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## Notice of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

**Paul Hodson** Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 10 March 2023

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee** will be held on **Monday 20 March 2023** at **Grove House in the Council Chamber commencing at 7.00 pm**. Members of the public and press are welcome to attend, either online via Teams or in person. Anyone wishing to attend is asked to inform the Council beforehand by emailing [democratic@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@dunstable.gov.uk) or calling the Council office by 20 January 2023.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Hodson  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

### **A G E N D A**

**Members are reminded that this meeting is being held during the pre-election period, so any discussions or debates must not in any way be used to promote any candidate or party in the coming election, or be designed to affect public support for a political party or candidate, or promotes or oppose a point of view on a question of political controversy which is identifiable as the view of one political party or group of Councillors and not of another.**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 23 January 2023 (copy previously circulated)

3. Specific Declarations of Interest
4. To receive the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 22 February 2023 (see page 4).
5. Referral Reports – to consider any referral reports from other Committees
  - 5.1. Constitution Working Group – Standing Orders - Report (see page 6)
  - 5.2. Other as required
6. Financial Monitoring Report - Report (see page 30)
  - 6.1. Internal Auditor's Report
  - 6.2. Revised Financial Regulations (see page 54)
7. Priory House Reopening - Report (see page 71)
8. Revised Complaints Policy – Report (see page 77)
9. Press and Media Policy – Report (see page 83)
10. Staff Benefits – Report (see page 87)
11. Phone Box – Report (see page 131)
12. Representatives on Outside Organisations - to receive reports from representatives on the following outside organisations:
  - Citizen's Advice Management Committee – Councillor Bater
  - Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Town Mayor and Councillors Corkhill and Abbott
  - Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Jones
  - Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Corkhill and Hollick
  - Ashton Schools Foundation – Councillors Hollick and Martin
  - Chew's Foundation – Councillors Corkhill and Kenson Gurney
  - Poor's Land Charity – Councillors Hollick and Jones
  - Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity – Councillors John Gurney and Jones
  - Dunstable Concert Ensemble – Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor
  - Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive – Councillor Martin

**NB: Those Members who are not members of this Committee but are representatives of organisations reporting to it are reminded to provide a report in time for the meeting.**

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

14. Staffing – Referral from Personnel Sub-Committee (see page 134)

15. Banking Arrangements – Report (see page 135)

16. Bad Debt – Report (see page 137)

To: All Members of Finance and General Purposes Committee:  
Councillors Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Lisa Bird (Deputy Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Chairman), Philip Crawley (Vice-Chairman), Sid Abbott, Wendy Bater, Matthew Brennan, Mark Cant, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Peter Hollick, Cameron Restall and Johnson Tamara and other Members of the Council for information.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH,  
DUNSTABLE**

**ON WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2023 FROM 19:00**

Present: Councillors Gloria Martin (Chairman), Sid Abbott, John Gurney, Liz Jones and Lisa Bird.

In Attendance: Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Peter Hollick

**1. Specific Declarations of Interest**

None

**2. Minutes of the Meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 18 November 2022**

Approved

**3. Investors in People Update**

Members received the report.

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

**5. Staffing Structure**

**RESOLVED:**

i) to recommend to Council for the Council to adopt the revised staffing structures for the Town Clerk & Chief Executive's Office listed at 3.2 and Creasey Park Community Football Centre listed at 3.3 in the report provided from 1 April 2023, providing that the job role assessments are in line with the forecast costs provided, with the following changes:

ii) to delegate to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in liaison with the Chairman to review the salary of the Apprentice dependent on initial recruitment.

iii) to retain the current role of Democratic Services Officer role, increased to full time hours, but advertise more openly to be clear that civic experience is not essential.



iv) to review whether level 3 NEBOSH certificate would benefit the Compliance Officer.

Council should consider including a caveat with training above a certain cost that staff should repay the cost if they leave within two years for training above a certain level.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**20 MARCH 2023**

**REVISED STANDING ORDERS**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To propose revised Standing Orders for Members' approval.
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**1 ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 To recommend to Council that the Council adopts the proposed new Standing Orders.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council reviews its Standing Orders each year, meaning the current version is the result of a gradual evolution. In recent years, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has produce a template for Standing Orders. The template shows legally required aspects in bold. The wording used tends to be clear, and ensures councils are compliant with the law but also with current good practice.
- 2.2 A new draft of Dunstable Town Council's Standing Orders was prepared. The new draft is based on NALC's template, but has been amended to reflect Dunstable's particular practices, and also the size of the Council and the scale of the services delivered.

**3 WORKING GROUP**

- 3.1 The Committee agreed during the meeting held in November 2022 to approve the establishment of a Working Group to review the Council's constitution and Standing Orders. The Working Group met via Teams on Tuesday 28 February. The Group considered the first draft of the new Standing Orders. The Group made some small changes, which have all been included in the draft provided for the Committee's approval.

**4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 While the Financial Regulations ensure the Council meets its legal obligations, the Standing Orders do clarify the role of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and Responsible Financial Officer to ensure these are both correctly held and carried out.

**5 POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None

**6 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

**7 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None

**8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The revised Standing Orders ensure the Council meets all current legal requirements. By highlighting in bold the Standing Orders which are required to meet legislation, Members can easily tell which Standing Orders may be suspended should this be appropriate.

**9 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

**10 APPENDICES**

10.1 Appendix 1: Draft Standing Orders

**11 AUTHOR**

Paul Hodson; Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
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## **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT STANDING ORDERS**

1. Rules Of Debate At Meetings .....	2
2. Disorderly Conduct At Meetings.....	4
3. Meetings Generally .....	4
4. Committees And Sub-Committees .....	7
5. Ordinary Council Meetings.....	8
6. Extraordinary Meetings Of The Council, Committees And Sub-Committees ..	10
7. Previous Resolutions .....	10
8. Voting On Appointments.....	10
9. Motions For A Meeting That Require Written Notice .....	11
10. Motions At A Meeting That Do Not Require Written Notice .....	11
11. Management Of Information .....	12
12. Draft Minutes .....	13
13. Code Of Conduct And Dispensations.....	13
14. Code Of Conduct Complaints .....	15
15. Proper Officer .....	16
16. Responsible Financial Officer .....	17
17. Accounts And Accounting Statements .....	17
18. Financial Controls And Procurement.....	18
19. Handling Staff Matters .....	19
20. Responsibilities To Provide Information .....	20
21. Responsibilities Under Data Protection Legislation .....	20
22. Relations With The Press/Media.....	21
23. Execution And Sealing Of Legal Deeds.....	21
24. Communicating With Central Bedfordshire Councillors .....	21
25. Restrictions On Councillor Activities.....	21
26. Standing Orders Generally.....	22

## **1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS**

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the Chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the Chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
- ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
- iii. to make a point of order;
- iv. to give a personal explanation; or
- v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order or a ruling on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall be decided by the Chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;
  - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed ten minutes without the consent of the Chairman of the meeting.
- u Members shall address the chairman of the meeting.  
discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. ction to the

Minutes shall be made by resolution

- v Any Member wishing to refer to, or present a document (letter, photograph, sketch, etc) to Council or one of its Committees, should notify and make a copy available to the Chairman of the relevant Committee at least three days prior to the relevant meeting. The Chairman, in consultation with the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, will then verify the appropriateness of the document, in preparation for submission at the relevant meeting.
- w Members who cannot attend Council or a Committee Meeting physically may attend virtually where this is possible, and may be allowed to speak by the Chairman. They may not vote, and they may not formally make a motion, propose an amendment to a motion or raise a point of order. They will not be counted as present for the purpose of deciding whether the meeting is quorate. They will also not count as present for the purpose of calculating attendance in regard of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the Chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

## **3. MEETINGS GENERALLY**

- a **Meetings shall take place in Grove House.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the**

**meeting is convened at shorter notice**

- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f Questions and representations from the public at all meetings of the Council or its Committees should be received by the Town Clerk and Chief Executive in writing a minimum of three working days prior to the date of the meeting.
- g The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- h Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than five minutes.
- i In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- j At a full Council meeting a person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The Chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- k A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the Chairman of the meeting.
- l Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- m **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- n **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**



- o **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- p **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- q **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- r **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- s **The Chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

*See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.*

- t **Voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- u The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
  - i. the time and place of the meeting;
  - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
  - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
  - vii. the resolutions made.
- v **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of**

**conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**

- w **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

*See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*

- x **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- y A meeting shall not exceed a period of two and half hours, unless Members resolve to proceed for longer.

#### **4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
  - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee; providing that no Member of a committee may hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.

- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive ( ) days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the Chairman of the standing committee;
- vii. shall permit each committee to elect its own Vice-Chairman, during the Annual Meeting of the Council;
- viii. the Mayor and Deputy Mayor shall be members of every standing committee;
- ix. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be one half of its members and no less than three;
- x. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- xi. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

## **5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on a week Monday following ordinary day of elections to the council.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on the third Monday in May.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least five other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman (who is the Town Mayor) and Vice-Chairman (who is the Deputy Town Mayor) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes**

**disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

- h In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:

  - i. In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
  - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
  - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
  - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
  - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
  - ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - x. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
  - xi. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
  - xii. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

**6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.
- c The Chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the Chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any two members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

**7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least four councillors to be given to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

**8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chairman of the meeting.

**9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE TOWN CLERK & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive at least five clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Town Clerk & Chief Executive may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Town Clerk & Chief Executive considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive at least five clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive of the reason for rejection.

**10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
  - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - ii. to move to a vote;

- iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

## **11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

*See also standing order 20.*

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**

- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

## **12. DRAFT MINUTES**

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e The Council shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

## **13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

*See also standing order 3(u).*

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.



- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made [by the Proper Officer] OR [by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required] and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered [by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
  - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
  - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
  - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

## **14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**

- a The Council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
  - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- b **Upon notification by Central Bedfordshire Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**
- c Upon notification by Central Bedfordshire Council that it is dealing with a complaint made by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in relation to the complaint until it has been determined.

## 15. PROPER OFFICER

- a The Proper Officer shall be either the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or in his absence the appropriate Head of Service.
- b The Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall:
  - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
    - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Town Clerk & Chief Executive thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
    - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

*See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;*

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least four days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. Provide a link from the Council's website to each Member's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- x. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);

- xi. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;  
(see also standing order 23);
- xii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiii. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority;
- xiv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the [Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman of the Plans Sub-Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Plans Sub-Committee];
- xv. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- c The following powers shall be delegated to the Town Clerk and Chief Executive or in his absence the appropriate Head of Service.
  - i. Grant or refusal of applications for Exclusive Rights of Burial, interment of human or cremated remains and erection of memorials at Dunstable Cemetery within the policies prescribed by the Council.
  - ii. Incurring all items of expenditure included within the approved budget for the relevant year except where an item is expressly excluded in the budget and subject to compliance with Standing Orders with respect to contracts and to Financial Regulations.
  - iii. Grant or refusal of applications to hire Council premises, sports facilities or facilities managed by the Council within the policies prescribed by the Council.

## **16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- a The Town Clerk and Chief Executive shall act for the Responsible Financial Officer when they are absent. The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when both the Responsible Financial Officer and Town Clerk and Chief Executive are absent.

## **17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.

- c As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
  - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's income and expenditure for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
  - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- d The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

## 18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
  - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
  - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
  - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
  - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
  - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the "light touch" arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it**

**proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**

- d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
  - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a manner that is appropriate;
  - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope or email addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - v. tenders shall be opened by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
  - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules.**

**19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee is subject to standing order 11 above.
- b. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee or, if he is not available, the Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee of absence occasioned by illness or other reason.
- c. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an

informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the Personnel Sub-Committee which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Grievance Committee.

- d Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- e In accordance with Standing order 11(a), persona with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in Standing order 19(f).

## **20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

*See also standing order 21.*

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**

**The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

## **21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

*See also standing order 11.*

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

- f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

## **22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

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

## **23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

*See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).*

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

**Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall witness their signatures.**

## **24. COMMUNICATING WITH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCILLORS**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Central Bedfordshire Council representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to Central Bedfordshire Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

## **25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.



**26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least two councillors to be given to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the Chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****20 MARCH 2023****FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) provide a revenue budgetary control report for the period ending 31 January 2023</li> <li>ii) provide detail of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 28 February 2023</li> <li>iii) present to Members the 2<sup>nd</sup> interim Internal Audit for financial year 2022/23</li> <li>iv) provide detail on current investments</li> <li>v) approve amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations</li> <li>vi) approve ear-marked reserve allocations</li> </ul>
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**1 ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 For Members to note the revenue budget position for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 January 2023.
- 1.2 For Members to note the current balance of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 28 February 2023 which include known, approved commitments in the current financial year.
- 1.3 For members to receive and note the first interim Internal Audit Report for financial year 2022/23, which concludes that the Council *"continues to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal control"*.
- 1.4 That Members approve the revised Financial Regulations submitted at Appendix 4 of this report.
- 1.5 For Members to consider and approve the allocation of £44,864 year end forecasted savings to reserves as outlined at 4.7 of this report.
- 1.6 For members to note the current investments.

**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This budgetary control report summarises the net expenditure against the budget for each service area as at 31 January 2023. This forms the basis for the projected outturn at the end of this financial year taking account current known variances.

**3 REVENUE BUDGETARY REPORT**

- 3.1 The summary at Appendix 1 shows the net expenditure at 31 January 2023 per service area and an indication of the anticipated outturn against budget, taking account of seasonal variances and known commitments for the remainder of the financial year.

- 3.2 The summary shows a potential overall net revenue underspend at the end of the financial year of **£87,181**. This includes a £14,987 overachievement on Creasey Park Community Football Centre which would be allocated to the CPCFC reserve at year-end and also takes account of the £50,000 contribution from general reserve agreed to support the drop in income at Priory House this year during the refurbishment works.
- 3.3 Within the **Town Clerk and Chief Executive's Office** the overall forecast is to be £23,787 underspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:
- *Staff Costs* due to overspend by £5,332 due to the pay award exceeding the budgeted amount.
  - *Corporate Management* income to overachieve by £38,347 due to an increase in investment and bank interest received/due to be received in this financial year, offset by increased newsletter production costs and unclaimable VAT.
  - *Democratic Representation* is forecast to be overspent by £7,342 due to the purchase of the honour boards and robes (mitigated by increased interest due on Corporate Management).
- 3.4 Within **Grounds and Environmental Services** the overall forecast is to be £32,016 underspent. Significant variances in the budget are as follows:
- *Grounds Staff Costs* are due to be overspent by £10,393 due to the pay award exceeding the budgeted amount and additional overtime requirements to cover sickness /vacancies offset by vacancies through the year.
  - *Cemetery* is due to overachieve by £23,701 largely based on burial and memorial income, together with a saving on staffing costs.
  - *Recreation Grounds* is due to overachieve by £11,480 mainly due to an external maintenance contract not budgeted for, an insurance claim settlement received and additional football pitch bookings.
  - *Town Centre and Gardens* is due to be overspent by £6,809, this is predominantly due to the Central Bedfordshire Council maintenance contract not being completed, as well as higher than forecast electricity usage at the Skatepark and increased bedding plant costs.
  - *Creasey Park* is due to overachieve by £14,987; this is mainly due to additional income forecasted for ATP Hire offset by additional expenditure being incurred of unclaimable VAT and increased waste disposal costs.
  - *Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground Splash Park* is due to be overspent by £1,021 due to the purchase of a replacement slushy machine for £2,149, offset by underspends across the service.
- 3.5 **Community Services** overall is forecast to be £4,546 overspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:
- *Older People's Support Service* is due to be overspend by £964, mainly due to not requiring the contribution from reserve included in the budget for additional transport costs.
  - *Grove Corner* is due to overachieve by £5,657 mainly from an increase in room hire bookings, offset by additional expenditure for sessional staffing and pay award.
  - *Events* is due to underspend by £9,194 mainly due to the Winter Events budget requirement being reduced.

- *Town Centre Services* is due to be underspent by £2,309, this is due to a reduced waste disposal requirement offset by additional expenditure on staffing due to the pay award.
- *Priory House* has a forecast overspend of £20,370 which will be offset from the contingency contribution of £50,000 from the general reserve agreed.

#### 4 RESERVES

- 4.1 The schedule enclosed at Appendix 2 provides detail of actual contributions to and expenditure from reserve funds in the current financial year as at 28 February 2023.
- 4.2 The schedule also includes the detail of further agreed/known commitments from earmarked reserves in this financial year and indicates an estimated end of year balance, which is of course subject to any further agreed expenditure.
- 4.3 The schedule does not take account of the recommendations for release of funds to be considered during the meeting.
- 4.4 The Council has already agreed to make the following contributions to reserves in 2023/24:

<b>Town Clerk and Chief Executive's Office:</b>	
IT Reserve	£20,000
Election Reserve	£12,500
Grove House Building Maintenance Reserve	£29,000
Town Twinning Reserve	£500

<b>Community Services:</b>	
Christmas Lights Reserve	£7,000
Downside Community Centre Building Maintenance Reserve	£3,000
Grove Corner building maintenance reserve	£4,000
Tea Rooms equipment reserve	£1,500

<b>Grounds and Environmental Services:</b>	
Vehicles Reserve	£10,000
Cemetery Memorial Safety Reserve	£1,500
Tree Reserve	£15,000
Open Spaces Reserve	£15,000
Pavilions Buildings Maintenance Reserve	£15,000
Allotment Reserve	£5,000
Cemetery Building Maintenance Reserve	£5,000

- 4.5 The Council currently holds a general reserve balance of £510,545 and, since the last report to this Committee, the revised forecast for overall underspend in 2022/23 has increased by £23,181 to £87,181 which would increase the general reserve at year end to £597,726.

- 4.6 It is the Council's policy to maintain a minimum general reserve of 25% of the salary budget. Based on the budget for 2023/24 the Council will require a general reserve minimum balance of £553,042, leaving a surplus of £44,864.
- 4.7 It is therefore proposed to transfer the following amounts to ear-marked reserves:

Development of a new 4 year corporate plan in 2023/2024	£5,000
Additional contribution to the IT reserve in preparation for retendering the IT contract in July 2024 and new tablets for members	£10,000
Priory House ongoing restoration works contingency	£29,864
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£44,864</b>

## 5 FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 In place of Accounts Sub-Committee, Councillors should, as a minimum, view and audit the Councils accounts on a quarterly basis.
- 5.2 The last quarterly financial Councillor audit took place virtually and was completed on 27 February 2023 with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Council Martin and the Town Mayor, Councillor Jones taking part. The Councillors carried out a 'mini-audit' which included requests of financial information on various purchase ledger invoices paid, together with verifying all the bank statements of the accounts against the Accounts Software relating to October, November and December 2022.
- 5.3 No issues or discrepancies, material or otherwise, were raised.
- 5.4 Further quarterly meetings have been arranged and all Councillors have been made aware and invited to attend any future Financial Governance Audit meetings they can make.

