme for maintenance of assets</p>	
Internal Audit	Internal Audit	<p>The Internal Auditor and scope of audit is approved annually by Council and attends the office to complete the internal audit in May of each year. Additional visits can be arranged as required and at least one interim visit is arranged, during the autumn.</p> <p>The report is presented to Council for acceptance.</p> <p>The Council review the effectiveness of Internal Audit annually</p>	
Annual Audit	Annual Audit	<p>The external auditor is appointed and directs the format and structure of the audit in line with current legislation and requirements</p> <p>Audit costs and levels of requirement are determined by government legislation based upon the annual income or expenditure levels</p> <p>The Town Clerk & RFO completes the year end accounts to audit trial level and prepares any additional reports required by the external auditor</p> <p>The Town Clerk presents the completed Annual Return, Financial Statement and other documentation required to Council in line with the timescales provided by the external auditor</p> <p>Once these have been formally adopted and signed by Council, they are lodged with external auditors</p>	

		<p>Any queries raised by the auditors are dealt with by the Town Clerk in the first instance</p> <p>Final sign-off by the external auditor is presented to Council</p>	
Insurance	Fidelity Insurance	<p>Fidelity insurance levels have been set after taking into account the possibility of fraudulent activities gaining access to the bank accounts</p> <p>Procedures in place (as previously detailed) have been established over the past few years incorporating separation of duties, cross referenced receipts of income and the decision not to currently use e-banking</p> <p>These provisions have ensured that no individual is able to gain access to withdraw funds without due process</p>	
	Insurance	<p>Zurich has been used as a recognised Town Council provider</p> <p>BTC are currently tied into a deal until 2020</p> <p>Annual reviews are carried out to ensure sufficient cover is in place</p>	