



BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk: Claire Molyneux

CSSC

15th November 2024

Councillor,

You are summoned to a meeting of the **Communications Strategy Sub-Committee** of Buckingham Town Council to be held on **Thursday 6th March 2025 at 1pm** in the Council Chamber.

Residents are very welcome to ask questions or speak to Councillors about any matter relevant to the meeting at the start of the meeting. Residents may attend in person or address the meeting virtually over Zoom. Please email committeeclerk@buckingham-tc.gov.uk or call 01280 816426 for the password to take part if you wish to speak over Zoom.

The meeting can be watched live on the Town Council's YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC89BUTwVpjAOEIdSlfcZC9Q/>

Claire Molyneux
Town Clerk

Please note that the meeting will be preceded by a Public Session in accordance with Standing Order 3.f, which will last for a maximum of 15 minutes.

1. Apologies for Absence

Members are asked to receive and accept apologies from Members.

2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 Sections 26-34 & Schedule 4.

3. Meeting Notes

To review and agree the notes from the last meeting held on Thursday 21st November 2024.

[Copies circulated previously](#)

4. Future Newsletter - Fringe 2025

To decide what we want to achieve with our next newsletter and outline the content.

[Appendix A](#)



Twinned with Mouvaux, France;

Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany



Members are reminded when making decisions that the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 requires Members to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't, and to foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't. All Committee documents can be found on the Buckingham Town Council's website. Alternatively, the Clerk can send you a copy of any minutes, reports or other information. To do this, send a request using the contact details set out above.

5. Audio Newsletter

To decide who should record the audio copy of the Fringe 2025 newsletter.

6. Ongoing Development of Existing Websites

To discuss the maintenance of the website and any improvements to be made.

- www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk
- www.discoverbuckingham.uk

7. Newsletter Cost Annual Review

To receive a report from the Estates Administrator

CSG/10/24

8. Future Newsletters

To receive a report from the Estates Administrator

CSG/11/24

9. The Town Council Gold Standard Criteria

To receive a report from the Town Clerk

CSG/12/24

10. Chair's Items

11. Date of Next Meeting

10th April @ 1pm Online via Zoom

5th June @ 1pm in person at Council Chamber

To:

Cllr. R. Ahmed

Cllr. M. Gateley

Cllr. J. Harvey (Chair)

Cllr. J. Mordue

Cllr. A. Osibogun

Cllr. A. Schaefer (Mayor)

Cllr. M. Try (Vice-Chair)

Cllr. J. Mordue

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY SUB COMMITTEE
Thursday 6th March 2025

Contact Officer: Nina Stockill, Estates Administrator

Plans for Summer 2025 Fringe Brochure

Print Deadline 4th June 2025

Distribution from 23rd June to 7th July 2025

1. Recommendations



- 1.1. It is recommended members agree to the suggested content and layout and make suggestions regarding the overall design.

2. Background

- 2.1. Since 2023, the summer edition of the Buckingham Town Matters newsletter is a trifold A5 leaflet focused on promoting events and the Fringe Week.

3. Suggested Content & Layout

- 3.1. The Summer 2025 Newsletter / Fringe Brochure will be an A5 trifold leaflet that will form six pages of content to include events over Fringe Week. It will also include a Message from the Mayor, future summer events, and useful contacts.
- 3.2. Fringe Week events will include Family Fun Day, Buckingham Play Days, a performance from Oxford Fiddle Group, Art in the Market, and a Comedy Night at Tanlaw Mill. More events are anticipated to take place which will be included in the brochure across the three centre pages.
- 3.3. Future summer events will include the Buckingham Summer Festival, Buckingham Play Days, Basketball Sessions, Bandjam Big Bash, Merchant Navy Day Flag Raising, Dog Show, and River Rinses.