## 6 INTERNAL AUDIT

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the second interim Internal Audit Report appended to this report, and it is pleasing to report that the Council has again been given a clean bill of health.

## 7 INVESTMENTS UPDATE

- 7.1 Dunstable Town Council's current bank and investment account balances as 28 February 2023 were as follows:

Account	Balance	Interest earned in month
Current Account	£10,000.00	-
Business Reserve Account	£264,218.75	£249.46
CCLA Deposit Account 1 – CP 3G Pitch	£92,017.22	£278.30
CCLA Deposit Account 2	£2,794,076.75	£8,450.51

## **8 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 8.1 Submitted at Appendix 4 are the proposed, updated Finance Regulations which have been amended to incorporate recent staffing changes as well as minor amendments to internal procedures and to include recent changes to the legally required tender thresholds.
- 8.2 Included in the Financial Regulations is the Scheme of Delegation. The current summary of delegated authority is shown in Appendix 5. The RFO provides training on Council finances, procedures for raising orders and any financial information for the particular service area as part of each relevant employee's induction process.

## **9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 These are inherent within the content of this report.

## **10 APPENDICES**

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Expenditure and forecast summary as at 31 January 2023  
 Appendix 2 – Summary of Reserves as at 28 February 2023  
 Appendix 3 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Interim Internal Audit Report  
 Appendix 4 – Updated Financial Regulations  
 Appendix 5 – Summary of Delegation of Authority

## **11 AUTHOR**

- 11.1 Lisa Scheder – Head of Finance and Responsible Financial Officer  
[lisa.Scheder@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.Scheder@dunstable.gov.uk)

**Dunstable Town Council**

**Summary of Actuals vs Budget**

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**Town Clerk and Chief Executive's Office**

	Service Area	Budget 2022/23	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
100	Staff Costs	(341,959)	(297,332)	(347,291)	(5,332)
101	Central Services	(105,850)	(83,735)	(107,564)	(1,714)
102	Grove House	(12,168)	(7,939)	(12,340)	(172)
106	Corporate Management	(129,075)	(86,407)	(90,728)	38,347
107	Democratic Management & Representation	(20,750)	(19,280)	(28,092)	(7,342)
110	Capital & Projects (inc loan charges)	(94,749)	(89,564)	(94,749)	0
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(704,551)</b>	<b>(584,257)</b>	<b>(680,764)</b>	<b>23,787</b>

**Grounds and Environmental Services**

	Service Area	Budget 2022/23	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
200	Staff Costs	(718,178)	(596,631)	(728,571)	(10,393)
201	Allotments	600	1,608	802	202
202	Cemetery	66,954	113,359	90,655	23,701
205	Recreation Grounds	(64,100)	(38,544)	(52,620)	11,480
403	Town Centre and Gardens	(30,900)	(25,349)	(37,709)	(6,809)
206	Town Ranger Service	(12,000)	(6,003)	(11,220)	780
210	Capital & Projects	(129,001)	(123,825)	(129,001)	0
	Sub Total	(886,625)	(675,385)	(867,664)	18,962
111	Income: Creasey Park - Football	201,022	263,987	257,122	56,100
111	Costs: Creasey park - Football	(75,528)	(94,239)	(117,471)	(41,943)
112	Income: Bar & Catering	210,000	213,662	246,442	36,442
112	Costs: Bar & Catering	(349,118)	(324,173)	(384,730)	(35,612)
	Sub Total	(13,624)	59,237	1,363	14,987
115	Bennett Memorial RG Splash Park	(31,664)	(33,493)	(32,685)	(1,021)
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(931,913)</b>	<b>(649,641)</b>	<b>(898,986)</b>	<b>32,928</b>

**Community Services**

	Service Area	Budget 2022/23	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
300	Staff Costs	(249,474)	(206,747)	(248,721)	753
209	Older People's Support Service	(26,045)	(19,550)	(27,009)	(964)
303	Community Engagement (inc Grants)	(19,707)	(14,544)	(19,707)	0
304	Grove Corner	(23,630)	(2,054)	(17,973)	5,657
401	Events Programme	(135,910)	(111,650)	(126,716)	9,194
103	Central Marketing	0	0	0	0
405	Town Centre Services (inc Special Markets)	(64,301)	(46,912)	(61,992)	2,309
407	Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	(3,050)	(3,865)	(4,320)	(1,270)
306	High Street Heritage Action Zone	(26,167)	(20,001)	(26,022)	145
310	Capital & Projects	(65,588)	(60,964)	(65,588)	0
	Sub Total	(613,872)	(486,287)	(598,048)	15,824
402	Income: Priory house - Tea Rooms	138,500	116,883	120,000	(18,500)
402	Costs: Priory house - Tea Rooms	(48,000)	(50,957)	(61,500)	(13,500)
402	Income: Priory house - Shop	14,600	14,714	16,000	1,400
402	Costs: Priory house - Shop	(6,500)	(10,384)	(11,000)	(4,500)
402	Other Costs (Inc Staff)	(378,754)	(242,297)	(364,024)	14,730
402	Sub Total	(280,154)	(172,041)	(300,524)	(20,370)
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(894,026)</b>	<b>(658,328)</b>	<b>(898,572)</b>	<b>(4,546)</b>

<b>DTC Grand Total</b>	<b>(2,530,490)</b>	<b>(1,892,226)</b>	<b>(2,478,322)</b>	<b>52,168</b>
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	50,000	<b>Contribution from General Reserve</b>	<b>50,000</b>
Precept	(2,480,490)	<b>Balance</b>	<b>102,168</b>
		<b>Allocation to CPCFC Reserve at year end</b>	<b>(14,987)</b>
			<b>87,181</b>

### Dunstable Town Council - Reserves Summary 2022/23

	Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.22	Contributions Revenue/Other	Expenditure in year
310	General Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£637,314		-£42,769
311	NEW - White Lion Land Landscaping	HofGES	£0	£10,000	
312	Vehicles Reserve	HofGES	£30,027	£20,000	-£3,747
313	CPCFC Reserve	TC&CE	£50,078		-£18,779
314	Christmas Lights Reserve	HofCS	£17,002	£3,500	-£20,500
315	NEW - Street Dressing Reserve	HofCS	£0	£18,000	-£1,985
316	Downside Building Maintenance Res	HofCS	£1,530	£45,769	
317	Grove Corner Building Maint Reserve	HofCS	£29,565	£4,000	
318	Building Security Systems	TC&CE / HofF	£5,357		
319	Cemetery Memorial Safety	HofGES	£4,300	£1,000	-£5,300
320	Priory House Tearooms Equipment	HofCS	£3,000	£1,500	
321	IT/Equipment Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£28,840	£15,000	-£15,837
322	Older People's Day Care Svce	HofCS	£12,545		-£220
323	Election Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£30,517	£12,500	
324	Grove House Building Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£119,550	£29,000	
326	Mayoral Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£3,000		
327	Priory House Exhibition	HofCS	£11,149		
328	Priory Churchyard	HofGES	£39,862	£5,000	
329	Performance Area Reserve	HofCS	£10,174		-£3,910
330	Town Twinning Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£8,833	£500	-£1,095
331	Tree Reserve	HofGES	£1,544	£10,000	-£8,966



332	Open Spaces Improvement Plan	HofGES	£39,137	£15,000	
333	Priory House Building Reserve	HofCS	£78,174	£20,395	-£554
334	Pavilion Buildings Maintenance Res	HofGES	£78,590	£15,000	-£58,515
335	Capital Receipts Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£0	£500,000	-£303,000
336	Staff Restructuring/Recruitment	TC&CE / HofF	£2,603		-£2,603
337	NEW - New Cemetery Development	HofGES	£0	£75,000	
338	Allotments Reserve	HofGES	£29,170	£5,000	-£15,869
339	Creasey Park 3G Pitch - Interest	TC&CE	£6,946	£1,153	
341	Splashpark/Skatepark/BMX Reserve	TC&CE / HofGES	£56,718	£12,000	
342	Memorial Kerbs Reserve	HofGES	£6,570		
343	Cemetery Building Maintenance Res	HofGES	£56,769	£5,000	-£34,846
344	Fencing Maintenance Reserve	HofGES	£2,000	£5,000	
345	NEW - Grounds Depot Extension	HofGES	£0	£100,000	
346	HSHAZ Scheme	HofCS	£606,529	£438,222	-£392,536
347	NEW - Luton Road MUGA	HofGES	£0	£100,000	
348	NEW - Unfulfilled Orders	TC&CE / HofF	£51,466		-£44,160
<b>Earmarked Reserves Total</b>			<b>£2,058,859</b>		

**S106/External Funding/Ringfenced Expenditure specified by funding body**

325	Shop Front Improvement Scheme	HofCS	£990		-£990
380	Developers Contributions- CAP	HofGES	£18,065		
381	CPCFC Capital	TC&CE	£83,641		

385	Development Contributions- REV	HofGES	£34,316		
570	Joint Committee Fund	HofCS	£8,766	£50,000	-£8,782
	<b>S106/External Funding Total</b>		<b>£145,778</b>		
			<b>£2,204,637</b>		

Key:

= Finance and General Purposes Committee

= Grounds and Environmental Services Committee

= Community Services Committee

Bal as at 28.02.23	Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
<b>£594,545</b>	Agreed in 22/23 Budget Setting: £50,000 contribution to revenue budget re Priory House Contingency; FGP 26.09.22-Minute 146= £34,000 for Performance Area works	-£84,000	<b>£510,545</b>
<b>£10,000</b>	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	-£10,000	<b>£0</b>
<b>£46,280</b>	FGP 23.01.23- Minute 45/23= £19,985- for purchase of an articulated dumper	-£19,985	<b>£26,295</b>
<b>£31,299</b>	Bal of £5,697 - 4 years sponsorship 22/23-25/26 (from £7,596)	-£5,697	<b>£25,602</b>
<b>£2</b>	5 year replacement lighting plan 21/22-25/26 - 2022/23 orders complete	-£2	<b>£0</b>
<b>£16,015</b>	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	-£16,015	<b>£0</b>
<b>£47,299</b>	FGP 23.01.23- Minute 41/23= £42,769- Priory House tender for additional works (previously allocated for Downside roof)	-£42,769	<b>£4,530</b>
<b>£33,565</b>			<b>£33,565</b>
<b>£5,357</b>			<b>£5,357</b>
<b>£0</b>	2022/23 orders complete		<b>£0</b>
<b>£4,500</b>			<b>£4,500</b>
<b>£28,002</b>	Bal of £2,100 for Cemetery Software (from £21,690 agreed)	-£2,100	<b>£25,902</b>
<b>£12,325</b>	£3,687 for increased transport costs	-£3,687	<b>£8,638</b>
<b>£43,017</b>			<b>£43,017</b>
<b>£148,550</b>			<b>£148,550</b>
<b>£3,000</b>	FGP 19.01.15-Minute 24 - to be retained for transport/allowance as required		<b>£3,000</b>
<b>£11,149</b>			<b>£11,149</b>
<b>£44,862</b>	FGP 23.01.23- Minute 41/23= £44,862- Priory House tender for additional works	-£44,862	<b>£0</b>
<b>£6,263</b>			<b>£6,263</b>
<b>£8,239</b>	Retained for twinning activities to be determined		<b>£8,239</b>
<b>£2,578</b>		-£2,578	<b>£0</b>

<b>£54,137</b>	FGP Minute 8 20.01.20- Bal of £4,723 for improvement works (from £26,668 agreed) Council Minute 85 29.06.20- £15,000 agreed for Priory Gardens Pergola Repairs; FGP Minute 45/23 23.01.23= £10,048- replacement swing purchase	<b>-£29,771</b>	<b>£24,366</b>
<b>£98,015</b>	bean machine (£10,000 approved); FGP Minute 41/23 23.01.23- £21,200- drainage, infill and electrical works; FGP Minute 41/23 23.01.23- £67,369- tendering process for additional works	<b>-£98,015</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£35,076</b>	FGP Minute 107 20.06.22- Bal of £17,129 from Downside repair works (from £75,000 agreed); FGP Minute 147 26.09.22- £9,908 - Meadway Store Refurbishment	<b>-£26,393</b>	<b>£8,682</b>
<b>£197,000</b>	£500,000 Income from sale of land- Council approval for creation of reserves for partial element - see <b>NEW</b> reserves. Report to future committees		<b>£197,000</b>
<b>£0</b>	2022/23 orders complete	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£75,000</b>	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	<b>-£75,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£18,300</b>	FGP Minute 107 20.06.22 - 5 year infrastructure improvement programme- upto £20,000 in 2022/23 & £22,800 in subsequent years (includes £5,000 pa contributions)	<b>-£6,931</b>	<b>£11,370</b>
<b>£8,099</b>	Interest accrued on ringfenced deposit - retained for contribution towards future pitch replacement - with 381 below		<b>£8,099</b>
<b>£68,718</b>	Chairmans Approval 12.09.22= £7,635 - Sewerage Pump and associated works- Splash Park; FGP 23.01.23- Minute 41/23= £50,000- Priory House tender for additional works	<b>-£57,635</b>	<b>£11,083</b>
<b>£6,570</b>	for purchase of future supplies		<b>£6,570</b>
<b>£26,924</b>	FGP Minute 148 20.09.21- Bal of £21,052 - Cemetery repair works (from £58,342 agreed)	<b>-£20,254</b>	<b>£6,669</b>
<b>£7,000</b>	FGP Minute 45/23 23.01.23= £980- replacement gate at Newton Recreation Ground	<b>-£980</b>	<b>£6,020</b>
<b>£100,000</b>	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	<b>-£100,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£652,215</b>	4 year HSHAZ scheme programme	<b>-£652,215</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£100,000</b>	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	<b>-£100,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£7,306</b>	Unfulfilled orders committed in 2021/22= all committed	<b>-£7,306</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£2,551,207</b>		<b>-£1,406,195</b>	<b>£1,145,012</b>

<b>£0</b>	Shop Front Scheme	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£18,065</b>	Frenchs Avenue S106 £13,779; Frenchs Avenue Fencing £4,286		<b>£18,065</b>
<b>£83,641</b>	Retained for future repair/replacement of All Weather Pitches at CPCFC (with 339 above)		<b>£83,641</b>

<b>£34,316</b>	£8,000 committed in 22/23 revenue budget from Bal of £30,129 for Willoughby (from S106 £47,645) Bal of £4,038 for Court Drive Landscaping (from CBC £15,000)	<b>-£12,038</b>	<b>£22,278</b>
<b>£49,984</b>	Bal in holding code as committed Joint Committees fund only = not DTC	<b>-£49,984</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>£186,006</b>		<b>-£62,022</b>	<b>£123,984</b>
<b>£2,737,213</b>		<b>-£1,468,217</b>	<b>£1,268,996</b>





£1,268,996



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## **Dunstable Town Council**

***Internal Audit 2022-23 (Second Interim Report)***

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***Stephen Christopher***

***For and on behalf of  
Auditing Solutions Ltd***

## Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control, each year, with the conclusions to be reported in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). Auditing Solutions Ltd has been appointed to undertake this function on behalf of Dunstable Town Council for the 2022-23 financial year.

This report sets out the results of our second interim internal audit in relation to 2022-23, which was undertaken on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023. It updates the report we issued following the completion of our first interim audit in November 2022. We wish to thank Council staff for providing the documentation and explanations required for our audit.

## Internal Audit Approach

In carrying out our audit work for the year to date, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts/AGAR. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in a number of key areas, in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our audit programme is designed to afford assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner which ensures effective probity of transactions and a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors, or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

## Overall Conclusion

On the basis of the programme of audit work we have undertaken for the year to date, we have concluded that the Council continues to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal control. The records held in support of the accounting transactions continue to be of a high standard and provide an effective audit trail, with clear cross-referencing of all relevant documentation.

In the sections below, we have explained the objectives of each area of our audit, summarising the work undertaken and our findings. We are pleased to report that, once again, there are no matters arising that require a formal recommendation for further action. We ask that Members consider the content of this report.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of Dunstable Town Council. To the fullest extent permitted by law, no responsibility or liability is accepted by Auditing Solutions Ltd to any third party who purports to use or rely, for any reason whatsoever, on this report, its contents or conclusions.

# Detailed Report

## Accounting records and Banking arrangements

Our objective is to confirm that the accounting records are accurate and up to date, with no anomalous entries in the cashbooks or financial ledgers, and that appropriate banking arrangements are in place.

The Council maintains its accounting records using the RBS Omega software, which is generally acknowledged as a market leader for this tier of local government.

Day-to-day business banking services continue to be provided by NatWest Bank. Two accounts are held, a Current Account and an instant access Business Reserve Account, with an automatic daily transfer between the accounts to retain a balance of £10,000 in the former. In addition to the Business Reserve Account, other funds that are not required for immediate use are held in two Public Sector Deposit Fund accounts with CCLA Investment Management Ltd.

In our audit work for the year to date, we have:

- Checked and agreed the opening trial balance on Omega for 2022-23 to the closing balances on the 2021-22 AGAR and the detailed accounts;
- Verified that the financial ledgers remained “in balance” as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 (the latest completed month’s accounts at the time of our second interim audit visit);
- Confirmed that the accounting code structure remains appropriate for the Council’s budget reporting and control requirements;
- Checked and agreed transactions in the Omega cashbooks for the Current and Business Reserve accounts to the relevant NatWest bank statements for April and September 2022, and for January 2023;
- Checked the bank reconciliations for all active bank account reconciliations, including the CCLA deposits, as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023, confirming that there are no long-standing uncleared cheques or other anomalous entries;
- Confirmed that the bank reconciliations continue to be subject to regular independent review by councillors, as part of the quarterly ‘financial Councillor audit’ and reported to the Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP);
- Noted that the External Auditors issued their ‘report and certificate’ on the Council’s 2021-22 AGAR on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and that there were no significant matters arising, and
- Confirmed that the Council continues to ensure that its IT systems are regularly backed-up offsite.

### **Conclusion**

***There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.***

## Corporate Governance

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust corporate governance arrangements in place and that, as far as we may reasonably be expected to ascertain (as we do not attend Council or Committee meetings), all meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been, or are being, considered for implementation.

During the course of our interim audits, we have confirmed the following:

- Our review of the minutes of the meetings of the Full Council and its standing committees for the year to date has not identified any issues that we consider might have an adverse effect, through litigation or other causes, on the Council's future financial stability;
- The Council continues to keep its governance arrangements under regular review, with both the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations updated and approved at the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022. We understand that further changes to the Financial Regulations are currently being considered, in the light of changes to senior management roles and responsibilities, and that these will be reported to March meeting of the F&GP Committee;
- A range of other policies and procedures are in place and continue to be reviewed on a regular basis, and
- The Council has continued to exercise the General Power of Competence during 2022-23; this was re-adopted at the Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019, following the last Council elections.

