

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

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## AGENDA

### ORDINARY MEETING OF HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Date / Time: Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 7.30 pm

Venue: Horley Town Council offices, Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, Horley RH6 7HZ

SENT BY EMAIL TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

You are hereby respectfully summoned to attend an **ORDINARY MEETING of HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL** to be held on Tuesday, 12 December 2023, 7:30 pm, at the Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, Horley RH6 7HZ. The Agenda for the meeting is attached to this Summons.

Yours sincerely

Joan Walsh  
Town Clerk

#### Members' Apologies:

If required, a Member must submit their apologies for this meeting by sending an email to: [town.clerk@horleytown.com](mailto:town.clerk@horleytown.com) or by telephoning the office on 01293 784765, by no later than noon on the day of the meeting.

#### Public Forum:

**Members of the Public and Press are welcome to attend this meeting in person or may join it remotely by requesting a Zoom link by email to: [town.clerk@horleytown.com](mailto:town.clerk@horleytown.com) or by telephoning the office on 01293 784765, by no later than noon on the day before the meeting is due to be held.**

Public and Press attendees are invited to put questions or draw relevant matters to the Council's attention and are permitted to speak once only and for five minutes maximum in respect of a business item on the agenda, at the discretion of the Chairman. If it appears that the number of speakers is likely to unreasonably delay the disposal of business items on the agenda, the Chairman may direct that a question or comment is submitted in writing which shall be answered in due course.

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

An Ordinary Meeting of Horley Town Council will be held at the Albert Rooms,  
Albert Road, Horley on Tuesday, 12 December 2023, at 7.30 pm

All correspondence and papers referred to in the public part of the agenda are available to view in the Town Council Offices during normal office hours or on the website.

## AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**  
To receive apologies for absence with officer recommendation for acceptance.
- 2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Pecuniary Interests**  
To receive any declarations of interest in relation to any items included on this agenda.
- 3 Public Forum**
- 4 Minutes**  
To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on [31 October 2023](#)
- 5 Full Council Updates**
- 6 Committee Reports**
  - i) To receive the draft Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees:  
Leisure Committee held on [17 October 2023](#)
  - ii) To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees:  
Planning and Development Committee held on [24 October 2023](#)
- 7 Council Chairman's Report**  
To receive a report of events attended by the Chairman or representative since the Full Council meeting held on 31 October 2023 (*attached*).
- 8 Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC) and National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**
  - i) To receive any updates from Cllr Mike George as the HTC representative on the SALC Board.
  - ii) NALC Review: Model Financial Regulations (Closing Date: 5 November 2023) – To ratify this Council's response.
  - iii) Statement of Devolution: County Deal for Surrey (Level 2) – To note information received.
  - iv) To receive any other updates from the National and County Associations.
- 9 Borough, County Council and Other Updates**
  - i) To receive an update on the SCC/RBBC/HTC Joint Council meeting, held on 4 December 2023.
  - ii) To receive an update on the RBBC/HTC Liaison Meeting held on 9 November 2023.
  - iii) To receive an update on any other matters.
- 10 Internal Audit Matters**  
To receive the report of the first internal audit for 2023/24 from Mulberry & Co and note this Council's response.
- 11 Horley Town Council Precept**
  - i) To approve the Town Council Precept set for the Financial Year 2024/2025.
  - ii) To approve the draft Budget Statement from the Finance Lead Member, for approval and publication.
- 12 Operational Matters**
  - i) To approve the expenditure of £21,523.43 for May 23 Election Costs, £20K to come from the Election Costs Earmarked fund and the remainder from General Reserve.
  - ii) Gatwick Greenspace Partnership (GGP) – To ratify the subscription for 2023/24 in the total sum of £2,350.

**13 Outside Bodies**

To receive any updates from the Town Council representatives on the following outside bodies:

- i) Horley Community Partnership
- ii) Royal British Legion

**14 Environment Working Group**

- i) To receive an update from the Chair on the virtual meeting held on 14 November 2023.
- ii) [Climate & Ecological Bill](#) – To consider the recommendations of the Environment Working Group for the Town Council to support the Bill through the Zero Hour campaign.

**15 Communications Received**

**16 Diary Dates**

**17 Items for Future Consideration**

To note urgent business for inclusion on future agenda.

**18 Press Release**

To agree items for inclusion.