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|--|---|--|
| <p>Inside Left of Trifold Leaflet</p> <p>Fringe Events & Pictures</p> | <p>Inside Middle of Trifold Leaflet</p> <p>Fringe Events & Pictures</p> | <p>Inside Right of Trifold Leaflet</p> <p>Fringe Events & Pictures</p> |
| <p>Reverse Inside Right of Trifold Leaflet</p> <p>Message from your Mayor</p> | <p>Reverse Middle of Trifold Leaflet</p> <p>Future (Summer) Events</p> <p>Useful Numbers</p> <p>DISCLAIMER This edition has been created in house by Buckingham Town Council</p> | <p>Reverse Inside Left & Front Page of Trifold Leaflet</p> <p>Buckingham Fringe Week 2025</p> <p>21st- 27th July</p> <p>  Buckingham Town Council</p> <p>Collage of Pictures</p> <p>Message from your Mayor Buckingham Fringe Week Future Events Useful Contacts</p> |

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY SUB COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 6th March 2025

Contact Officer: Nina Stockill, Estates Administrator

Newsletter Costs

1. Recommendation:

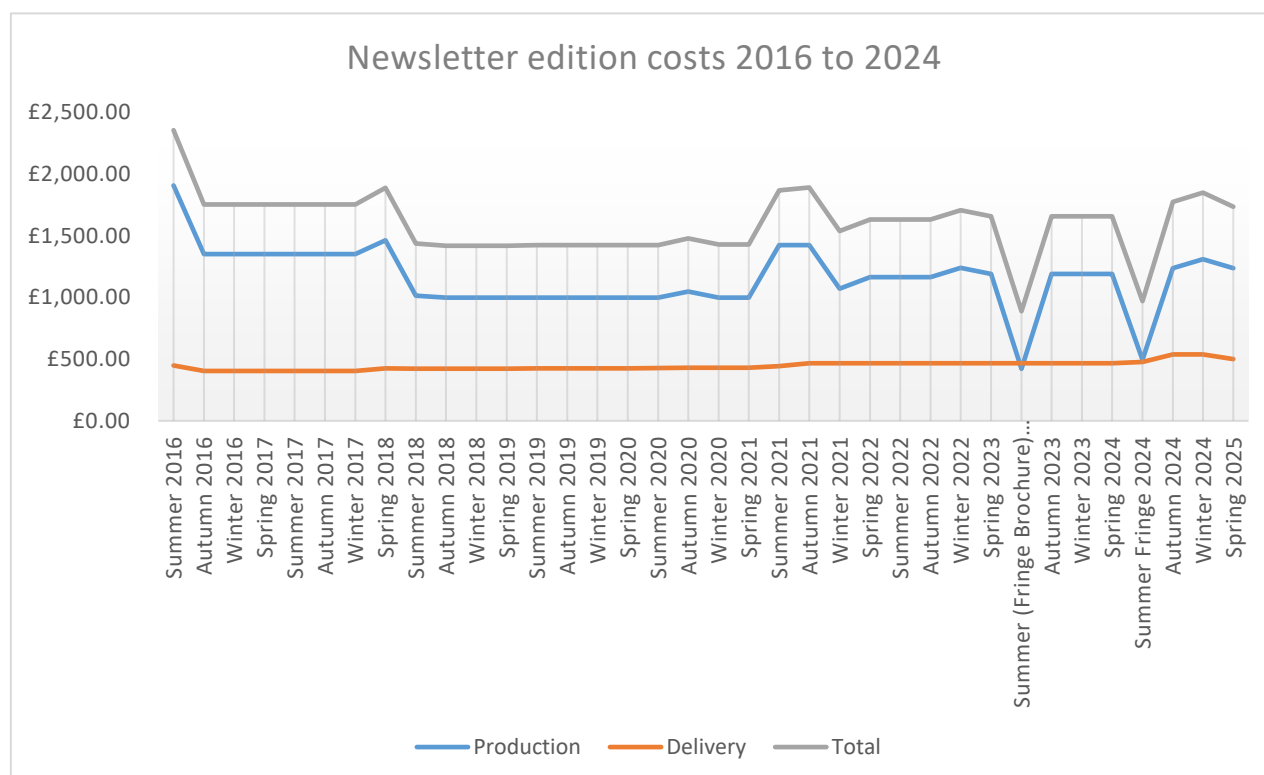
It is recommended members note the report.