### **Conclusion**

*There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.*

## Expenditure

Our objective is to confirm that:

- Council resources are released in accordance with approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other documentation that confirms the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no invoice is available;
- Official orders have been raised for purchases, where appropriate;
- Any discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

During our second interim visit, we have continued with our review of the procedures in place in this area. To test compliance with the above criteria, we have examined a sample of non-pay related expenditure items for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. Our test sample included all payments in excess of £7,500, together with a more random selection of every 80<sup>th</sup> payment as recorded in the Omega cashbook. The overall value of expenditure in our sample totalled £780,025, equating to 40% of non-pay related expenditure in the period.

The Council makes use of a NatWest Commercial Credit Card, with a monthly limit of £6,000, which is used mainly for items such as internet purchases and subscriptions. There are currently three users, each with a monthly expenditure limit of £2,000. The Card is settled monthly by direct debit. During our first interim audit we reviewed the Card statement for a sample period (month ending 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022), confirming that all purchases were appropriate to the Council's business and adequately supported by receipts and that, where relevant, VAT was accounted for correctly.

A Fuel Card is also in use, for the purchase of fuel for the Council's vehicle fleet. During our second interim audit, we reviewed the invoices paid in December 2022 and January 2023, and confirmed that these were supported by receipts and confirmation of the vehicle registration, and that VAT had been accounted for correctly.

We confirmed that VAT Returns continue to be submitted quarterly in electronic format, as required by extant legislation, with the detail being reconciled to the Omega financial ledger.

### ***Conclusion***

***There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.***

## **Assessment and Management of Risk**

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has put in place arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, and also that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks, in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

There is a regulatory requirement for the Council to formally review and approve its risk management arrangements during each financial year. We confirmed that this requirement has been satisfied for the 2022-23 financial year; with the 'Corporate Risk Log', which provides an assessment of the Council's organisational strategic risks, being reviewed and re-affirmed at the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022, as part of the annual review of corporate governance arrangements.

The Council's primary insurance cover continues to be provided by Zurich Municipal and we have reviewed the schedule for the current policy (to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023) to confirm that an appropriate level of cover remains in place. The policy includes Employer's Liability and Public Liability of £10 million, and Fidelity Guarantee cover of £2.5 million, all of which appear to be adequate to meet the current needs of the Council. From our discussions with the Head of Finance and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), we understand that negotiations are currently being held with a number of brokers to determine the insurance arrangements from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 onwards.

As part of the wider health and safety arrangements, a regular programme of reviews of the Council's playgrounds and play equipment is undertaken. This includes daily and weekly inspections by the Council's own staff, with external inspections (quarterly by Wicksteed and annually by RoSPA), to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. The most recent external inspections have just been completed (in February 2023) and, from a brief review of the reports, we noted that no high-risk issues have been identified. We have confirmed that, as for the previous inspections, a schedule of the play inspection 'findings' provided with the reports will be used by the Grounds Operations Manager to ensure that appropriate action is taken to address the various issues identified.

### ***Conclusion***

***There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.***

## **Budget Setting, Budgetary Control and Reserves**

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust procedures in place for identifying and approving its future budgetary requirements and the level of Precept to be drawn down from Central Bedfordshire Council, and that an effective reporting and monitoring process is in place. We also consider whether the Council retains appropriate funds in earmarked and general reserves to finance its ongoing spending plans, whilst retaining appropriate sums to cover any unplanned expenditure that might arise.

At our first interim visit we considered the information provided to the Council on progress against the 2022-23 budget. The F&GP Committee continues to receive financial monitoring reports at each meeting, with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review. The most recent report, detailing performance for the first nine months of the year, estimates an overall underspend of approximately £64,000, including the agreed contribution of £50,000 from the General Reserve. We note that the financial monitoring reports also provide Members with details of the movements in earmarked reserves during the year and an up-to-date summary of the overall funds held in the various accounts.

In the course of our second interim audit, we reviewed the approach taken by the Council to setting its budget and Precept for 2023-24. As in previous years, the budget process involved detailed consideration by the various committees, in particular F&GP, before the Precept was formally approved by the Full Council at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The Precept has been set at £2,791,245 (£2,480,490 for 2022-23), which represents £209.49 (£187.66) per annum for a Band D property. We are satisfied that Members were provided with an appropriate level of information on which to base the budget decision, with comprehensive supporting documentation included in the budget pack produced by the Head of Finance & RFO and the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

### ***Conclusion***

***There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation. We will consider the 2022-23 out-turn and the Council's overall reserves position at our final audit visit.***

## Income

The Council receives income from a wide variety of sources including the Allotments, Cemetery, Creasey Park, Specialist Markets, Priory House, and bank and deposit interest. Our objective is to confirm that robust procedures are in place to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified and invoiced (where appropriate), with recovery effected within a reasonable time span, and also that it is banked promptly in accordance with the Financial Regulations. In the course of our 2022-23 interim audits, we have considered the following:

*Approval of fees and charges:* We have confirmed that the fees and charges for 2022-23 were formally approved by the Council at its meeting in February 2022, as part of the budget setting process, following detailed consideration by the F&GP Committee. We note that a similar approach has been followed in determining the fees and charges for 2023-24;

*Banking of income:* As noted earlier in this report, we have checked and agreed three sample month's receipts transactions from cashbooks to the relevant bank statements, confirming the timeliness and accuracy of transactions;

*Allotment income:* We reviewed the allotment records for the current year (commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023), confirming that requests for rental payment were sent to all allotment holders in early January, by email or letter, encouraging payment via the Council website or by bank transfer. At the time of our second interim visit, the majority of income due had already been received. We confirmed that formal reminder letters have been drafted for tenants whose rents remain outstanding, but these will not be sent out until the bank reconciliations for the end of February have been finalised (to confirm the details of all income received by then). We will review progress at our final audit.

*Cemetery-related fees and charges:* We have reviewed the interment applications and other cemetery-related activities for a sample month (October 2022). We confirmed that, in all cases, the correct amounts had been charged and that income due was received and banked on a timely basis.

*Priory House:* During our second interim audit, we visited Priory House and discussed the procedures that are in place for the operation of tills and cash handling/banking of income in relation to the Tourist Information Centre, Shop and Tea Rooms. We noted that formal procedures documentation is currently being drafted for all key financial and operational areas and will shortly to be incorporated within the formal training programme for all staff. We concur with this approach, which is particularly important, given the recent changes the operational arrangements at Priory House, with more flexible staff roles.

*Outstanding debts:* We reviewed the Sales Ledger as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. We were pleased to note that the overall value of long-standing debts remains relatively low – mainly relating to sports clubs who are billed on a periodic basis. We confirmed that effective control arrangements remain in place, with appropriate action being taken in relation to outstanding payments. We noted from our discussions with the Head of Finance & RFO that there is one potential bad debt that will be reported to the Council at its meeting in April 2023.

## Conclusion

***There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.***

## Petty Cash

As part of the internal audit review and the reporting requirements for the AGAR, we are required to assess the effectiveness of controls over the operation of petty cash accounts at the Council, ensuring that payments are supported appropriately, that transactions are only made for items connected with the Council's functions and that any recoverable VAT is correctly identified.

Petty cash accounts are operated at several locations. At our second interim audit visit, we reviewed the procedures in place for the main petty cash account holding at Grove House, which is effectively operated on an Imprest basis, with a float of £150. We checked and agreed the cash balance held at the date of the audit to the petty cash ledger, and confirmed that there was appropriate supporting information for petty cash payments made since the date of the last reconciliation. At the time of our visit, the Finance team were due to make a reimbursement to the Creasey Park petty cash for payments made during the past month. We reviewed the documentation submitted to support the payments made and confirmed that these were reasonable.

### **Conclusion**

***There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation. At our final audit, we will confirm that the correct petty cash balances have been included in the cash and bank figure in Section 2, Box 8 of the AGAR.***

## Staff Salaries

In examining the Council's payroll function, our objective is to confirm that extant employment legislation is being adhered to, that the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation are satisfied regarding the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions and that the requirements of the local government pension scheme are met.

To meet this objective, we examined the payroll procedures in place and reviewed the computations undertaken for the payment of salaries in 2022-23 by reference to the September 2022 payroll documentation produced by the Council's bureau provider (Payroll Options Ltd, Milton Keynes). Our audit work involved the following:

- We confirmed that the Council has applied the approved employee pay rates for the financial year;
- From review of the contracts of employment for all full and part time staff and a sample of casual staff whose employment commenced in 2022-23, we confirmed that appropriate signed contracts of employment are held;
- We checked and agreed the detail of the salaries paid to all staff in September 2022 to the overall schedule of salaries and pay scales;
- We confirmed that tax and NI deductions have been made applying the appropriate tax code and NI Table, also ensuring that appropriate amounts are paid to HMRC;



- We confirmed that the appropriate employee and employer contributions to the pension scheme have been determined and paid over to the County's Pension Fund Administrators on a timely basis, and
- We verified the net payments due to staff from their copy payslips to the bank transfers for the same sample month.

The national Local Government Services pay agreement for 2022-23, applicable from 1st April 2022, was finally agreed by all parties in November 2022. At our second interim audit, we confirmed that the payment of arrears due to staff had been made correctly.

### **Conclusion**

*There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.*

## **Investments and Loans**

Our objective is to confirm that an appropriate investment/treasury management policy is in place, that any funds not required for immediate use, whether temporarily or on a longer-term basis are invested in line with that strategy and that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records. We also confirm that any loan repayments due to, or payable by, the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

During the course of our interim audits, we confirmed the following:

- As required by the 'Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments', a Treasury Management Policy is in place. This was last updated and approved at the F&GP meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022;
- At present, the Council does not hold any long-term investments. As noted above, surplus funds are held in either the NatWest (instant access) Business Reserve Account or the two CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund accounts. From our discussions with the Head of Finance & RFO, we understand that, whilst consideration is currently being given to other investment options, no decisions will be made until after the new Council is in place;
- We have checked and agreed the two half-yearly Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan instalment repayments of principal and interest made in 2022-23 (in April and October 2022) to the PWLB third party "notification / demand" notices;
- From our minutes review, we noted the Council's decision on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to apply to the Secretary of State for approval of a new PWLB loan of £215,000 to assist with the funding of the Priory House Restoration project. We have confirmed that the loan application was subsequently made and that the funds were drawn down in October 2022, with the first repayment of principal and interest due to be made during the 2023-24 financial year.

### **Conclusion**

*There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation. In our final audit visit, we will confirm that there is correct disclosure of the PWLB loans in the AGAR, Section 1, Boxes 5 and 10.*

# **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

## **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

1.	GENERAL	1
2.	ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)	3
3.	ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET)	5
4.	BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND	5
5.	BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS	6
6.	INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS	7
7.	PAYMENT OF SALARIES	9
8.	LOANS AND INVESTMENTS	10
9.	INCOME	10
10	ORDERS FOR WORKS, GOODS AND SERVICES	11
11.	CONTRACTS	12
12.	PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS	13
13.	STORES AND EQUIPMENT	14
14.	ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES	14
15	INSURANCE	15
16	RISK MANAGEMENT	15
17	SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS	16

# **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on TBA.

## **1 GENERAL**

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial Regulations are one of the Council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2 The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the Council has a sound system of financial control, which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 The Council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - for the timely production of accounts
  - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money
  - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - identifying the duties of officers
- 1.4 These financial regulations demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5 At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7 Members of the Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office and shall be appointed by the Council.

1.9 The RFO:

- acts under the policy direction of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
- administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices
- determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed
- maintains the accounting records of the Council up to date in accordance with proper practice
- assists the Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the Council.

1.10 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Council's transactions and to enable the RFO ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the Council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

1.11 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the Council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the Council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy

1.12 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Council are recorded as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible,
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the Council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records, and

- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.13 The Council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:
- setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax requirement)
  - approving accounting statements
  - approving an annual governance statement
  - borrowing
  - writing off bad debts
  - addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors

shall be a matter for the full Council only.

- 1.14 In addition the Council must:
- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts
  - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.15 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or "the regulations" shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.16 In these financial regulations, the term 'proper practice (s)' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England), issued by the **Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG)** available from the websites of the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

## **2 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)**

- 2.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.2 At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member shall verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO/Deputy RFO. Two members shall verify a sample of invoices and the bank reconciliations/statements. Verification shall be confirmed in writing by email. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 2.3 The RFO shall complete the annual financial statements, annual report, and any related documents of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and,

having certified the accounts, shall submit them and report thereon to the Council for approval and authorisation in accordance with proper practice and within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 2.4 The Council shall ensure that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO, Town Clerk and Chief Executive or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit. The officer or member shall supply the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the Council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6 The Internal Auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council
  - report to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report in respect of each financial year
  - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.
- 2.7 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the Council
  - initiate or approve accounting transactions, or
  - direct the activities of any Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor
- 2.8 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9 The RFO shall make arrangements for exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

### **3 ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET)**

- 3.1 Each Committee shall **shall review its four-year forecast** of income and expenditure. The Committee shall formulate and submit proposals to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in respect of revenue and capital including the use of reserves and sources of funding for the following financial year not later than the end of January each year.
- 3.2 Detailed estimates of all income and expenditure including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO the form of a budget to be recommended to the Council by Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 3.3 The Council shall review the budget not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved budget.
- 3.4 The approved annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

#### **4 BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND**

- 4.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget and in accordance with the Officers' Scheme of Delegation.
- 4.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure unless Finance and General Purposes Committee or the Council, having fully considered the implications for public services, resolves that unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate (virement).
- 4.3 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the Council.
- 4.4 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually for the following financial year as part of the budget setting process. The RFO or Head of Service will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.5 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive or the RFO may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council, which is necessary to carry out repair, replacement or other work that is of such extreme urgency, that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure. This is subject to a limit of £25,000, following consultation with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Chairman of one other Standing Committee. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

- 4.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and contracts entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive, RFO and Heads of Service are authorised to incur expenditure on the Council's annually agreed capital/revenue reserve programme on transactions of £10,000 or less having discussed the issue first with the appropriate standing Committee Chairman. Any proposed expenditure above £10,000 from allocated reserves; any expenditure from the General Reserve; or any other reserves expenditure determined by the standing Committee's Chairman as needing prior Committee approval, must first be approved by the relevant standing Committee.
- 4.9 The RFO shall provide the Finance and General Purposes Committee with a summary of income and expenditure to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of £5,000 or 15% of the budget.
- 4.10 Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Finance and General Purposes Committee as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS**

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the Bank Mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. Banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2 The RFO will ensure that a schedule of payments over £500 be presented to two members of Finance and General Purposes Committee on at least a quarterly basis for viewing and verification. Invoices are provided on request.
- 5.3 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring all invoices for payment are examined, verified and certified. When required, the Budget Manager shall verify that the work/goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received/carried out.
- 5.4 The RFO shall be responsible for examining invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall assign them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, within 30 days of receipt.



- 5.5 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive and RFO shall have delegated authority to make fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 5.6 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.7 The Council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.8 Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved by the RFO or Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

## **6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS**

- 6.1 The Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2 Following authorisation under Regulation 5 above, the Council, a duly delegated Committee or, if so delegated, the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3 Apart from petty cash, all payments shall be effected by cheque, direct debit, on-line banking or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.4 Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two members of Council and countersigned by the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in accordance with Regulation 5. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5 Payment for utility and other regular supplies (including energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by the RFO and or Town Clerk and Chief Executive.
- 6.6 Payment for salaries and wages shall be made by BACS via the Council's approved payroll bureau. The BACS release will be authorised by submission of a Payroll Approval form certified by the RFO and or Town Clerk and Chief Executive. The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall maintain records detailing all payments.
- 6.7 Where internet banking arrangements are made with the bank, the RFO, the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services shall be appointed as Service Administrators. The Bank Mandate approved by the

Council will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the Service Administrators. Access rights to on-line banking will be set up in accord with internal signatory and delegation rules to ensure that payments cannot be processed and released with only one signature.

- 6.8 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for Council banking work.
- 6.9 No employee shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised by the Council.
- 6.10 Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away off site.
- 6.11 Changes to account details which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written notification by the supplier and authorised by the RFO/ and or Town Clerk and Chief Executive.
- 6.12 Any corporate credit cards held by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Budget Managers and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end.
- 6.13 Any trade account opened by the Council will operate on submission of an authorised purchase order and be restricted to delegated officers.
- 6.14 The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Finance Officer may provide petty cash to Officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Requests for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Finance Officer with a claim for reimbursement:

## **7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES**

- 7.1 As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with the agreed rates of pay and other allowances as held on the payroll records and in accordance with the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2 Payment of salaries and payment deductions from salary such as may be required in respect of income tax, National Insurance, pension contributions or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 7.3 No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- 7.4 Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know
  - b) by the internal auditor
  - c) by the external auditor
  - d) by any person authorised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5 The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6 All timesheets shall be certified as to accuracy by the individual's manager, and retained by the Business Support Manager and checked by the RFO.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.

## **8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS**

- 8.1 All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full Council.
- 8.2 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.3 The Council has adopted a Treasury Management Plan in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. The Plan shall be reviewed at least annually..
- 8.4 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

- 8.6 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of Payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for Payment).

## **9. INCOME**

- 9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of the RFO/Deputy RFO.
- 9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO who will be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.
- 9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable together with any bad debts shall be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and shall be written off at the end of the financial year.
- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The only exception to this is for insignificant cash sums received for photocopying or postage which may be deposited into the petty cash.
- 9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 9.8 The RFO shall be responsible for promptly completing any VAT Return required in accordance to the rules applicable to a VAT Registered body.
- 9.9 Where the Council regularly receives any significant sums of cash, the RFO shall be responsible for taking such steps as agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance. Also, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10 Every transfer of Council money from one member of staff to another shall be signed for by the receiving officer.

## **10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES**

- 10.1 An official order shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

- 10.2 Order books shall be controlled by the Finance Officer under the direction of the RFO.
- 10.3 All Members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimus provisions in Regulation 11 (h) below.
- 10.4 A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.
- 10.5 The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall ensure the lawful nature of any purchase.