**Signed: Town Clerk, 7 December 2023**

**Date of Next Meeting – 30 January 2023**

## **List of Mayoral Events 1 November – 12 December 2023**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
8 November	Rededication of Memorial Garden Attended by Deputy Mayor	Horley Recreation Ground
11 November	2 Minutes Silence Observation Attended by Deputy Mayor	Pedestrian Precinct, Horley
12 November	Remembrance Service	Horley Recreation Ground
22 November	Tandridge Civic Day	Caterham
3 December	Christmas Tree Festival	Horley Methodist Church
9 December	Town Award Presentations @ Cllr Christmas Hospitality	Community Centre
	Horley Singers Christmas Carols	Horley Methodist Church

# NALC Model Financial Regulations Consultation

1. Name \*

Judy Morgan

2. Council \*

Horley Town Council

3. Email address \*

finance@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk

4. Job title

\*

RFO

5. Is the description of budget preparation (Section 3) adequate and if not, what changes should be made? I feel it is adequate \*

It seems prudent to include some consideration of the status and expected longevity of Council assets when considering budgets otherwise Councils can find themselves faced with unexpectedly large bills for managing or replacing ageing assets. We suggest that there should be a more explicit reference to such consideration in Section 3

6. How should we improve the wording (Section 4) about monitoring of expenditure? \*

COVID had an impact on accelerating working practices to be more internet based. Perhaps references to permission slips should be amended to include confirmation emails to better reflect current ways of working. Re 4.2 our feeling is that it is unrealistic to impose a regulation requiring formal resolution by Council prior to any amount over an allocated budget being authorised and paid. In this unusual circumstance reality seems to be payments are presented for ratification, with a note explaining that the payment is over

7. What changes are needed to manage safe and satisfactory delegation of authority to staff (Section 5)?

\*

Current regulations work for HTC – no comment

8. Can you suggest any amendments to improve control of online payments and banking (Sections 5 and 6)? take the cheque out or make less prominent, as more is done online and via card payments \*

Current controls work for HTC – however, we note that the emphasis seems to be on making payments by cheque (6.3, 6.4 and 6.6) and payment by BACS/electronic payments seems to be incidental as 6.9 states "If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS". We imagine that as we do, most councils now pay electronically and payment by cheque is a rarity. Consideration should be given to changing Section 6 to more closely reflect current practice i.e. the emphasis should be on how to secure BACS/electronic payments. As an example, our practice is that the RFO initiates the payments, with the Clerk checking and if content being the first authoriser of the payments following which two Councillors are asked to

9. What revisions are needed to achieve effective management of procurement Sections 10,11 and 12)?

\*

With reference to 10.1 and 10.2 although we naturally maintain a good audit trail, with orders in writing, many of these orders are made by email instruction and we do not maintain an order book as such. I would expect this reference to an order book to be either removed or updated.

We feel that the thresholds are too low given recent rises in costs.

In our experience the Tender process is extremely onerous for small Town and Parish Councils, especially in terms of the amount staff resource required to complete a tender process. We would like NALC could assist by providing easy to use templates and guidance in the form of flow charts to help decrease the administrative burden on councils. Perhaps as Appendices to the Financial Regulations.

10. What additional regulations may be needed in relation to financial risk management (Section 17)?

\*

HTC take risk assessment very seriously but we feel that the current controls work for HTC.

11. Which regulations create challenges for either transparency or the protection of personal and commercially sensitive data?

\*

No comment – we have not experienced a challenge in this way.

12. What, if anything, should be removed from the model regulations and why?

\*

Para 6.11 This appears to be unnecessary and out of step with current practice where Officers have their own passwords and there is no requirement to share. Similarly 6.12 The financial regs should actively discourage disclosure of passwords/pins.

References to order books, to reflect current working practices

References to signed hard copy authorisations, again as these processes are now mostly completed by email, which in my view supplies a sufficient audit trail

13. Which paragraphs, if any, are obsolete and need replacing?

\*

I feel sure, like HTC that many councils now mostly use electronic banking, the paragraphs relating to cheque payments need a good overhaul.