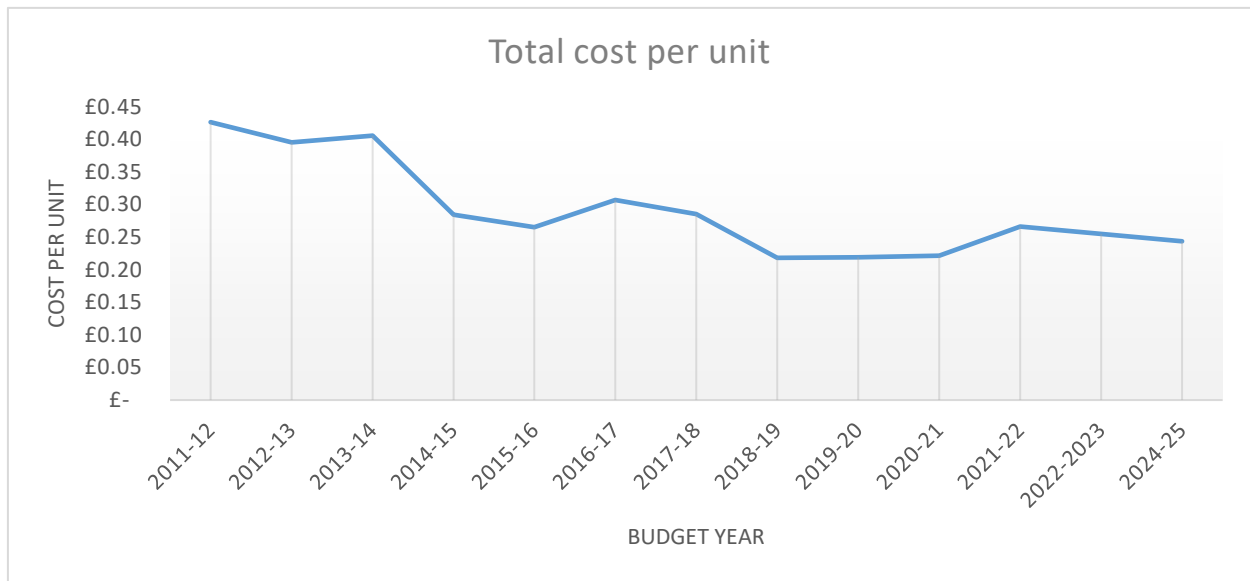
2. Newsletter costs:

| Issue | Production | Delivery | Total | Copies | Pages | Price Per Unit |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|--------|---------|----------------|
| Fringe Brochure (Summer) 2024 | £494 | £477.98 | £971.98 | 6,500 | Trifold | £0.15 |
| Autumn 2024 | £1,236 | £538.90 | £1,774.90 | 6,500 | 16 | £0.27 |
| Winter 2024 | £1,311 | £538.90 | £1,849.90 | 6,500 | 16 | £0.28 |
| Spring 2025 | £1,236 | £499.56 | £1,735.56 | 6,500 | 16 | £0.27 |

2.1 The final cost for newsletter design, production, and delivery in 2024/25 was **£6,332.34**, a slight increase from the previous year. The newsletter is funded from the Publicity Budget (code 4032). The budget for 2024/25 was **£6,773**. This has been increased to £7,400 for 2025/26.

2.2 The following graphs show more detail about newsletter costs over time.





Buckingham Town Council
Communications Strategy Group
Thursday 6th March 2025

Contact Officer: Estates Administrator

Plans for 2025 - 2026 newsletters

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. It is recommended that Members review and agree the new schedule for regular newsletter content, including "What did your Council achieve in the previous year?"

2. Background

- 2.1. At last year's March meeting of the Communications Strategy Sub Committee, members agreed to review the plans for what articles should be included in each edition for the forthcoming financial year.