## **11. CONTRACTS**

### **11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:**

- (a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
- (i) For the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage, telephone and datalink services;
  - (ii) For specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, specialist consultants etc; whereby periodic reviews will be made of ongoing arrangements to test for value for money or at least three quotes will be required for one-off specialist support with an estimated value in excess of £7,500;
  - (iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of any existing machinery or equipment or plant;
  - (iv) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
  - (v) For additional audit work of the External Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council);
  - (vi) For goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- (b) Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts

Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations. (Footnote 1: The Regulations require Councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts)

- (c) The full requirements of the Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds, the Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24EU which may change from time to time. (Footnote 2: Thresholds currently applicable are: a) For public supply and public service contracts £213,477 b) For public works contracts (£5,336,937.
- (d) Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £40,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are expected as set out in paragraph (a) the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall invite tenders from at least three suppliers, such suppliers to be selected in accordance with Standing Orders.
- (e) When applications are made to waive Standing Orders relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.
- (f) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the RFO shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall, in addition, state that tenders must be addressed to the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Head of Service in the ordinary course of (electronic) post.
- (g) All sealed (or electronically delivered) tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the RFO, and/or designated Manager, in the presence of at least one member of Council.
- (h) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £40,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements, as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- (i) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 35 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- (j) The value of a contract is the total cost of the projects/works over the length of the agreement.
- (k) When it is intended to enter into a contract:

- (i) exceeding £5,000 but less than £40,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, material, works or specialists services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a), the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall invite quotations from at least three suppliers, such suppliers shall be selected in accordance with Standing Orders;
  - (ii) for expenditure of £5,000 or less in value the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or the duly authorised Head of Service shall have executive power;
  - (iii) for expenditure exceeding £40,000, a minimum of three tenders shall be invited in accordance with Standing Orders.
- (l) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- (m) Should it occur that the Council, or duly delegated Committee, does not accept any tender, quotation or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quotation who was present when the original decision was being undertaken.
- (o) The Town Clerk and Chief Executive or his nominated representative shall have authority to sign all contract documentation.

## **12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and/or the Head of Service shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.
- 12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and/or the Head of Service, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

## **13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

- 13.1 The Head of Service shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section and ensure that the officer allocated responsibility for those stores shall maintain such stocks as consistent with minimum operating requirements.
- 13.2 Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3 The RFO or Head of Service shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

#### **14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

- 14.1 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2 No tangible moveable property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.
- 14.3 No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the Council. In each case, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5 The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually.

#### **15. INSURANCE**

- 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment, (per Financial Regulation 16), the RFO shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.



- 15.2 The RFO or Head of Service shall give prompt notification of all new risks, properties or vehicles that require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances affected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report any greater than £5,000 to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the next available meeting.
- 15.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance, which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.

## **16. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 16.1 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive and/or Head of Service shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 16.2 When considering any new activity, the Town Clerk and Chief Executive and/or Head of Service shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council.

## **17. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 17.1 It shall be the duty of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.
- 17.2 The Council may, by resolution, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of the Council.

**Adopted at meeting of Council on xxx**

Designation		Authority to Raise Orders	Authority to Sign Orders	Authorise Payment of Invoices	Time Sheets	Overtime Claims	Leave Cards
		£	£				
Town Clerk & Chief Executive		within all budgets	within all budgets	within all budgets	Yes	Yes	Yes
Head of Finance and RFO		within all budgets	within all budgets	within all budgets	Yes	Yes	Yes
Business Support Manager		10000	7000	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
Democratic Services Manager - VACANCY		3500	x	x	x	x	x
Administrative Assistant		1000	x	x	x	x	x
Administrative Assistant		1000	x	x	x	x	x
Finance Officer		3500	x	within all budgets - with the RFO	x	x	x
Corporate Marketing & Communications Officer - VACANCY		7000 (4032,4033,4034 only)	x		x	x	x
Head of Community Services		within service area budget	within budgets	within service area budgets	Yes	Yes	Yes
Town Centre Manager		10000	x	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cultural Services Manager		7000	7000	x	Yes	x	Yes
Events Officer		7000	x	x	x	x	x
Community & Young People Services Manager		4000	3000	x	Yes Yes - Support Workers	Yes Yes - Support Workers	Yes Yes - Support Workers
Neighbourhood Development Officer		3000	1000	x			
Community Services Assistant		1000	x	x	x	x	x
Caretaker		250	x	x	x	x	x
Older People's Services Support Officer		1000	x	x	x	x	x
HSHAZ Manager		3000	x	x	x	x	x
Cultural Services Manager		5000	3000	x	x	x	x
Priory House Duty Manager		1500	1500	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
Priory House Duty Manager - VACANCY		1500	1500	x	x Yes -	x	x
Catering Manager		1500	1500	x	Tearooms	Yes - Tearooms	Yes - Tearooms
Kitchen Assistant		500 (on 4016,4059&4060)	x	x	x	x	x
Kitchen Waiting Assistant		500 (on 4016,4059&4060)	x	x	x	x	x
Kitchen Assistant		500 (on 4016,4059&4060)	x	x	x	x	x
Head of Grounds & Environmental Services		within service area budget	within budgets	within service area budgets	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grounds Operations Manager		10000	5000	5000	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cemetery Manager		10000	2500	2500	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grounds Operations Supervisor		5000	500	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grounds Operations Supervisor		5000	500	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parks and Green Space Development Officer		10000	2500	x	x	x	x
Cemetery & Grounds Administration Assistant		500	x	x	x	x	x
Senior Grounds Maintenance Assistant		500	x	x	x	x	x
Senior Grounds Maintenance Assistant		500	x	x	x	x	x
Grounds Maintenance Assistant		250	x	x	x	x	x
Grounds Maintenance Assistant (Parks & Outdoor Equipment)		2500	500	x	x	x	x
Town Ranger - Cost Centre 206		2500	500	x	x	x	x
Assistant Ranger		2500	500	x	x	x	x
Town Centre Ranger		500	x	x	x	x	x
additional: Town Ranger - on all other Cost Centres for Repairs and Maintenance 4038 ONLY		250	x	x	x	x	x
Sports & Leisure Facilities Manager		10000	2500	With counter-signatory	Yes	Yes	Yes
CPCFC Duty Manager		2500	x	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assistant Sports & Leisure Facilities Manager		2500	x	x	Yes	Yes	Yes
CPCFC Duty Manager - VACANCY		2500	x	x	x	x	x
		Heads of Service					
Authorised to Raise, Sign and Authorise payment within own service area							
Will also be authorised to sign on other Heads of Services budgets if necessary							
Signing orders to be in order of seniority up ie Supevisors could sign order within their service area raised by other staff but not by Head of Service							

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 20 MARCH 2023**

**PRIORY HOUSE – CAPITAL REQUEST FOR FURNITURE**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	For members to agree spend from the Meadway capital fund of up to £26,000 for a new bespoke serving counter, and associated furniture for the Undercroft area.
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 For members to agree spend from the Meadway capital fund of up to £26,000 for a new bespoke serving counter, sofas, tables and chairs for the Undercroft when it is reopened.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Since the Undercroft became a fully functioning area of the tea rooms in 2009, it has welcomed visitors far and wide. It is certainly the most popular area in the Tea Rooms to take afternoon tea and the lower, soft seating appealed to a more relaxed leisurely pace, with the higher, harder seating more attractive for those not staying too long or having something more substantial to eat.
- 1.2 When emptying the Undercroft in preparation of the works, all furniture was assessed for their condition. Being over 10 years old, the sofas, tub chairs and low-level tables were in poor condition, with significant wear and tear. It was deemed that the soft furniture was not fit for purpose and several low-level coffee tables were also significantly damaged. These items were disposed of. It should be noted that all furniture which was not damaged (mainly high tables and chairs) has been kept and will be reposition throughout the Tea Rooms when it reopens fully. The request is to only replace items that are broken/damaged/longer fit for purpose.
- 1.3 Officers feel that to launch the Undercroft back open after the repair works it is a excellent time to create an new environment and look, and reassess the layout to try and maximise covers.
- 1.4 Officers have been liaising with customers over the past few months, researching tastes/preference, purpose of visits, etc to understand what would be the most suitable in the Undercroft in terms of furniture and layout.
- 1.5 All customer stated they liked the soft seating of tub chairs and sofas. Many customers also stated booth style seating for larger groups would be beneficial.
- 1.6 The serving counter currently used was put in place in 2011, it consists of two sides board put together brought from a charity shop. This set up was deemed as a temporary measure to try the new layout in the tea rooms, and if successful a new permanent solution would be created. However, after 12 years, these sideboards are still being used and a very tired and are not fit for purpose. What this has

proven however, is that the serving area is in the correct location for the tea rooms, especially with the coffee machine as far away as possible from the Undercroft with the additional ventilation.

- 1.7 In terms of maximising income the counter/serving area is crucial, it is often the first impression and it is the main point of sale for the Tea Rooms. Therefore, it is important to have a professional properly constructed and fit for purpose serving counter. This would provide better storage and displace space and the Tea Rooms would be able to offer more products by having space for glass display units to display and sell more products.
- 1.8 The drinks preparation counter at the back is very limited for staff, there is very little room to display items, limited space to make drinks and it looks very tired and out of date. With drinks being the main seller in the Tea Rooms it is essential to upgrade this area if the Tea Rooms are to offer an efficient service.
- 1.9 Officers have contacted a local tradesperson to quote for a bespoke build for a new serving and back counter. The bespoke element will be ergonomically designed, offering staff exactly the space they require. The counter will be a feature in the Tea Rooms.

### **3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Following the refurbishment, Priory House will need statement pieces to offer something different and unique to Priory House to best reflect the work that has been done. An example of this would be purchasing of second-hand church pews to create feature booth seating in front of the Undercroft windows; these booths would cater for parties of 6/7 people ideal for larger afternoon tea bookings.
- 3.2 The church pews would link in the heritage of the building connected to Priory Church whilst fulfilling the brief of booth seating which our customers would like. The repurposing of the pews would also align with the Town Council's environmental policy.
- 3.3 The overall design and concept of the refurbished Undercroft will highlight the Undercroft's unique features e.g. creating feature seating around the fireplace, to create a 'cosy' feel.
- 3.4 An increasing number of young customers are using Priory House Tea Rooms. The purpose of these visits includes; having a catch up with friends over a coffee, bringing preschool aged children in for lunch often with another family member, or using their laptop to work. In fact, there are now several customers who regularly use Priory Tea Rooms to work from, showing that post-covid shift to increases in hybrid/homework continues. It is important for the Tea Rooms to be agile and react to this shift in customer and usage if it is to maximise on income.
- 3.5 A bistro high bar with stools and extra electric points would cater for this customer base and would further maximise seating in the Undercroft. It is proposed, as described in appendix 1, to have high stools facing the Undercroft from the staging area to offer a variety of seating for all customer needs.

- 3.6 There would be a mix of low-level tables, high tables and bistro tables to give customers a choice. There would also be a selection of different chairs, from our existing dining chairs to tub chairs, Chesterfield and church pew booths. The proposed layout and variety in furniture would give customers the choice they want and create a new feel and look to the Undercroft for the launch.
- 3.7 Before the Undercroft closed the capacity of the tea rooms was 57 covers. With the new layout, booths and high stools the capacity would grow to 78 covers, an increase of 21. In addition, the 12 additional covers in the gift shop would remain thus providing a total capacity of 90 covers.
- 3.8 The additional works to Priory House that have been recently identified mean that there is a bit more time before orders need to be placed so as not to have storage issues with the items being onsite before the works are completed. However, it should also be noted that by waiting it is possible that the costs of individual items may increase and therefore officers will have to take this into consideration when placing orders,

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The funding is being requested from the Meadway capital fund. As new items it meets the criteria for spend and members have previously been supportive of this spend; this report was requested to provide further information about the items of spend proposed.

#### **5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The new furniture and serving counter will assist the Council in meeting its corporate plan priority of improving services, creating a sense of pride and continuing to improve the organisational management and efficiency of the Town Council.

#### **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Much of the existing in the Undercroft future had to be thrown away as it was either broken, or no longer fit for use. The new furniture that is purchased would meet all the necessary health and safety standards and would be of a commercial rather than domestic grade.

#### **7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None

#### **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 None

#### **9. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Officers have considered how best to meet the Council's environmental policy. This includes ensuring that the wood used to create the bespoke serving area is from a sustainable source, and the repurposing of church pews in the Undercroft for 'booth

style' tables. When sourcing the remaining items officers will consider the carbon impact by purchasing nationally and identifying items that are not shipped internationally.

## **10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 None directly, although consideration is being given to ensure there is enough space throughout the tea rooms for wheelchairs and those with sight impairments. Priory House will also offer a variety of seating options to help those with other physical needs.

## **11. APPENDICES**

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Proposed Layout
- 11.2 Appendix 2: Proposed Furniture Costs

## **12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 None

## **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 Considerable money, time and effort has been spent on the repair of the Undercroft and the 'finishing/cosmetic' touches play a key part in how the public view the project and are able to enjoy the Undercroft. This will also impact on the outcomes of the project which has been submitted to Historic England regarding increase in number of covers and the space available due to the works. In addition, choosing the right style and furniture will have an impact on the commerciality of the space for many years to come.

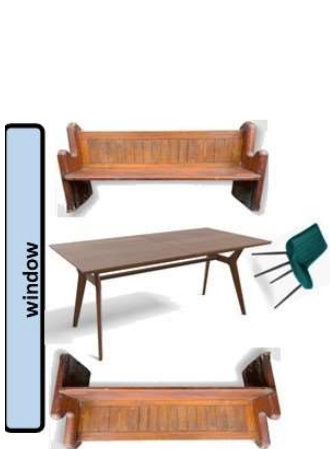
Building on efforts to maximise the income of Priory House, the current team now have a clearer understanding of its brand, its image, current customers and the untapped market of potential future customer. It is important that officer have the opportunity to enhance further.

The new furniture would see a mixture of seating and tables to suit an array of customers needs whilst also attracting new ones. Creating an attractive, accessible, flexible environment for any visit being it for afternoon tea, lunch or a simple coffee whilst working.

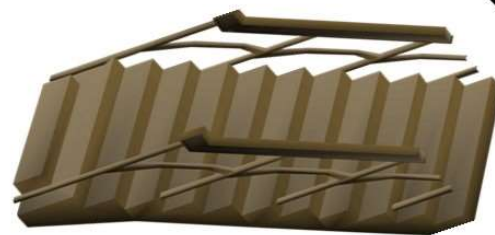
## **14. AUTHOR**

- 14.1 Lisa Stephens – Cultural Services Manager  
Lisa.stephens@dunstable.gov.uk

- |  |                        |   |                              |
|--|------------------------|---|------------------------------|
|   | New Sofas              |   | Existing High tables         |
|  | New Tub Chairs         |  | New Bar style stools         |
|  | New dining chairs      |  | New Low Level Tables         |
|  | Existing Chairs (38)   |  | New large dining tables      |
|  | New Church Pews        |  | Existing Chesterfield chairs |
|  | New bistro Style table |   |                              |



HALLWAY



Fireplace

## Proposed Furniture Costs

New Items	Qty	Price
Custom built front and backing serving counter	1	£10,000.00
Cake display units	2	£750.00
3 seater sofas	3	£3,200.00
Tub chairs	4	£850.00
Dining style chairs	10	£1,600.00
Dining tables	2	£1,200.00
Bistro tables	3	£650.00
Bar stools	6	£1,200.00
Custom built bar style counter	1	£1,800.00
Church pews 3 seater	4	£1,300.00
Low level coffee tables	5	£1,600.00
soft furnishing		£1,850.00
<u>Total</u>		<b>£26,000.00</b>

Exsisting covers		Proposed new layout covers	
Tea Rooms seating	57	Tea Rooms seating	78
Shop seating	12	Shop seating	12
TOTAL	<b>69</b>	TOTAL	<b>90</b>
		<b>Additional seating creating</b>	<b>21</b>



**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****20 MARCH 2023****REVISED COMPLAINTS POLICY**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To propose a revised Complaints Policy for Members' approval
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**1 ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the Council adopts the proposed new policy.
- 1.2 That once a new Corporate Communications and Marketing Officer is in place, the Council's website is updated to provide a more comprehensive and accessible way for residents to send in compliment and complaints about Council services.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council's current Complaints Policy is very brief, and does not cover all the possible routes complaints may need to be dealt with through. The revised policy has been drawn up to reflect the key aspects of NALC's model template, along with good practice from other councils, and has then been amended to suit the size and diversity of the services provided by Dunstable Town Council.
- 2.2 The Council does provide a comments, complements and complaints form on the website. However this is only a pdf document, which can be hard for people to use and return easily.

**3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None

**4 POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

**5 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None

**6 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

**7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None

**8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None

**9 APPENDICES**

9.1 Appendix 1: Draft Complaints Policy

**10 AUTHOR**

Paul Hodson; Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
E-mail: [paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk)

# **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **1. ROLE OF THE POLICY**

This Complaints Procedure relates all complaints to the Town Council, whether these are minor, serious, informal or formal and apply to all services provided by the Council.

Separate arrangements as prescribed by law are in place in respect of Councillors. These arrangements set out further in this policy.

The Town Council believes that complaints can provide useful information and feedback on the quality of our services, procedures and practices. The effective handling of complaints will help us to improve the services provided on behalf of residents, visitors and those working within the Town.

This policy does not apply to complaints from members of staff. These will be considered under the Grievance Procedure.

The aim of this Complaints procedure is to swiftly investigate all complaints in an impartial manner and to find a solution locally, whenever possible, to the satisfaction of both the complainant and the Town Council.

The Local Government Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over Parish and Town Councils in England. Consequently, there are no statutory mechanisms in place should complaints be made against local councils in England.

### **2. COMPLAINTS ABOUT COUNCILLORS**

All Councillors are required to observe the 'Code of Conduct' which is available on the Town Council's website.

If you believe that a Town Councillor has not followed the Code, you can complain to the Monitoring Officer at Central Bedfordshire Council and they will look into the matter. They are contactable via the website at [https://forms.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/officeforms/Complaint\\_form\\_for\\_councillors\\_conduct.ofml](https://forms.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/officeforms/Complaint_form_for_councillors_conduct.ofml) or by writing to the Monitoring Officer at Central Bedfordshire Council Offices, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ.

### **3. COMPLAINTS ABOUT COUNCIL SERVICES AND STAFF**

a complaint is where:

- The Town Council has not done something it has a duty to do or normally does
- The Town Council has done something it has no right to do or does not normally do as a matter of established practice

- The conduct or behaviour of an employee or contractor working for the Town Council is unsatisfactory
- The established levels of service delivery are not reached
- A person does not understand or is not informed of why or how a situation arose or exists
- An adopted and known procedure is not followed
- There may have been maladministration

This Complaints Procedure will not apply to complaints made anonymously.

### 3.1. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT

Your complaint can be made by telephone, email, in person or in writing, giving names and addresses and relevant dates with as much information as possible.