14. Are there any other issues that you think should be covered within financial regulations?

\*

None that I can bring to mind at present

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Our Ref: MARK/HOR004

Mrs J Walsh  
Horley Town Council  
The Council Offices  
92 Albert Road  
Horley, Surrey  
RH6 7HZ

28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Joan

**Re: Horley Town Council**  
**Internal Audit Year Ended 31 March 2024 – Interim Audit Report.**

### Executive summary

Following completion of our interim internal audit on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November we enclose our report for your kind attention and presentation to the council. The audit was conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines and testing was risk based. Whilst we have not tested all transactions, our samples have where appropriate covered the entire year to date.

Our report is presented in the same order as the assertions on the internal auditor report within the published AGAR. The start of each section details the nature of the assertion to be verified. Testing requirements follow those detailed in the audit plan previously sent to the council, a copy of this is available on request. The report concludes with an opinion as to whether each assertion has been met or not at the interim audit. Where appropriate **recommendations for action are shown in bold text and are summarised in the table at the end of the report.**

The interim audit was conducted on site with the clerk and RFO. The clerk and RFO had prepared the information advised in advance of the visit and provided a pack of evidence in pdf format. I have the impression that accounting records are neatly maintained and easily accessible. Other information was reviewed through discussion with the clerk and a review of the council website <https://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/>

Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk. We noted that training takes place.

It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.

### Regulation

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts. In addition to this, a smaller authority is required by Regulation 5(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to “undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.”

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance activity designed to improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of

risk management, control and governance processes. The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the authority on whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

Internal audit's function is to test and report to the authority on whether its specific system of internal control is adequate and working satisfactorily. The internal audit reports should therefore be made available to all Members to support and inform them when they considering the authority's approval of the annual governance statement.

### Independence and competence

Your audit was conducted by Mark Mulberry of Mulberry & Co. We confirm we are independent from the management of the financial controls and procedures of the council and neither the internal auditor or the firm have any conflicts of interest with the audit client, nor do they provide any management or financial assistance to the client.

Your auditor has over 30 years' experience in the financial sector with the last 20 years specialising in local government finance and internal audit.

### Engagement Letter

An engagement letter was previously issued to the council covering the internal audit assignment. Copies of this document are available on request.

### Planning and inherent risk assessment

The scope and plan of works including fee structure was issued to the council under separate cover. Copies of this document are available on request. In summary, our work will address each of the internal control objectives as stated on the Annual Internal Audit Report of the AGAR. As part of the inherent risk assessment, we have concluded that:

- There have been no reported instances of breaches of regulations in the past.
- The client uses an industry approved financial reporting package.
- The client regularly carries out reconciliations and documents these.
- There is regular reporting to council.
- The management team are experienced and informed.
- Records are neatly maintained and referenced.
- The client is aware of current regulations and practices.
- No High staff turnover

It is our opinion that the inherent risk of error or misstatement is low, and the controls of the council can be relied upon and as such substantive testing of individual transactions is not required. Testing to be carried out will be "walk through testing" on sample data to encompass the period of the council year under review.

### Table of contents –

		TEST AT INTERIM	TEST AT FINAL	PAGE
A	BOOKS OF ACCOUNT	✓		3
B	FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS	✓		4
C	RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE		✓	6
D	BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES	✓	✓	6
E	INCOME	✓	✓	7
F	PETTY CASH	n/a	n/a	7
G	PAYROLL	✓	✓	7
H	ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS		✓	8
I	BANK AND CASH	✓	✓	8
J	YEAR END ACCOUNTS	✓	✓	9
K	LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW	✓		10
L	PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION	✓		11
M	EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS – INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS	✓	✓	12
N	PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS	✓		12
O	TRUSTEESHIP	n/a	n/a	12
	ACHIEVEMENT OF CONTROL ASSERTIONS AT INTERIM AUDIT DATE			13
	INTERIM AUDIT POINTS CARRIED FORWARD			14

## A. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.*

### **Audit findings**

The council continues to use the RBS Rialtus suite as a day-to-day accounting package, this is a tried and tested industry specific package and I make no recommendation to change. The system is used daily to report on and record the financial transactions of that of the Council.

There are five users with their own individual logons and individual privileges. The RFO is responsible for the maintenance of privileges on the system. Passwords are not routinely prompted to change, and each user has to log onto the council system first before access to the financial reporting package. The system is backed up to the cloud on a real time basis.