3. Existing Schedule for Newsletters

- 3.1. The previous schedule for 2024/25 newsletters was agreed as follows:

| Print item | CSG Planning Meeting | Distribution period | Key articles to include |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Fringe & Summer Newsletter | 07/03/2024 | 24/06/2024 – 08/07/2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fringe promotion - Summer events promotion - Message from the Mayor |
| Autumn Newsletter | 06/06/2024 | 16/09/2024 – 30/09/2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant applications for next year's funding - New Mayor & Deputy Mayor (if required) - Mayor Making, Mayor's Charities & Civic Awards - What did your Council achieve in the previous year (shortened version of annual reports from committees) |
| Winter Newsletter | 05/09/2024 | 11/11/2024 – 25/11/2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where the Money came from and how we spent it - Grant recipients current/past year |
| Spring Newsletter | 21/11/2024 | 24/03/2025 – 07/04/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Tax & Precept infographic advertising |

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| | | | - Annual Town Meeting advert |
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4. Local Council Award Scheme Criteria

- 4.1. As part of the NALC Local Council Award Scheme, all award levels (Foundation, Quality and Gold) require an annual report to be written. At 'Quality' status it is suggested, although not required, that the report be available in print at a variety of public locations including the library. Although the Council does not currently have a Local Council Award it is a long-term aim to regain Gold status.
- 4.2. *"The annual report should be actively communicated and shared with the community. It might be produced digitally and/or in hard copy. It is accepted that it cannot always be distributed to all households, but digital versions could be distributed by email and social media. Hard copies could be left at prime locations in a community, including a library, doctors' surgeries, schools, pubs, shops or residential homes."*
- 4.3. The Town Council previously achieved this through annual committee reports which are presented at the Annual Town Meeting in March/April and printed in the Town Council summer newsletter as a 'What your Council achieved in the previous year?' article, publicly available on the Town Council website, advertised on social media and delivered to all homes in Buckingham.
- 4.4. Members previously agreed that the regular 'What Your Council Achieved' in the previous year's article be moved to the Autumn edition. However, this creates a 6-month gap between the reports being written by committee chairs in September 2025 and the Annual Town Meeting in March or April 2026. In practice, it would become necessary for two reports to be written and a decision to be made about which constituted the 'annual report'.

5. Options

5.1. Option 1:

If the article stays in the Autumn edition, it may be better to use the reports from the March 2025 Annual Town Meeting (e.g. the previous year's Chair's report), as this would leave a 5-month gap between the report being written and publication. However, the author of the report would be the previous year's Chair, which may cause confusion.

5.2. Option 2:

If the article were to move to the Spring 2026 edition, articles could be written in early January 2026, this would leave only a 3-month gap until they are presented at the Annual Town Meeting.

5.3. Option 3:

The Annual Town Meeting committee chair reports and newsletter articles become separate reports. Committee chairs are asked to write a full report for the Annual Town Meeting and a short article for the newsletter. The Annual Town Meeting reports can be added to the website and shared on social media as usual.

6. New Schedule for 2025– 2026 newsletters

6.1. The new schedule for 2025 – 2026 newsletters will be as follows:

| Print item | CSG Planning Meeting | Distribution period | Key articles to include |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Fringe & Summer Newsletter | 06/03/2025 | 23/06/2025-07/07/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fringe promotion - Summer events promotion - Message from the Mayor |
| Autumn Newsletter | 05/06/2025 | 09/09/2025 – 23/09/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant recipients this year - Grant applications for next year's funding - New Mayor & Deputy Mayor (as required) - Mayor Making & Civic Awards |
| Winter Newsletter | 04/09/2025 | 11/11/2025 – 25/11/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where the Money came from and how we spent it - Option 1: What did your Council achieve in the previous year (annual reports from committees) |
| Spring Newsletter | 20/11/2025 | 04/03/2025 – 18/03/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Tax & Precept infographic - Annual Town Meeting - Option 2: What did your Council achieve in the previous year (annual reports from committees) |

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Buckingham Town Council
Communications Strategy Group
Thursday 6th March 2025

Contact Officers: Town Clerk

Overview of the NALC Local Council Award Scheme

1. Introduction:

1.1. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Local Council Award Scheme is a framework designed to encourage and recognise good governance, leadership and service delivery by local councils.

2. Background

2.1. Buckingham Town Council already undertake the majority of the required criteria. However, the evidencing of this and the application process, are very time consuming particularly around the more subjective criteria. At this stage while there are major projects underway officer resources are engaged elsewhere.