The appropriate details for contacting the Town Council are:

By **telephone** on 01582 513000

By **email** at [info@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:info@dunstable.gov.uk)

Via our **website** at <https://www.dunstable.gov.uk/contact-us/>

In many cases, it will be possible for an issue to be dealt with straight away and the source of the complaint resolved immediately.

For more complex issues, it is much better to put these in writing so that a thorough investigation can be undertaken. Investigations will be dealt with as quickly as possible. You will receive a written acknowledgement of your complaint within five working days and a full response to your complaint will be provided according to the timetable below.

The Town Council maintains a register of complaints showing dates, details of the complaint, complainant and the action taken to resolve the issue. This is available for all members of the Town Council to inspect. Serious complaints will be reported to appropriate Councillors.

### 3.2. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

If it has not been possible to deal with your complaint informally, the following section lays out the procedure and timelines under which your complaint will be dealt with.

#### Stage 1 – Formal Complaint

Task	Timescale	Actions
Complaint is received	Day 1	
Acknowledgement	By Day 4 - Within three working days of	The administration team will acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant and will notify them of the name of the officer handling their complaint and the target date for a response.

	receipt of the complaint	
Response due	By Day 28	The responding officer will provide a full response to the complainant outlining the right to appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome.
Request for extension	By Day 28	The responding officer will inform the complainant that the complaint cannot be resolved within the 28 day timeframe and give the reasons why along with an estimate of how long the complaint will take to respond to.
Appeal	Within 14 days of the receipt of the Stage 1 response	If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response at Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure they have a right to appeal this at Stage 2. This is their only and final stage of appeal.

## Stage 2 – Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response at Stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure they have a right to appeal this at Stage 2. This is their only and final stage of appeal.

Task	Timescale	Actions
Appeal is made in writing	Day 1	All appeals should be sent for the attention of the Town Clerk. If the Town Clerk & Chief Executive dealt with the complaint at Stage 1 they will refer the issue to another senior officer or the Town Council's Appeals and Appointments Committee as appropriate.
Acknowledgement	By Day 4 - Within three working days of receipt of the complaint	The Town Clerk & Chief Executive (or nominated senior officer) will acknowledge receipt of the appeal to the complainant and will notify them of the target date for a response.
Response due	As soon as possible but no later than eight weeks	The Town Clerk & Chief Executive (or nominated senior officer) will provide a full response to the complainant.
Request for extension	As soon as possible but no later than eight weeks	The Town Clerk & Chief Executive (or nominated senior officer) will inform the complainant that the complaint cannot be resolved within the 28 day timeframe and give the reasons why along with an estimate of how long the complaint will take to respond to.

**The purpose of a Stage 2 Appeal is to consider if:**

- The customer's complaint has been fully understood and addressed at Stage 1.
- All the relevant evidence has been taken into account.
- The Town Council's policies and procedures have been properly followed.
- The Complaints Procedure was carried out properly and fairly.
- The conclusions reached on the basis of evidence are reasonable and fair.
- Any other actions or remedies are appropriate.

**It is not to:**

- Review Town Council policy.
- Deal with any new matters not part of the original complaint.
- Cover any points dealt with by a court or where an appeal against a decision lies with a court or other legal process.

Complaints about issues that occurred more than three months ago will not normally be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances. Similarly there will be no review of a complaint that was dealt with more than three months ago.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IRREGULARITY**

Complaints about financial irregularity should be referred to the Council's auditor, whose name and address can be obtained from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

#### **5. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

Any complaints which involve criminal activity will be referred to the Police.

#### **6. COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE TOWN CLERK & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

If the complaint is about the Town Clerk & Chief Executive the complaint will be reviewed by the Town Council's Appeals and Appointments Committee. This committee is made up of a group of Councillors who would not have been involved with the issue previously.

The Committee will be convened as soon as possible but no later than eight weeks from the receipt of the complaint. Once the meeting has taken place they will respond to the complainant within 10 working days.

The Committee's decision is final.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****20 MARCH 2023****REVISED PRESS AND MEDIA POLICY**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To propose a revised Press and Media Policy for Members' approval
---------------------------	---

**1 ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the Council adopts the proposed new policy.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The proposed new Standing Orders, based on NALC's model template, refer to the Council's Press and Media Policy. The Council does not have one of these at present. It would be helpful to adopt a suitable policy to make clear the roles of Members and officers. The proposed policy describes the current practice of the Council and is consistent with the legal roles of staff and Members.
- 2.2 The Council does provide a comments, complements and Press and Media form on the website. However this is only a pdf document, which can be hard for people to use and return easily.

**3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None

**4 POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

**5 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None

**6 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

**7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None

**8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 None

**9 APPENDICES**

9.1 Appendix 1: Draft Press and Media Policy

**10 AUTHOR**

Paul Hodson; Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
E-mail: [paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk)



## **Dunstable Town Council Press and Media Policy**

This policy applies to employees, volunteers and Councillors of Dunstable Town Council.

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Dunstable Town Council welcomes enquiries from the Press and Media and recognises its relationship with the press helps communication with residents. The Council seeks to be as transparent as possible, cooperating at all times with the press and using the opportunities of the media to publicise events, projects and works being organised.
- 1.2. The press are permitted to attend all meetings of the Council and its committees, unless excluded under the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960.

### **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The aim of the policy is to ensure that Dunstable Town Council communicates through the press in the best way possible, reflecting the corporate view of the Council, without inhibiting councillor's individual roles.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1. The Media Policy includes:
  - Official council press releases
  - Councillor press correspondence
  - Press protocol
- 3.2. The same principles apply for the written press, radio, television and other media.

### **4. Policy**

#### *Council Press Releases*

- 4.1. Press releases and statements will be prepared and issued by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in consultation with Members as required;
- 4.2. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive will act as the Council's Press Officer. Any official contact with the media concerning the Council's policies, the decisions it makes and services it provides are to be initiated through the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or delegated officers;
- 4.3. Members who identify a media opportunity concerning the Council's policies, the decisions it makes and services it provides should discuss this with the Town Clerk & Chief Executive who will, in consultation with other Members as appropriate, decide how this will be followed up;
- 4.4. If a Member or an employee receives an approach or enquiry from the media about any matter relating to the Town Council, Members are free to provide a personal view, however any queries concerning the Council's policies, the decisions it makes and services it provides should be referred to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive. Employees

are not to comment without agreement from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Head Of Service. Where possible, press releases will include a quote from the Mayor or relevant Committee Chair.

#### *Councillor Press Correspondence*

- 4.5. Individual Councillors can make their own statements relating to local issues and this policy is not designed to prevent any Member expressing a personal opinion through the media. Indeed, engaging directly with the press and social media can be a key tool for members seeking to engage with residents, represent local views and take part in public debate. However, Members must make it clear that any views expressed which differ from Council policy are their own personal views and should be recorded as such;
- 4.6. Such releases, political or non-political, should bear no reference whatsoever to any officer and must not use the Council logo. Neither the Council address, telephone number nor website should be included as a point of contact;
- 4.7. Where a journalist wishes to confirm what was said by an individual Councillor during a Council meeting, they will be referred to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

### **5. Press Protocol**

- 5.1. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive is responsible for issuing official press releases on behalf of the Town Council;
- 5.2. When the media seeks information on an issue that is, or likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then where necessary advice will be obtained from the Council's solicitor before any response is made;
- 5.3. All press releases and other materials are filed for reference by the Town Clerk.

### **6. Roles**

- 6.1. Whilst the Town Clerk & Chief Executive is the Press Officer, the spokesperson for the Council shall be the Mayor or in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor, or the relevant Committee Chairman.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 20 MARCH 2023**

**ENHANCED STAFF BENEFITS**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	For Members to consider and approve proposals to offer staff a selection of enhanced benefits and make recommendations to full Council accordingly.
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**1. RECOMMENDATION**

1.1. For members to consider and approve proposals to offer staff the following enhanced benefits:

- 1.1.1. Wagestream
- 1.1.2. Vivup
- 1.1.3. ToHealth
- 1.1.4. Electric Car Lease Scheme with Octopus Energy

**2. INTRODUCTION**

2.1. With the cost of living crisis and general rising costs, many staff are feeling the effects. As the Council has no control on pay awards, officers have looked into other ways we could assist.

2.2. The Council has been struggling to recruit to positions throughout the Council and offering these benefits may make the Council a more enticing prospect and shows we are a caring employer and also help with retention.

2.3. Members should note that 89% of our current employees earn less than the average annual salary, according to the Office of National Statistics, of £33,000.

**3. ENHANCED BENEFIT SCHEMES**

3.1. There are four schemes we are looking to offer: Wagestream, Vivup, ToHealth. and Octopus Energy electric car lease scheme.

**4. Wagestream**

4.1. Wagestream offers a suite of financial products that assist with financial well-being through budgeting, flexible pay, coaching and savings (see Appendix 1):

- a. **Budgeting:** live visibility over pay and spending in one place making it easier for staff to budget with a single view of their worked shifts, expected pay and bank transactions.
- b. **Flexible pay:** staff flexibility to choose how and when they get paid, giving them access to their pay as they earn it, so they can establish a pay cycle that works for their long-term financial health.

- c. **Education:** personalised financial coaching with a live human coach available in real-time on their phone.
- d. **Savings:** automated savings direct from their salaries helps put all staff on the road to financial resilience.

4.2. The cost to the Council to offer this service is £3.00 per month for each employee that actually signs up to it. This can be met from current budgets.

## 5. Vivup

5.1. Vivup offers a range of Lifestyle Savings and Salary Sacrifice benefits as well as providing an app where staff can access all staff benefit, health and wellbeing initiatives in one place. Including internal or external providers (see Appendix 2).

- a. **Payroll Pay®:** is a range of salary sacrifice benefits which can help staff to spread the cost of goods where they may otherwise have no option but to use high interest loans or credit cards to afford the items they want and need. This also includes a 'Cycle to Work' scheme.
- b. **Lifestyle Savings:** Allow staff to purchase high street and supermarket vouchers at a discount.
- c. **Support & Wellbeing:** allows staff to access all health and wellbeing information provided by the Council in one place.

5.2. There is no cost to the Council to provide this scheme.

5.3. The Payroll Pay part of the scheme is optional and we do not have to offer it as part of the scheme.

5.4. Should the Council offer the salary sacrifice scheme to enable staff to purchase goods, the Council would have to pay for the goods up front and then recover the cost from staff salaries. We would, however, have complete control of what goods are offered and the maximum value. All staff would be assessed on a case by case basis if they apply to the scheme.

5.5. The Cycle to Work scheme would be funded up front by Vivup and they would recover the cost from staff salaries.

## 6. ToHealth

6.1. ToHealth offers onsite health screening to staff that will assess their physical health, overall wellbeing and lifestyle choices (see Appendix 3).

6.2. They offer a range of health screenings at a cost of £50 to £219.

6.3. If the Council agree to this benefit, it is recommended that we provide a health screen either when employees reach a significant birthday or after a designated amount of year's service.

## **7. Electric Car Lease Scheme with Octopus Energy**

- 7.1. Current regulations enable staff to lease an electric car through their employer under a salary sacrifice scheme. The sacrificed sum is taken pre-taxation, so employees save on income tax and NI contributions. Company car tax of 2%, also known as Benefit-in-Kind, is payable on an EV through salary sacrifice.
- 7.2. There are a number of schemes available. The Octopus Energy Scheme includes a free home charger, a very wide range of vehicles, and initial energy savings.
- 7.3. There would be no cost to the Council for providing this scheme.
- 7.4. To meet the scheme's requirements, to be eligible staff would need to have completed their probation period, be on a permanent contract and paid via PAYE, and hold a valid UK driving licence. Staff must also be able to afford the vehicle without going below minimum wage and not be planning on retiring during the length of the contract.
- 7.5. Further details of the scheme are available in Appendix 4.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. The individual cost for each scheme has been outlined above. The costs where there are any can be met from the current revenue budget.

## **9. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. The introduction of these enhanced staff benefit schemes would be a positive example of the Council's commitment to its employee and would help maintain our Silver standard for its Investors In People accreditation. The electric car scheme would also contribute to the Council's Environmental Policy and its aim to become carbon neutral.

## **10. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

## **11. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. The schemes could help reduce staff absences due to mental and physical health issues. It also shows that we are a caring and understanding employer which in the long term would help with the recruiting and retention of staff.

## **12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

## **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1. If agreed, the schemes would be rolled out as soon as possible, and in most cases from April 2023. All staff would be assessed individually for which schemes they would be eligible for.

## **14. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Wagestream Information Pack

Appendix 2 – Vivup Proposal

Appendix 3 – ToHealth Information Pack

Appendix 4 – Octopus Energy Salary Sacrifice Car Lease Scheme

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Business Support Manager

# Wagestream

## Information Pack

# Information Pack

## Contents:

<b>1. Introduction</b> to Wagestream	3-7
<b>2. Human Resources:</b> key Information	8-17
<b>3. Payroll:</b> key information	18-24
<b>4. IT:</b> key information	25-31
<b>5. Corporate:</b> key information	32-36



# 1. Introduction to Wagestream

# Our shared mission

## with our founding charity partners

We're proud to be funded by social impact charities in order to help bring financial security and stability to the lives of working people by challenging the negative effects of the monthly pay cycle.



**“** *As impact investors we work closely with the mission led businesses in our portfolio to make sure the impact is scaled in a positive way. Wagestream is one of the best case studies of a business providing true cashflow smoothing solutions to those households vulnerable to cashflow shocks. It is designed to bring people out of the cycle of debt by removing the need for debt altogether.*

*The key is to understand how organisations empower their colleagues whilst thinking of their financial vulnerability. Wagestream's full product suite and the finer details reflect how Wagestream there to support colleagues long-term financial wellness.* **”**

Emma Steele  
**Investment Manager, Fair by Design**



# Lack of financial wellbeing in UK workforces:

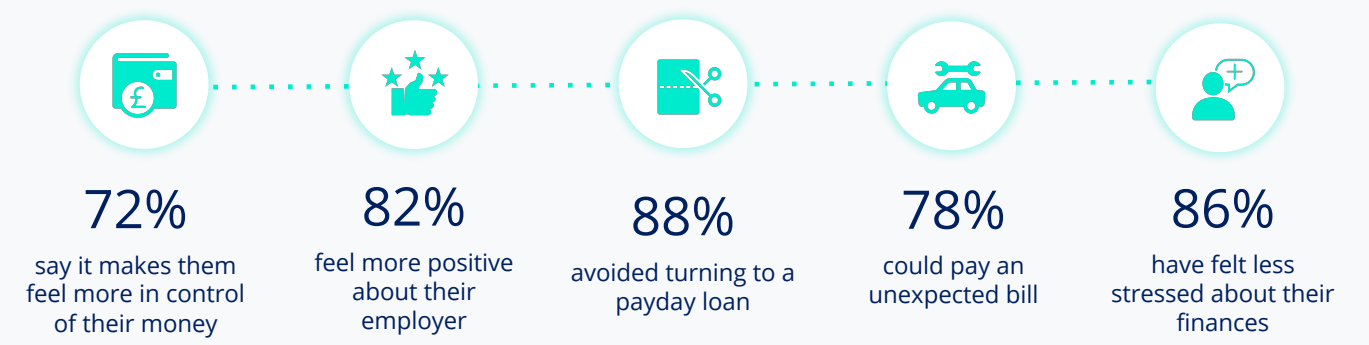


## The four areas we're passionate about fixing:



## Measuring impact on employees:

With our bi-annual Impact Assessments and ongoing colleague surveys we constantly monitor impact on our users to ensure we're consistently improving financial wellbeing.



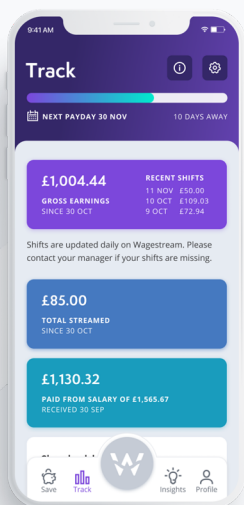
\*statistics from our H1 2021 Impact Assessment

# Revolutionary technology

which provides true financial freedom and a new path to better money management

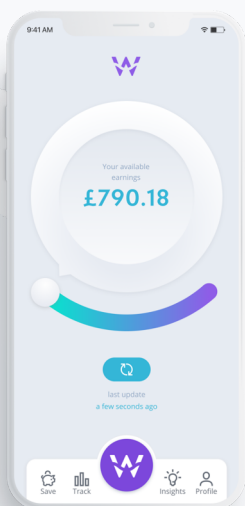
Wagestream's market-leading financial wellbeing platform now gives over half a million workers a life-changing app for smart budgeting, savings, education and coaching, all built around a flexible pay cycle.

## Budgeting & tracking



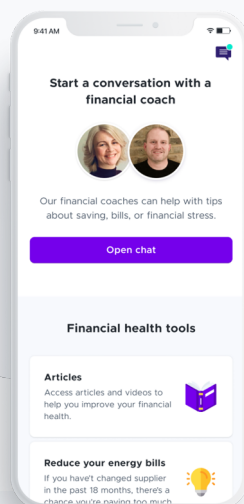
Live visibility over pay and spending in one place

## Flexible Pay



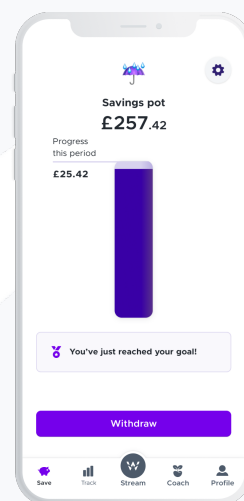
Cover unexpected costs through access to earned wages

## Financial Coaching



1:1 financial coaching & education

## Saving



True financial freedom with prize-linked savings

"From a business perspective, we know financial stress is a huge distraction for anyone. This in turn affects the people profit chain and you simply can't ignore these things. This is absolutely the right thing to do."

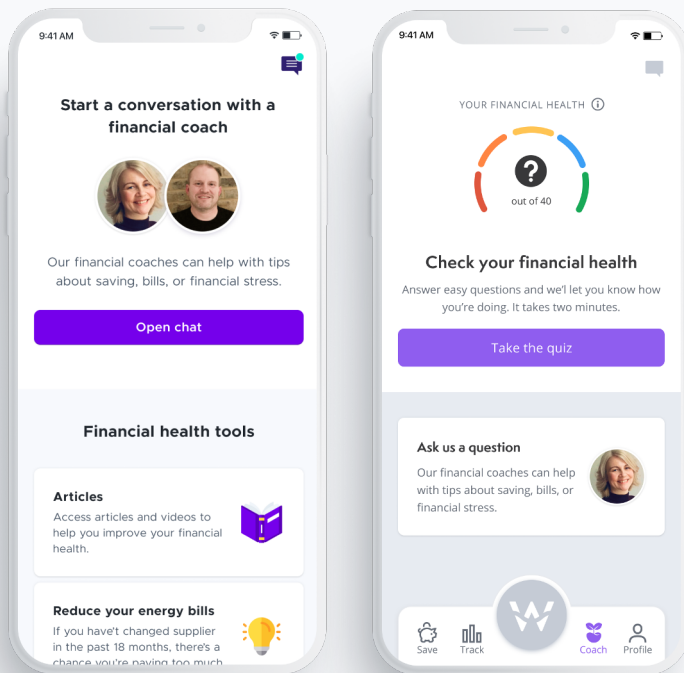
**Sam Westwood: Head of People**

THE WHITE COMPANY  
LONDON

# Coach: impartial and fair financial coaching available to all employees

New studies show that access to standard financial education has little tangible impact on colleagues. That's why we designed Coach, because we know that access to expert, impartial financial guidance is the only way to drive positive change.

Taking colleague financial wellbeing to the next level:



Some of our coaches:



**Erik Porter:**  
Financial Coach and  
Founder of Cheddr  
C.I.C, a social  
enterprise in financial  
wellbeing



**Emma Waller:**  
Financial Coach for  
Cheddr and wellbeing  
consultant.  
ILM qualified.

Instant live chat access to  
qualified human financial  
coaches within the  
Wagestream app

Tools & in-app  
assessment to track  
financial health and  
improvement over time

Confidential & impartial  
with tangible outcomes  
such as opening an ISA  
or reducing bills

"That's amazing! I have looked into getting an Isa savings before but didn't really know anything about it or how it could benefit me in the future"

**First Source Employee**

# Why clients choose Wagestream

## EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Reduction in staff turnover by up to 16%



*"Employees' reaction has been overwhelmingly positive and we can see this becoming a key retention tool".*

Ashley Worsley: CEO



## TALENT ATTRACTION

27% faster talent attract and recruitment on the UK's largest job site indeed.co.uk



*"This is a real revolution in pay that is already making it easier to recruit and retain staff."*

Tim Painter: HR Director



## INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Employees with Wagestream work 26% more shifts



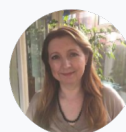
*" Compared to a year ago we've got a much better overall fill rate on our bank and shift update."*

Julie Burgess: Head Nurse



## IMPROVED WELLBEING

86% of current users feel less stressed as a result of using Wagestream



*"We surveyed users within a month of having the system, and we noted a reduction in financial stress and a reduction of being distracted at work."*

Katie Duxbury: Head of Payroll Services



# 2. Human Resources

Key information

# Wagestream is used everyday by colleagues across the globe

## Covering unexpected costs with flexible pay



**Jacob**

"Wagestream helped me afford to get into work when I was stuck instead of taking out a payday loan or something, which is what I would have done."\*

## Budgeting with the Track feature



**Melisa**

"I use it to keep track of my earnings, scheduled direct debits and also use it to save money."

\*this story was featured in the BBC news

## Build a regular savings habit with Save



**Maria**

"Having access to my wages when I need them has improved my ability to save. It's improved my attitude towards money."

## Learning how to start saving with Coach



**Nick**

"That's amazing! I have looked into getting an Isa savings before but didn't really know anything about it"



All the user reviews are from Trustpilot or the app store



# Cheat sheet:

## explaining Wagestream internally to your colleagues

### What is Wagestream:

Wagestream is a socially-backed, market-leading financial wellbeing platform which provides almost a million workers access to financial education, budgeting and savings tools and flexible pay, all through one app.

### Why is financial wellbeing so important:

With 50% of UK households unable to afford an unexpected bill of £300 [Monday Advice Service] more than ever we are seeing employers taking more steps to support the financial wellbeing of their staff. This is because they recognise that financial benefits and wellbeing policies can have a material impact on the employee-employer relationship and on the success of their business in general. Financial worries cost businesses £1.56bn every year in productivity, retention and turnover costs, according to CEBR. By improving financial wellbeing and the colleague experience, businesses can see huge improvements across these areas.

### How Wagestream works

In order to build the financial health of a workforce we have created a unique set of financial products, accessible through a smartphone app, for every single colleague in your business. This suite of products puts them on a road toward financial wellbeing through our budgeting, flexible pay, coaching and savings features.

### What are the key benefits to your workforce:

There are four key products which will benefit your staff:

1. **Budgeting:** live visibility over pay and spending in one place making it easier for your team to budget with a single view of their worked shifts, expected pay and bank transactions.
2. **Flexible pay:** colleague flexibility to choose how and when they get paid, giving them access to their pay as they earn it, so they can establish a pay cycle that works for their long-term financial health.
3. **Education:** personalised financial coaching with a live human coach available in real-time on their phone.
4. **Savings:** automated savings direct from their salaries helps put all colleagues on the road to financial resilience.

# Cheat sheet: continued

## How does Wagestream impact your business?

Wagestream has benefited current clients in numerous ways, which include:

1. 16% reduction in staff turnover
2. 27% faster recruitment and talent attraction
3. 26% increase in productivity (number of shifts worked by staff)
4. 32% increase in overtime shifts worked
5. 86% reduction in staff financial stress
6. 40% reduction in payroll queries
7. 32% reduction in agency spend

Please see our Impact Assessments for more information.

## How does the flexible pay feature work:

Each colleague will have access to 50% of their accrued wages throughout the month which they can access when needed (funded by Wagestream and provisioned through the app in a matter of seconds). The average amount transferred by current users is just £60 and has saved these employees from having to turn to payday loans as an alternative.

## How does your workforce access the tools:

Once we have integrated with you, all staff have to do is follow the sign up link which they will have been emailed, download the Wagestream app and complete the simple steps to set it up. The Human Resources department will also be given access to an Employer Portal where they can track key metrics across the company, engagement and monitor any starters or leavers.

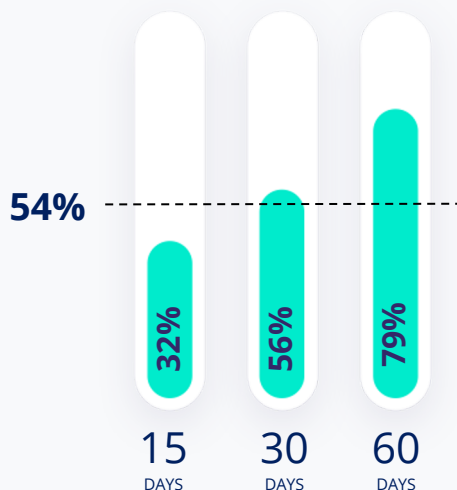
## What is the administrative impact for you?

Wagestream has been designed so that there is no impact on your current payroll process. Wagestream's operating model is designed to be highly automated with as few touchpoints and as little manual intervention as possible. Please also refer to Payroll Process pages.

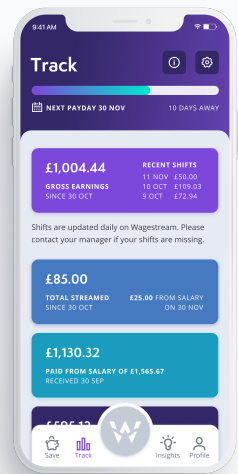
## What support do Wagestream offer both for clients and staff?

User support is provided 24/7 by Wagestream by our dedicated Customer Support team, in-app. All our clients have dedicated Client Success Managers to ensure the smooth integration and running of the Wagestream service.

# Adoption rates & engagement

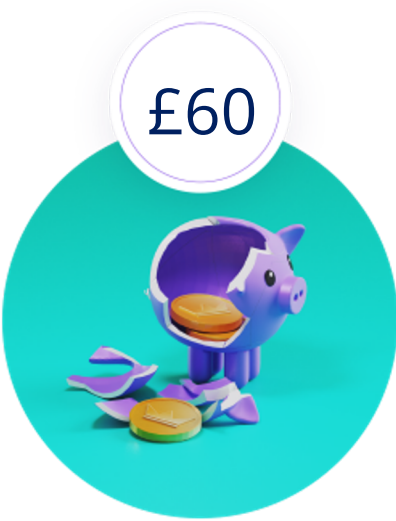


Typically we see an average workforce adoption rate of 54%, with some clients seeing engagement rates of up to 80%+.



On average we see users accessing the budgeting and tracking feature 21 times a month to track their spending and view upcoming shifts.

# Responsible usage

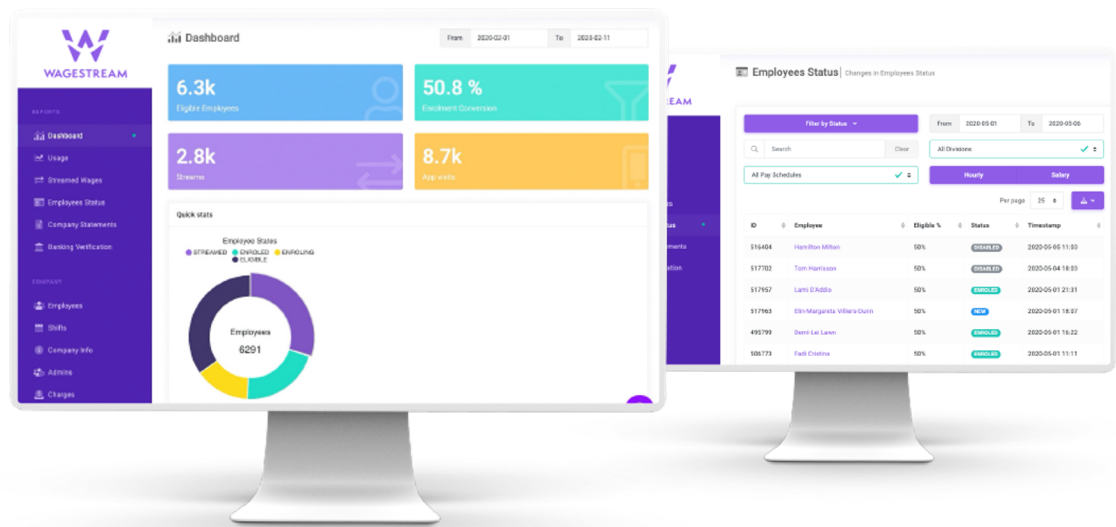


**94%** of all current transfers take place to cover unexpected or emergency costs or to smooth income until payday, with the average transfer sitting at just £60.

Within 6 months the amount and frequency transferred by individuals each pay cycle has been proven to reduce by an average of 40%, as the tools offer them a new path to better money management [source: H1 impact assessment 2021]

# The Employer Portal

We provide all clients with their own Employer Portal, equipping businesses with valuable insights and analytics around return on investment, colleague engagement, retention and performance.



- EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT
- STAFF ENGAGEMENT
- STAFF RETENTION
- MEASURE ROI
- ADJUST LIMITS/THRESHOLDS
- MONITOR RESPONSIBLE USAGE
- MONITOR STAFF FINANCIAL WELLNESS



*“the best perk my company has ever put in for employees.”*

**Barry Wadeson - Deputy Manager at Greene King**

# NHS Frimley:

## Case Study

Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust provides NHS hospital services for around 900,000 people across Berkshire, Hampshire, Surrey and south Buckinghamshire. Their aim is simple - to provide the highest quality healthcare possible to their patients and they understand that staff wellbeing is central to achieving that.

## The Challenges

Frimley wanted to give their staff a benefit that tied in with their existing health and wellbeing strategy by caring for financial wellbeing and preventing staff from using high-cost, short-term credit.

They had identified that there were many benefits to moving to a more regular payroll, but knew that to do so internally would involve a huge commitment and major increase to their workload.

## The Solution

What the Wagestream solution offered was a way to give staff flexibility with their pay without the time, money and commitment involved in changing payroll and paying staff more frequently.

After a survey found that staff wanted access to flexible wages, Wagestream was the obvious option for the Trust and achieving their aims.

## The Results

With this in mind and innovation central to their aims, Frimley wanted to launch as quickly as they could. Our tech-first solution meant that we could absolutely deliver on this. Frimley launched in under 4 weeks, a record time for the NHS.

### Saf Angelo

HR Programme Manager  
NHS Frimley Trust



"If I were to say one word [about Wagestream], I would say 'pace'. Implementation in just 4 weeks is unheard of for any project at scale. An almost instant solution from Wagestream!"

To watch the video interview with NHS Frimley Trust please visit the [Wagestream YouTube channel](#)

# GDPR

Please read these slides in conjunction with the Information Security pages

## General Principles

Our service is built on the premise of accurate and up to date information at all times and we are entirely reliant on our clients to provide us with this.

Wagestream promises to have the necessary controls and processes in place to comply with the DPA and GDPR.

## What colleague data does Wagestream require to provision the service?

Exact data points may vary depending on the integration type. Below is a list of typically required data points processed by Wagestream.

	Colleague Data	Mandatory or Optional
User Personal data	Name	Mandatory
	Email	Mandatory
	Phone number	Optional
	Colleague ID	Mandatory
User Salary data	Salary	Mandatory if salaried
	Days or hours worked	Mandatory if working part-time or irregular hours
	Wages for shifts	Mandatory if a shift worker
	Start and end date of employment	Potentially mandatory
User Personal banking Data	Account sort code	Mandatory after enrolment
	Account number	Mandatory after enrolment
Administrator data (e.g. HR and payroll from the employer who needs access)	First Name	Mandatory
	Last Name	Mandatory
	Email	Mandatory
	Phone number	Optional

# GDPR cont.

## Why do we need to process this personal data?

This data allows Wagestream to deliver the service securely:

- **Verification:** Wagestream can identify each user as a data subject of the client by using their colleague ID and email address to confirm who they are.
- **Auto-enrolment:** the most colleague friendly means of verification is by auto-enrolment which allows each colleague to enrol by email. This is done by Wagestream emailing all employees directly with a unique link contained in an email, this removes the need for employees to request the Wagestream service directly from their employer. Having clicked on the unique link in the first email, each colleague is sent a second email containing a unique username and password for them to log into the Wagestream app.
- **Processing of payments:** to allow Wagestream to receive and submit earned salary and/or savings goal transaction requests.

## On what legal basis is Wagestream provided with the data?

It is the employer's responsibility, as the initial data controller, to ensure that they have the appropriate lawful basis to provide us with colleague data. Typically, we receive the information on the basis of either legitimate interest or on the basis of the employment contract between employer and colleague.

## Does Wagestream offer communication preference management to colleagues?

Wagestream initiated email communications include contact preference management. If enrolled in the Wagestream service, colleagues cannot 'opt-out' of transactional communications (e.g. statements, service updates), however, they can manage other communication preferences (e.g. financial education).

## Can colleagues opt out of Wagestream?

Colleagues have the option of opting out of the Wagestream service pre-enrolment and also have the option to opt out post-enrolment. The process may vary depending on the data exchange and integration set up.

## Do employees actively consent to enrol in Wagestream?

When colleagues download the Wagestream app they are provided with the request to review and accept our Terms of Service prior to being able to enrol. A report of consent is available to the employer through the Employer Portal.

# 3. Payroll

## Key information



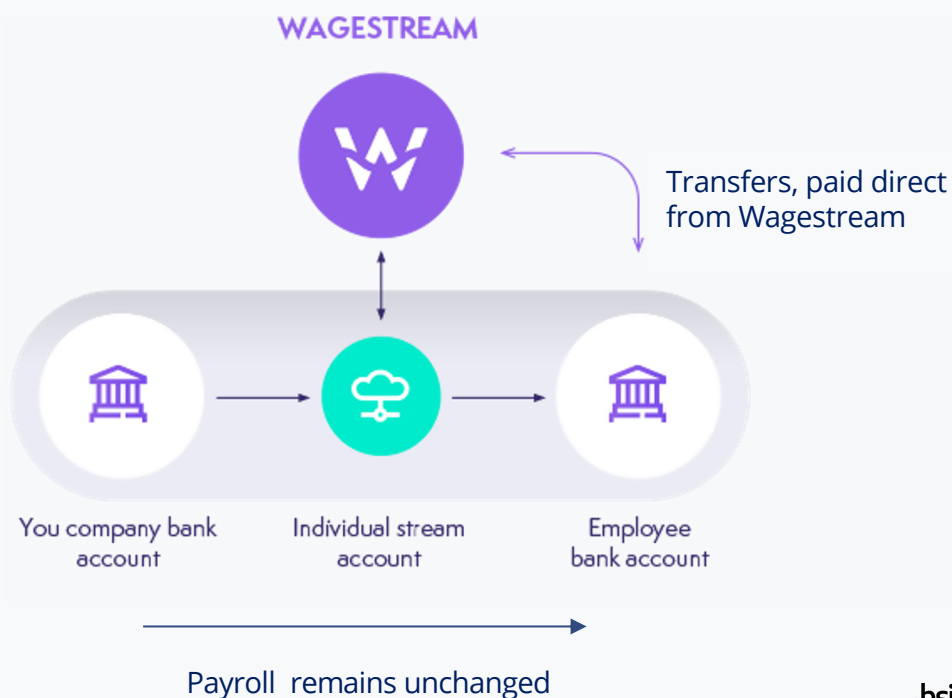
# The payroll process: overview

## How it works

Wagestream operates a technology platform capable of connecting various data points within your systems, undertake complex automated calculations and reporting and at the same time connect with the banking and payment systems to respond to earned wages access request.

Wagestream has a revolving credit facility that allows us to provision the necessary funds to our corporate clients, so that offering flexible pay to their colleagues does not impact their cashflow.

Wagestream is connected to authorized Electronic Money Institutions (EMI) and, acting as an agent for its clients, leverages the EMI's e-money accounts and payments services capabilities to provision flexible pay service to the clients.



# The payroll process: in detail

## **Operational and back end set-up that facilitates the payment from Wagestream to the colleague**

Upon enrolment, each colleague will have a colleague dedicated e-money account set up by Wagestream. This account is owned by the employer. The e-money account records the transfers that each colleague makes and also processes the end of pay cycle salary payments from the employer. Each time a colleague makes a transfer, the amount will be recorded, enabling us to know what payments have been made.

## **Reconciling transactions prior to payroll taking place**

No reconciliation takes place before payroll processing. This enables us to be able to provide access to earned salary payments right up to the moment before colleagues are due to receive their salaries.

## **How are transactions reconciled and when do the employer and Wagestream 'settle up'?**

At the time of payroll (typically at the end of each month) we reconcile any colleague's earned salary transactions against their full earnings for that month; we deduct any transfers already made, less applicable transactions fees; and process the remaining balance to the colleague's current account.

## **How does this impact payroll?**

This has no impact on payroll. All that is required is for the colleague to be enrolled. Wagestream will then set up a dedicated e-money account for the colleague to be registered on our system.