3. Scale of Fees for Applying:

3.1. The NALC's Local Council Award Scheme involves application fees based on the population size of the council. For a Town Council to apply for the *Quality Gold Award*, the application fee will vary, with smaller councils typically paying lower fees compared to larger councils. Specific fee details can be obtained directly from NALC or their official website, as these may change annually.

There are two fees:

- A registration fee is paid to the National Association of Local Councils
- An accreditation fee is paid to the organisation responsible for administering the local or regional accreditation process.

3.2 Registration fee:

The registration fee (£50 excluding VAT) is paid to the National Association of Local Councils by all councils for each level regardless of size.

3.3 Accreditation fee:

The accreditation fee varies according to the award applied for, the council's income and the council's accreditation history. The accreditation fee covers the cost of the accreditation panel decision-making process only.

Bronze Award:

- Annual income under £25,000 — £50
- Annual income over £25,000 — £80

Silver Award:

- Annual income under £25,000 — £80
- Annual income over £25,000 — £100

Gold Award:

- Annual income under £25,000 — £100
- Annual income over £25,000 — £200

The figures quoted are the discounted rates for NALC members. Both the registration fee and accreditation fee are reduced by 50% for member councils. Non-member councils must pay the full fee, i.e. double the figures quoted above.

4. Criteria for the Quality Gold Award:

To qualify for the *Quality Gold Award*, a Town Council must meet key criteria for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Award that reflect best practices in local governance and service delivery. These specific criteria include:

| Bronze Award Criteria |
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| 1. Standing Orders |
| 2. Financial Regulations |
| 3. Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests |
| 4. Accessibility statement |
| 5. Publication scheme |
| 6. Complaints procedure |
| 7. Privacy notice |
| 8. Last annual return |
| 9. Transparent information about council payments |
| 10. Calendar of all meetings <u>including</u> the next annual meeting of electors |
| 11. Minutes for at least <u>one year</u> of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee/sub-committee meetings |
| 12. Current agendas |
| 13. The Budget and Precept information for the current or next financial year |
| 14. Biodiversity policy |

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| 15. Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code |
| 16. Action plan for the current year |
| 17. Evidence of consulting the community |
| 18. Publicity advertising council activities |
| 19. Evidence of participating in town and country planning |
| 20. Evidence of publicising elections and vacancies on the council |
| 21. Risk management policy |
| 22. Register of assets |
| 23. Up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money |
| 24. Evidence of considering the impact of the council's functions and decisions on crime and disorder in local area |
| 25. Disciplinary and Grievance procedures |
| 26. A policy for training and development of staff and councillors |
| 27. A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year |
| 28. A current clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year |
| 29. Signed up to the Civility & Respect Pledge and a Dignity at Work policy |

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| Silver Award Criteria |
| 1. Health and Safety policy |
| 2. Policy on Equality |
| 3. Co-option policy |
| 4. Community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community |
| 5. Councillor profiles |
| 6. Grant awarding policy |
| 7. Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting |
| 8. Action plan and related Budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review |
| 9. Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins |
| 10. Evidence of helping the community plan for its future |
| 11. Evidence of encouraging public engagement in local democracy |
| 12. Scheme of Delegation (where relevant) |
| 13. At least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election, <u>or</u> significant evidence of the council advertising vacancies |
| 14. Evidence of customer service with examples of managing/handling correspondence with the public |

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| 15. A current qualified clerk |
| 16. A formal appraisal process for all staff |

| Gold Award Criteria |
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| 1. A business plan covering a financial forecast for at least <u>three</u> years linked to revenue and capital plans for the council and its community |
| 2. An annual report, online material, news bulletins and other council communications with evidence of: |
| a) engaging with diverse groups in the community using a variety of methods |
| b) community engagement influencing council activity and priorities |
| c) A wide range of council activities, including innovative projects, that produce positive outcomes for the community |
| d) co-operating constructively with other organisations |
| e) Active promotion of elections, including that at least two-thirds of its councillors stood for election |
| 3. Ensures that the council delivers value for money |
| 4. Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community |
| 5. Engages with the community on issues related to the environment and climate change |
| 6. Manages the performance of staff and the council as a corporate body to achieve its business plan |
| 7. Supports a culture of civility and respect in the council |