# The payroll process: in detail

## How much of their accrued earnings can a colleague transfer?

Under our Terms, the colleague may access a portion of their earned wages and not the full earned amount. At Wagestream we recommend responsible usage and suggest a maximum of 50% of accrued earnings to be available for transfer. This is a recommendation and may be adjusted down at the discretion of the employer limits can be set at company, department and colleague level.

We're legally not allowed to offer more than 50% from an employee's basic salary. Employers can monitor earned salary access metrics through the Employer Portal.

## How can the employer track/view Wagestream usage?

When a colleague accesses some of their earnings, the transfer will appear with the employer's name as the originator of the funds as per normal payroll - so at the end of the month everything totals exactly to their net pay.

Colleagues receive confirmation notifications when they make a transfer and get a full account summary at the end of the month (they also have access to their account statement using the Wagestream app).

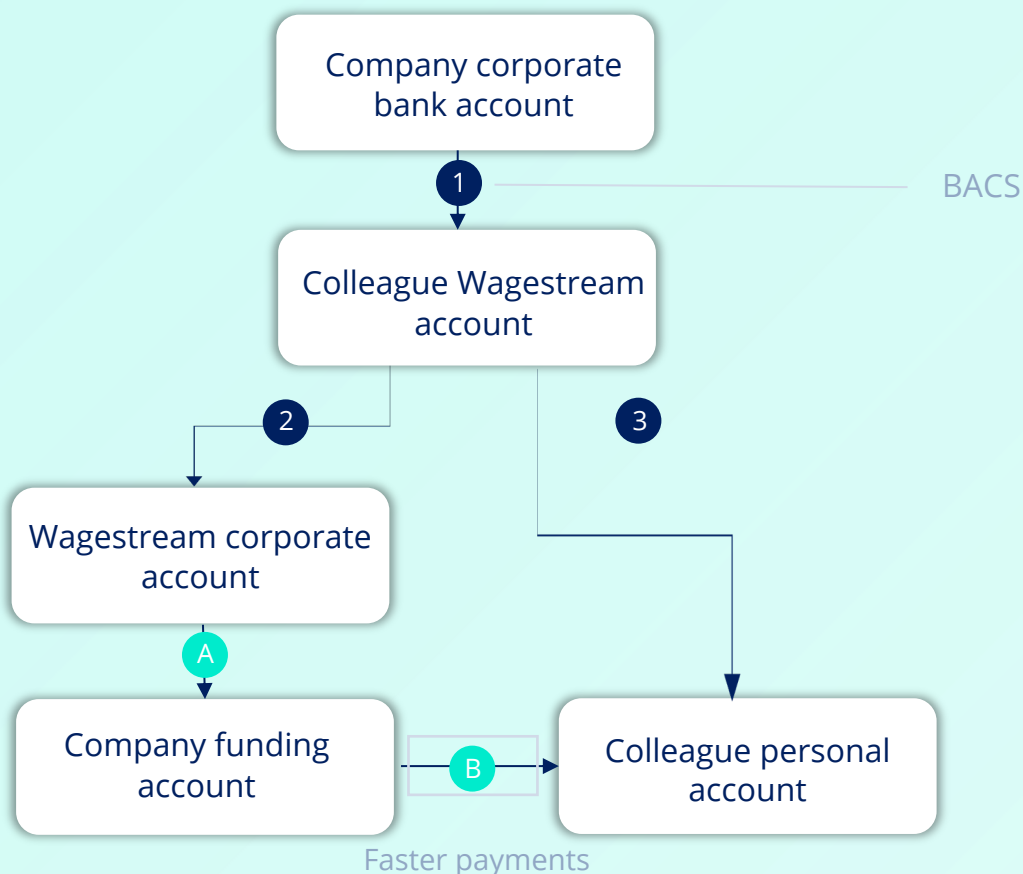
## What happens if a colleague leaves their employer?

Any client should deactivate a leaver in Wagestream immediately through the Employer Portal or your Wagestream Client Success Manager. This will stop the benefit for the colleague, avoiding them taking out more than what they will be paid during their final payroll.

## Over what period can a colleague transfer from their accrued earnings?

Accrued earnings can only be accessed from earnings accrued during the current pay cycle.

# The flow of funds



At any time during the pay cycle:

- A** Wagestream transfers colleague's requested pay to the Company Funding Account
- B** That transfer is immediately deposited to Colleague's Personal Account via Faster Payments, typically within 4 seconds

Colleague Wagestream accounts are provisioned by Wagestream but owned by the client.

On the final day of the pay cycle

- 1** Employer deposits the total net wages (after taxes and other deductions) to the Colleague's Wagestream account
- 2** Wagestream reimburses itself for any transfers and fees that were taken in steps A and B
- 3** Those wages are immediately deposited to the Colleague's Current Account

# How it works

## from a colleague's perspective:

### **What does it cost for the colleague to transfer?**

To benefit from the Wagestream services, employers pay a monthly charge to use the service whilst colleagues wishing to transfer from their accrued earnings will pay a small convenience charge of £1.75 per transfer (regardless of the amount).

### **How do colleagues access their accrued earnings?**

Within the Wagestream app the colleague can view the available portion of accrued earnings to date since the last pay cycle. Each time they make a transfer, the amount of remaining and available funds is recalculated and instantly shown on the app.

### **Does the impact of transaction fees charged put colleagues below the National Minimum Wage and does this generate a breach of National Minimum Wage legislation?**

The National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015 sets out how pay is to be determined and the appropriate pay reference periods for measuring total remuneration. They also state that total remuneration is gross pay before deductions for income tax and National Insurance contributions, but less payments and deductions that do not count towards the NMW. Following consultation with external legal advisors, we received a legal opinion that the fees do not need to be deducted and therefore do not generate a breach of the NMW legislation.

### **Are clients authorised to make the early earned salary transfers?**

On signing up to use the service, the colleagues agree to our Terms of Service, which addresses the fact that the employer may give access to earned salary.

### **How much of their accrued earnings can a colleague transfer?**

We recommend to employers a maximum of 50% of accrued earnings to be made available to colleagues. These limits can be set at company, department and colleague level via the Employer Portal.

# How it works

## from a colleague's perspective:

### How transfers appear on a colleague's payslip:

The Wagestream platform has been specifically designed not to appear on the payslip.

If we were part of the payroll process colleagues would not have access to Wagestream after the payroll file was locked, which is typically 7 days before payday. This week is the most financially stressful period for most workers so we believe it is very important for colleagues to be able to access their earnings during this week; most payday loans are taken between 4-8 days before payday.

When a colleague accesses some of their earnings, the transfer will appear with the employer's name as the originator of the funds as per normal payroll - so at the end of the month everything totals exactly to their net pay.

Colleagues receive confirmation notifications when they make a transfer and receive a Wagestream Statement at the end of the pay cycle; they also have access to their account statement using the Wagestream app.

### How will enrolment happen?

Once data integration is complete and communication plans are agreed between the employer and Wagestream, colleagues will receive an email invitation explaining our service and to download the Wagestream app.

# 5. Corporate

## Key information

# General company

## Information:

Name	Wagestream Ltd
Company number:	11173225
VAT number	893765072
Registered office & trading address	35 Gresse Street, London W1T 1QY
Regulatory information:	<p>FCA registered as an EMD agent (reference number: 902046) of the following Electronic Money Institutions (EMI):</p> <p>PayrNet Limited authorised by the FCA (reference number: 900594) Modulr FS Limited authorised by the FCA (reference number:900573)</p> <p>ICO under the UK Data Protection Act: reference ZA421647</p>
Directors:	<p>Peter Briffett</p> <p>Portman Wills</p>

## Social charter

Wagestream was founded with the desire to be a strong cause for social good and is incorporated in Articles of Association below:

## Company's Objectives

- The Company's primary objective is to advance, for the public benefit, technology solutions to help workers, including those that are on low income, escape the cycle of debt by being able to access their earned wages at any time (the "Social Purpose"), and as a secondary object, to secure a reasonable return to its Shareholders while having regard to the need to promote the Social Purpose.
- The Company may do all such lawful things as may further the Company's objects.

## Backed by investors with a social purpose

Wagestream is proud to include the Fair by Design fund as an investor.

The Fair by Design fund is a partnership between [Ascension Ventures](#), [Nominet Trust](#), [Big Society Capital](#) and the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#). Their focus is to work with businesses who aim is to make an impact on the poverty premium.



# Finance and Legal

## **Are the activities undertaken by Wagestream 'regulated' activities?**

Not at all, providing earned salary access service does not constitute a 'consumer credit activity' and thus does not require regulatory authorisation. The FCA confirmed that Earned Wages Access does not involve the provision of credit. We work with FCA authorised Electronic Money Institutions (EMIs) and leverage their electronic money and payments capabilities. For the FCA's view on flexible pay, please see [here](#).

## **Under what mechanism can Wagestream provision funds to the client employer?**

Wagestream has a revolving credit facility with an FCA authorised banking institution. From this facility we can provision funds to the employer to meet the earned salary access demand, easing our clients' cash flow concerns. There is no interest or additional cost involved; the client is only required to meet its monthly payments. Funds required by the employer to meet earned salary access requests are provisioned directly through a dedicated client funding account.

## **How does Wagestream ensure colleague salaries processed through the Wagestream platform are safe, even in the case of Wagestream's insolvency?**

Wagestream is an EMD Agent of authorised Electronic Money Institutions (EMI). The EMI holds an e-money licence from the UK's Financial Conduct Authority and must comply with the rules on capital and safeguarding as set out in the Payment Services Regulations 2017 and Electronic Money Regulations 2011. These dictate that, funds in these accounts must be held separately from the institution's working capital or other funds and cannot be lent out, or used for other purposes and must be readily available to be claimed. Consequently, all funds in the Wagestream e-money accounts are safeguarded by the EMI. On the insolvency of an institution, claims of e-money holders or payment service users are paid from the asset pool formed from these funds in priority to all other creditors.

## **Does the advancement of an accrued salary constitute a credit-brokering agreement?**

Wagestream's access to earned wages service is not a loan to the colleague. We have received legal opinion stating that the Wagestream product does not constitute "credit" under the section 8 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974. As a result, the product does not constitute a regulated credit agreement under Article 60B of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Regulated Activities) Order 2001/544 and authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority is not required in order to offer the product. There is no recourse against the colleague.



**Vivup proposal for Dunstable Town Council**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**



Visit [vivup.co.uk](https://vivup.co.uk)



## Introduction

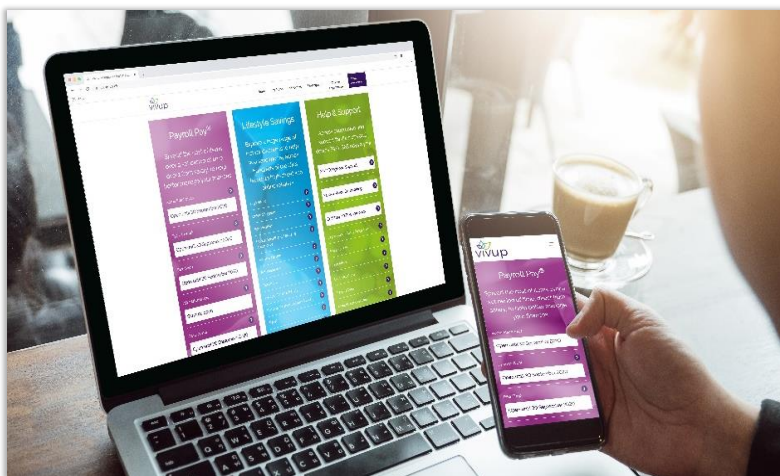
The objective of this proposal is to demonstrate why Vivup is uniquely placed to provide the support you require to fulfil your organisation's own health and wellbeing agenda.

This proposal details all aspects of the Vivup platform deployment at Dunstable Town Council. The primary functions of the Vivup platform enable you to:

- Promote and manage benefits offered to employees in a single environment
- Provide Lifestyle Savings to save your employees money on the things that matter most
- Provide tailored health and wellbeing initiatives to all staff
- Give access to intranet resources on the internet through employees' personal devices
- Communicate directly to employees through email, portal messages, SMS and In-App notifications
- Customise your portal to illustrate your total employee offer, values and culture

Our proposal is based upon:

- Extensive knowledge of health and wellbeing solutions in the public and private sector
- The challenges you face with communication to your diverse workforce
- Detailed experience of providing fully managed employee benefits solutions
- Tried and tested, award-winning marketing for effective communication and increased engagement



## Why Vivup?

As one of the UK's leading employee benefits companies providing health and wellbeing benefits to almost 1,000,000 employees, our ambition is to make it easy for companies to illustrate their total employee offer, help their employees become happier, more successful and rounded individuals in everything they do. Our work was recognized at the 2020 Employee Benefits Awards where we won **'Best Voluntary Benefits'** in partnership with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

We offer the first, fully customisable platform where all an organisation's benefits can be accessed by their staff in one place. With the added value of both an in-house market leading Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and an effective in-house Recognition and Reward solution, Vivup provide a full range of employee benefits and training tailored to support your organisation's health and wellbeing agenda.

**Currently more employees than ever before are feeling the pressure of the cost of living crisis, Vivup are continually adding new wellbeing benefits and savings to our platform to help you support your employees when they need it most.**

## The Vivup Platform



We enable all your employee benefits and health and wellbeing initiatives to be accessed by your staff in one place, wherever they are, on any device and at any time. Our Platform is split into three key areas which house all our benefits:

Through the platform, employees are offered choice allowing them to access benefits which suit their preferences and personal situation.

- **Payroll Pay®** is our range of salary sacrifice benefits which can help your staff to spread the cost of goods where they may otherwise have no option but to use high interest loans or credit cards to afford the items they want and need.
- For staff that have the money available and do not need to spread the cost of the goods, we offer **Lifestyle Savings** which provide an upfront saving.
- **Support & Wellbeing** allows employees to access expert help and support for life's ups and downs, either through our EAP or through signposting to relevant areas of support.

You can also include any additional benefits, initiatives or communications that you currently have in place or would like to put in place. This is yours to use to engage with and communicate to your workforce.

Employees can access the platform immediately following launch. The platform can be accessed all year round, from any device, logging in using either their work or personal email address and their user-defined password. Our platform is a responsive website, with the platform view adapted to reflect the device being used. It is fully compatible with all operating systems and supports accessibility for users with disabilities. We can issue printed copies of any agreement terms and conditions. A mobile app is also available for free download on Google Play and via the Apple Store.

The intuitive nature of our platform has received excellent feedback from our existing portfolio of clients due to its simplicity. The links ensure that the platform is easy to navigate for all levels of user. Once a benefit is selected, a live chat facility with our customer service team is available to support the customer journey for any employee who may feel uncomfortable with the technology. For those employees who would prefer to find out more online, our frequently asked questions provide information covering all areas which employees seek reassurance on.

The Vivup platform can also accommodate the following pay as you go services:

- Health & Safety Training
- Employee Assistance Programme - Face to Face Counselling
- Mental Health First Aid / Awareness Training
- Compliance Training
- Training & Development
- Consultation Services

Through the platform, employees are offered choice allowing them to access benefits which suit their preferences and personal situation.

The benefits of the Vivup platform to your organisation include:

**Affordable, fully customisable platform**

- ✓ Provided as a cost-free solution
- ✓ Integrate all your benefits in once place, including those from other providers
- ✓ Always on Lifestyle Savings to save your employees money everyday



- ✓ Illustrate your total employee offer, values and culture
- ✓ Dedicated Account Manager with you every step of the way

#### **Better communication and engagement**

- ✓ Utilise Vivup's personalised messaging service
- ✓ Employee benefits can be accessed via the website or the Vivup App
- ✓ Comprehensive and award-winning marketing support provided free-of-charge helps promote your benefit offering internally
- ✓ One location for all your employee benefits, health and wellbeing initiatives ensuring you maximise engagement via a simplified employee journey

#### **Reduce the administrative burden**

- ✓ On-demand payroll reports provided
- ✓ Important tasks highlighted on the dashboard
- ✓ Tasks can be completed within the Vivup portal or offline via CSV download and upload
- ✓ Online calculators and full order details to aid authorisation
- ✓ Secure methods to allow you to authorise employee orders while working alongside your existing payroll systems
- ✓ Dedicated customer service helpdesk to answer all your staff queries

#### **Gain meaningful insight**

- ✓ Monitor progress, demonstrate success and continuously improve your benefits
- ✓ See which benefits are the most popular amongst staff and how and when they are accessed
- ✓ View your total savings per month
- ✓ Allow staff to register their interest in benefits that are not running to understand what they would like to see in the future
- ✓ Design and deployment of staff surveys
- ✓ In platform reporting, management information and analytics





## Overview of Payroll Pay Benefits

Payroll pay is our range of salary sacrifice benefits which can help your staff to spread the cost of purchases where they may otherwise have no option but to use high interest loans or credit cards to pay for the items they want and need.

The Payroll Pay benefits we provide are cost free and easy to implement and administer. We pride ourselves on providing compliant benefits to reduce the risk of any liability on your part.

### Home and Electronics **\*\*Employer Funded\*\***

Our Home and Electronics staff benefit helps your employees afford the things that matter to them. We have thousands of products available from the UK's leading home and electrical retailers for your staff to choose from, including the latest in computing, mobiles, home cinema, garden, DIY, furnishings, toys, domestic appliances and much more. Employees can spread the cost of items over a set period of time direct from salary through this staff benefit and simply browse and order products online through the Vivup portal.



Home and Electronics is run in conjunction with the UK's leading home and electrical retailers Currys PC World and John Lewis, offering staff access to a range of up to 19,000 products with the ability to spread the cost with no credit check. This benefit is fully compliant with HMRC and has been developed in conjunction with PS Tax.

Reductions are made from an employee's gross salary, so they can make savings on National insurance and NHS pension Scheme/LGPS contributions, where applicable.

### Cycle to Work

Cycle to Work not only encourages physical activity, it also helps save money for you and your employees. Your staff can make huge savings on the latest cycling gear through this employee benefit. Employees have the flexibility to either visit a local participating bike shop to select any brand of bike or accessory, or browse and order products online through the Vivup portal.



Vivup work with over 1,200 local bike shops nationwide and the UK's leading specialists, Evans Cycles, Cycle Solutions and Halfords offering your staff the widest choice of bikes and delivery / pickup options within the UK. By working with four supply chains, our ability to deliver is unrivalled.

Reductions are made to an employees' gross salary, so they can make savings on Income Tax, National Insurance and NHS Pension Scheme contributions, where applicable. We use tax consultants PS Tax who are public sector tax specialists, to ensure compliance with HMRC's conditions for the Cycle to Work (CTW) benefit. A disposal fee is recommended for compliant disposal of the asset at the end of the loan period as there can be no right to ownership through the loan period itself. The disposal fee is 10% plus VAT (12%) of the total order value. This is taken as a net salary deduction at the end of the loan scheme. Following this the employee can choose to extend the loan for one or two years (depending on the initial value of the order) at no additional cost, return the bike, or take ownership of the bike at the value stated on HMRC FMV tables (less any disposal fee already paid). The thinking behind the disposal fee is that it will negate the impact of the 'transfer of asset' benefit since the cost to the employee for transfer will equal or exceed the HMRC fair market value.

### Bike Shop **\*\*Employer Funded\*\***

Complementing our Cycle to Work scheme, our Bike Shop staff benefit not only keeps the whole family active, employees can also spread the cost through their pay to make it more affordable. We have the largest range of bikes



and accessories in the UK from leading cycling brands for your staff to choose from, including children's bikes, road, mountain, hybrid and electric bikes. Plus, cycling equipment, components, GPS cycle devices, Go Pro sport cameras, smart trainers and more!

Employees place their Bike Shop order through the Vivup portal and have monthly reductions from their salary for an agreed length of time.

Reductions are made to an employee's gross salary, so they can make savings on National Insurance and NHS Pension Scheme/LGPS contributions, where applicable.

### **Gym Membership \*\*Employer Funded\*\***

Staff can make significant savings on the cost of local gym membership for themselves and their partners at over 3,000 gyms, health clubs, leisure centres and yoga studios. Employees order their gym membership and have monthly reductions through their salary for an agreed length of time.

## **Investment**

### **Your Investment**

The Vivup platform is provided as a cost-free solution subject to a three year contract, and includes all the functionality to create and customise content, the full range of lifestyle savings, the messaging module and the mobile app. In addition, the project management and support needed to effectively implement the Vivup platform is provided. All marketing, implementation support and collateral is included.

## **Summary of the Key Benefits of the Vivup platform**

### **For you**

- Delivery of a Health and Wellbeing Programme
- Delivery of a Benefits Strategy
- Free, fully customisable platform
- Full support and resource provided
- Enhanced communication
- Comprehensive marketing support
- Account Management with regular reviews

### **For your Employees**

- Access anywhere on any device
- All benefits are in one place
- Lifestyle Savings
- Health and Wellbeing at their fingertips
- Affordable, easy money management

## **Don't just take our word for it...**

Our Feefo reviews reflect the relationships we have with the clients we work with. All reviews are available on our website ([www.vivup.co.uk](http://www.vivup.co.uk)) and show that from our 35 customer reviews we have an average customer experience rating of 4.8/5. Some examples include:

### **' Excellent employee benefits service '**

Our experience with Vivup has been a great one. Our account manager is fantastic and very responsive, as are the other members of the team. Vivup are very proactive in their approach to marketing and are always looking at ways in which they can improve, as shown by their recent platform update. Queries are responded to in a timely manner and



throughout COVID, Vivup have demonstrated their commitment to providing an excellent service, even in these challenging times.

### **' Outstanding!!!! '**

I have worked with ViVup for just over 4 years and I can honestly say the service is just outstanding!!! recently the Trust has developed the relationship further and introduced a face to face counselling service, again this is just outstanding I would also like to note the personal approach that the account manager Sean Nualart again has been outstanding, always available, friendly, approachable and more importantly honest

### **' Comprehensive, versatile, easy to use employee benefits platform '**

As an NHS Trust with over 4000 employees we have utilised Vivup as our staff benefits platform provider for a number of years and have had an altogether positive experience. The contract management & customer service teams have been supportive & amiable & feedback from our staff members has been excellent. Not only do Vivup provide an array of optional staff benefits across multiple areas of staff support they also work closely with the Trust to explore further opportunities to engage with our staff which is very well received. The flexibility of the platform also allows us to collate all of our benefits in one place regardless of whether or not the information is linked directly to Vivup which makes accessibility easy for all

### **' Great Staff Benefit '**

We have used vivup for quite a few years, It has proven to be a valuable benefit to staff, especially in the recent lock-down we have seen the orders go 'through the roof'. But they offer so much more than tech, with access to a full raft of staff benefits and health and on the portal. I have not seen anything better out there.







# Health Screenings

With the fast pace of living today it is crucial we look after ourselves, both physically and mentally.



Employee health is a prerequisite for corporate resilience and growth. Our health screenings provide employees a convenient way to assess their physical health, overall wellbeing and lifestyle choices. Assessments are focused on identifying health risks before they become problems and guiding employees to make better decisions about their future.

Our onsite health screening services identify immediate areas for action and give suggestions for positive lifestyle changes. They provide a road map to continuing health and wellbeing that's complemented by a 12-month action plan to cover both short-term and long-term health goals.

The right health screening package is key, be it a quick body MOT or a full executive medical, we can offer reliability and expert advice to all organisation sizes throughout the UK and Ireland.

- ✓ Employee reports include an overview of each area tested and guidance on how to improve.
- ✓ Using the data in your Company report is a great way to build your wellbeing programme!

## How ToHealth make Health Screenings easy

1 MOT 20 min

2 Essential 30 min

3 Wellperson 60 min

4 Wellperson + cancer 60 min

5 Executive 90 min



- ✓ Available onsite, online or at any of our network of clinics
- ✓ Easy to set up with online booking for employees
- ✓ Insightful and engaging Employee & Company Reports
- ✓ A range of options available to suit your requirements



## Proactive & Preventative Health



**35%** of UK office workers fail to get the recommended exercise quota of 150 minutes per week.



**11.5** days per employee could be saved by improving the health of an average workforce.



**86%** of employees believe their employer has responsibility for their wellbeing.



More than **4M** people with high blood pressure go undiagnosed and untreated.



Inactivity and poor diet are among the top causes of ill health.

Screening can detect a problem early, before you have any symptoms. Finding out about a problem early can mean that treatment is more effective. Finding out you have a health problem or an increased chance of a health problem can help people make better informed decisions about their health.

\*NHS

- ✓ Have a **happier, healthier** workforce
- ✓ **Attract** staff in the competitive work market
- ✓ Show that you are a **caring employer**
- ✓ **Improve** staff retention
- ✓ **Engage** your employees



# Our Packages

	MOT	Essential	Wellperson	Wellperson + Cancer	Executive
Duration (Mins)	20	30	60	60	90

Included as standard for in-person and online Health Screening					
Lifestyle assessment	Personal medical questionnaire	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Lifestyle questionnaire	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mood assessment		✓	✓	✓
Results	Results sent by encrypted email	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Coaching with health and wellness expert		✓	✓	✓
	12-month action plan		✓	✓	✓
Blood analysis	Total cholesterol	✓	✓	✓	✓
	HDL cholesterol	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Diabetes - random glucose* / HbA1c	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Non-HDL cholesterol			✓	✓
	LDL cholesterol			✓	✓
	Triglycerides			✓	✓
	Kidney / Liver function			✓	✓
	Iron status			✓	✓
	Gout (uric acid)			✓	✓
	Proteins			✓	✓
	Vitamin D			✓	✓
	Thyroid function (TSH and thyroxine)				✓
Cancer tests & awareness	PSA prostate cancer (male only 50+)			✓	✓
	CA125 ovarian cancer (female only)			✓	✓
	FIT bowel cancer test (45+ or history)			✓	✓
	Inflammation marker (CRP)			✓	✓
	Full blood count (white and red)			✓	✓
	Clotting status			✓	✓
	Breast and testicular cancer awareness			✓	✓
Plus the below included for in-person health assessments					
Bacteria test	H Pylori			✓	✓
Body composition	Height and weight	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Body Mass Index (BMI)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Waist : hip ratio	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Metabolism assessment		✓	✓	✓
	Metabolic age		✓	✓	✓
	Body fat percentage		✓	✓	✓
	Visceral fat		✓	✓	✓
	Muscle mass		✓	✓	✓
	Bone mass		✓	✓	✓
	Hydration status		✓	✓	✓
Heart & lung health	Blood pressure	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Cardiac assessment (Qrisk)		✓	✓	✓
	Lung function and age			✓	✓
	Heart rhythm screen				✓
	Fitness assessment				✓
Bone health	Osteoporosis risk assessment			✓	✓
Urine analysis	Nitrates, blood, leucocytes and proteins				✓

Rate per online screen	£50.00	£65.00	£119.00	£159.00	£219.00
Rate per in-person screen	£55.00	£69.00	£129.00	£169.00	£229.00

\*For clients booking over 250 employees 3% off, and 5% for over 1,000. A minimum fee of £600 per day applies for on-site screenings at non clinic locations.  
 \*\*ToHealth reserves the right not to carry out some tests if deemed clinically inappropriate.

## Post Screening Support

### Employee reporting

- ✓ Instant results (excluding laboratory analysed bloods)
- ✓ Health report designed to inform, educate and advise
- ✓ Results based health and lifestyle guidance
- ✓ 12 month action plan
- ✓ GP referrals, if required

### Employer reporting

- ✓ Anonymised organisation health report
- ✓ Potential health risks and trends identified
- ✓ Target health and wellbeing spend
- ✓ Improved ROI

### Additional education and reinforcement

#### Recommendations could include:

- ✓ Workshops and webinars
- ✓ Health promotion days
- ✓ Training and coaching
- ✓ E-learning modules
- ✓ Blood testing and cancer screening
- ✓ DNA and epigenetics



tohealthltd.co.uk



@tohealth-ltd



engagement@tohealthltd.co.uk

# The Electric Dreams Car Scheme

*To enhance your flexible benefits package to retain and reward talent*

## Frequently Asked Questions



## ABOUT THE ELECTRIC DREAMS CAR SCHEME

### What is the Electric Dreams Car Scheme?

The Electric Dreams Car Scheme allows you to get a new car through salary sacrifice, paying for it out of your gross salary before tax and national insurance, with no up-front costs and a simple monthly fee that includes all of the below!

### What is included in it?

This scheme is designed to be all-inclusive and as convenient as possible for both the employer and employee. The monthly payment includes:

- Your electric car
- Breakdown cover and roadside assistance
- Servicing, MOT, repairs, tyres (subject to Fair Wear and Tear guidelines)
- Insurance (including additional drivers)
- Accident management
- Road tax
- New EV starter pack and expert advice
- Leaver protection for certain unforeseen circumstances
- An end of contract damage waiver

### What are the main benefits of this scheme?

You can drive a brand-new car for less money with no up-front payment. By switching to a fully electric car you can take advantage of the extremely low benefit-in-kind rates – as well as all the other benefits of switching to electric, such as really low running costs. You'll be supported by a team of EV specialists who will help match you with the right car, and pair you with the right charger and energy tariff.

### Why should I consider salary sacrifice?

By 'sacrificing' gross salary before income tax and national insurance, you can save as much as 60% on your monthly car costs. It's also a one-stop shop product reducing hassle and giving peace of mind.

### Will I pay company car tax?

A salary sacrifice vehicle is subject to company car tax, also known as Benefit-in-Kind. HMRC will charge you the Benefit-In-Kind on the vehicle payment. However, as it's an electric vehicle, the BiK rates are only 2% from 2022/25!

### Do I make the same payment throughout the life of the contract?

Your payments will vary based on benefit-in-kind rates.

### Is the scheme available to everyone?

The employer decides who can partake in the scheme. As a minimum, you need to have completed your probation period, be on a permanent contract and paid via PAYE, as well as hold a valid UK driving licence. There is additional insurance eligibility criteria that can be viewed [here](#). You must also be able to afford the vehicle without going below minimum wage and not be planning on retiring during the life of the contract agreement.

### How long is the agreement for on the car?

You can choose either a 24, 36 or 48 month term.

### Can I choose a specific yearly mileage allowance?

Yes, there are many options - the minimum being 5,000 miles and maximum being 30,000 miles.

### What happens when the car needs a service or maintenance?

The vehicle is provided under a full maintenance scheme, which includes servicing, batteries and tyres under normal wear and tear conditions – you just need to phone our Driver Line to get booked in. The car will be delivered with a pack which will also detail the standard service and maintenance requirements.

### What happens if I resign or I am dismissed?

If you resign, or are dismissed by your employer, the vehicle can be returned and your employer's early termination leaver protection will be used, usually resulting in no fee.

### What happens if I go on parental leave?

You may retain the car and continue to pay for the vehicle for as long as you can afford it. If your salary drops to a level below minimum wage and/or statutory pay, you will be covered for up to 12 months from the start of your leave. Alternatively, if you no longer require your vehicle, you can return the vehicle and your employer's early termination leaver protection will be used, usually resulting in no fee.

### What happens if I go on long term sickness leave?

You may retain the car and continue to pay for the vehicle for as long as you can afford it. If your salary drops to a level below minimum wage and/or statutory pay, you will be covered for up to 3 months from the start of your leave (defined as being off on sick leave for 4 weeks or more). Alternatively, if you no longer require your vehicle, you can return the vehicle and your employer's early termination leaver protection will be used, usually resulting in no fee.

### How does parental and long-term sickness leave work for the employer?

The employer would notify us that an employee classifies for this cover (providing some documented proof) and would keep paying the monthly rentals but stop deducting the sacrifice from the employee's pay. When the employee returns, the employer just needs to notify us and we will credit them back for the number of months due under the cover.

### What happen if I lose my licence on medical grounds?

The vehicle can be returned, and your employer's early termination leaver protection will be used, usually resulting in no fee.

### What happens at the end of the contract?

Your car will be returned and an assessment will be made to assess any damage or excess mileage charges. Damages above our £500 end of contract damage waiver, as well as excess mileage charges, will be invoiced to the employer in full which are usually then deducted from the employee's net salary.

### Do you need to see my driving licence?

Yes, this will be checked during your quoting and ordering journey and yearly thereafter.

### Is there a delivery charge?

No, this is already included if delivery is available. Your car will be delivered free of charge to any UK mainland address, either home or business (except for Tesla vehicles which usually need to be collected).



## Are there any fees or other payments involved?

There are no scheme set-up fees and no upfront payments. There may be charges in circumstances of excess mileage, certain early termination circumstances, end of contract damages or fines.

## How can I get a quote online once the scheme is live?

Simply click this [link](#), and click “Let’s go” to get started:

1. Input your email address and click “Sign in with email”
2. Now check your inbox for email entitled “Sign into your workplace salary sacrifice scheme”
3. That email will have a 6 digit verification code
4. Input that code from your inbox into the portal
5. Input your invite code\* and phone number, or;
6. Click the link “Can’t find your invite code?” if you’re stuck

\*If you can’t find it/don’t know your invite code please speak to your internal HR team. This code is provided to you when you are live on our systems.

## I’m struggling to access the online quoting portal?

If your code isn’t working, then please read the below tips & tricks:

- The codes are one time use only; if users try to use the codes again they will not work
- Codes will work for 30 minutes, then expire
- Once logged in though, **you should stay logged in on that browser for 1 week** i.e. you won't need another code in that time
- If you’re following all the above steps and getting an expiry error then this might have to do with your work network. Please try the above steps on a device that isn’t linked, in anyway, to your work network (including a different email address).
- Ask you IT team to whitelist the following email address: [hello@octopusev.com](mailto:hello@octopusev.com) which sends out the codes to access the portal.

Any bugs or issues please get in touch at [hello@octopusev.com](mailto:hello@octopusev.com) with as much detail as possible alongside screenshots.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 20 MARCH 2023**

**ADOPTION OF RED TELEPHONE BOX ON CHURCH STREET, DUNSTABLE**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To consider the purchase of the red telephone box located on Church St and determine how it might be used in future.
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That Members determine if they wish the Council to adopt the phone box in accordance with the BT adoption scheme.
- 1.2 The Members indicate what they would like to use the phone box for in the future.
- 1.3 That, subject to agreement on adoption, Members approve the use of in year revenue savings made during 2022.23 in addition to the current forecast savings up to £5,000, to progress the project.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Members have previously approached the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services to look into the possibility of the Council adopting the iconic red phone box located on the corner of the Church Street and Kingsway junction opposite the Priory Church.
- 2.2 The phone box is in a very poor condition with broken and missing glazing and peeling paintwork. The telephone is still connected and in working order but is available for emergency calls only. The electricity supply remains intact. The Town Rangers periodically clean the phone box and have, in the past, removed broken glass and vandalised items.
- 2.3 The phone box is a listed structure and any proposed changes would require consent from the local planning authority.

**3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 British Telecom (BT) currently own the phone box and they have an adoption process in place for communities and councils to adopt phone boxes. It is understood that the process involves a 90-day consultation following application.
- 3.2 BT is offering communities across England the opportunity to adopt their local phone box for just £1 to turn them into something inspirational for their local area. BT will continue to provide electricity (if already in place) to power the light for adopted kiosks, free of charge to communities. Where electricity is available, adopted boxes can be used as housings for defibrillators; an increasingly popular and potentially life-saving conversion.
- 3.3 BT has set up a 3-step application process:

- Step 1 requires an expression of interest to adopt.
- Step 2 involves BT reviewing the request and if applicable offering adoption via contract.
- Step 3 takes place once contracts and payment have been exchanged. At this point BT will disconnect the phone and leave the adoptee in charge.

3.4 There are any number of uses that could be considered for the phone box once adopted. Some of the more popular uses seen elsewhere across England include floral displays, book, seed and toy swaps, community art and housing for a defibrillator. Combined uses such as floral displays and a defibrillator could be given consideration. Some images are included below to show how adopted phone boxes have been used elsewhere. It would be helpful if Members could indicate what they might like to see the phone box used for in the future.





- 3.5 In addition to the phone box future use options it might be appropriate to consider an interpretation panel nearby detailing the history of the iconic red phone box.
- 3.6 If members are minded to adopt the phone box the next steps would be:
- Contact BT with an expression of interest.
  - Speak with the CBC Conservation Officer to determine any restrictions on future uses.
  - Complete the BT contract process.
  - Refurbish the phone box and make any approved alterations.
- 3.7 It should be noted that BT do offer advice on future uses including appropriate defibrillator suppliers and links with the British Coating Federation who support undercoating and repainting works.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The cost of adopting the phone box has been set by BT at £1.
- 4.2 It is not possible to say at this stage what the cost implications of this initiative would be as the costs will be determined by any future use and a full understanding of the repairs and repainting required to refurbish the structure.
- 4.3 It would therefore be sensible to establish a working budget of up to £5,000 from any in year revenue savings identified. However, officers will seek to secure grant funding or support from others to reduce the direct costs to the Council.

#### **5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This project is in line with one of the Council's Corporate Priorities to preserve and enhance the history and identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable.

#### **6. LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The adoption of the phone box will add a new listed structure to the Council's overall assets, and it will be necessary to adhere to all listed structure planning requirements.

#### **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY, HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None identified at this stage.

#### **8. AUTHOR**

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