1.	RFO	Access all areas
2.	RFO Elect	Access all areas
3.	Clerk	Read Only
4.	Leisure and facilities manager	Bookings, invoices and allotments
5.	Admin assistant	Bookings, invoices and allotments

Every month, a "month end" close down is performed by the RFO, various reports are printed and filed in hard & soft copy, these include but are not limited to, income and expenditure against budget, bank reconciliations and other reports as fit. The RFO has a checklist for this. I was showed where the files are kept and can confirm existence of hard copy reports and underlying financial documentation.

The system requires the population of key data fields to enable the user to record a transaction. This is a clear and easy to follow system and a review of the cashbook shows that all data fields are being entered, the reports are easy to read and logically filed.

I conducted a simple walk-through test on a supplier invoice drawn at random and a receipt drawn at random and can confirm the underlying documentation could be found and agreed to the cashbook details. Invoices are filed in date paid order, together with a bank payment summary. The soft copy invoices were easier to locate than the hard copy. The RFO may want to consider a review of the filing system.

I tested the opening balances as at 1/4/23 by reviewing the balance brought forward on the receipts page on the RBS accounting package for cashbook one and confirmed it could be agreed back to the investment reconciliation for the audited accounts for 2022/23. There were no errors.

I reviewed the nominal ledger entries for the period 1st of April to 31<sup>st</sup> of October to ensure items were posted to the correct heading it was noted that there were instances of income being netted off against expenditure especially in code 4230 Utilities. I remind council that income and expenditure must be shown gross. **I recommend journals are posted to correct this.**

The Council is VAT registered and the last VAT return was for the quarter ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, which showed a payment position of £9,969.18. The refund was received on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 and agrees to the return. This test indicates that the council is up to date with its postings on the financial package and that these can be verified to third party evidence.

Overall, I have the impression that the accounting systems are well ordered and routinely maintained and as such I make no recommendation to change.

## B. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS

### **Internal audit requirement**

*This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

*Check the publication & minuting of the prior year audited AGAR and notice of conclusion of audit.*

External auditors report was not qualified in 2022/23 although a note was made regarding missing supplementary evidence requested by the external auditor. The AGAR is published on the council website along with the notice of conclusion. This was taken to full council on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 [minute ref C5659].

The council has made a note to address the concerns raised by the external auditor.

*Confirm by sample testing that councillors sign statutory office forms.*

I confirmed by sample testing that Councillors sign Acceptance of Office forms, and declaration of interest in accordance, together with a formal acceptance to receive information by electronic means.

*Confirm that the Council is compliant with the GDPR.*

The council is fully aware of GDPR and accessibility regulations. It was noted the council has established common email addresses for all councillors. This is recommended because it gives a natural segregation between work and personal lives, making it clear beyond doubt in what capacity a councillor is acting. In addition to this it gives control to the council, adds a degree of professionalism and in the event of a FOI request limits access to personal computers.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide (March 2023) contains updated guidance on the matter as below:

#### *The importance of secure email systems and GOV.UK*

- 5.205. *All authorities except parish meetings must now have an official website. To comply with GDPR, councils should provide official email accounts for their councillors as well as for their clerk and other officers.*
- 5.206. *When choosing a domain name for the council's website and emails, many local council websites are appropriately making use of the official GOV.UK domain (for example, ourparishcouncil.gov.uk), with email addresses being linked to that domain.*
- 5.207. *Using a GOV.UK domain for your council website and email accounts demonstrates the council's official local government status. Members of the public are increasingly cyber security awareness, so a GOV.UK domain can also help to build trust, and credibility and visibly demonstrates authenticity. Many people will now reasonably expect a local council to have a GOV.UK domain name.*
- 5.208. *For the purposes of user management, councils should ensure that the proper officer can add and remove member and staff email accounts. Commercial 'dashboard' email and web systems offer centralised searching of all data contained within the system for effective compliance with GDPR Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information Requests.*

*Confirm that the Council meets regularly throughout the year.*

In addition to full council, the council has two committees. The terms of reference are published on the council website and are current with dates for future renewal.

*Confirm all section 137 expenditure meets the guidelines & does not exceed the annual per elector limit of £9.93 (2023: £8.82) per elector.*

The council has the General Power of Competence (GPC). S.137 thresholds do not apply. This was reaffirmed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May by full council minute ref C5550

*Check that agendas for meetings are published giving 3 clear days' notice.*

The Clerk was able to demonstrate that at least 3 clear days' notice is given on agendas. Whilst we have not tested every single committee and council meeting there was no evidence of non-compliance. The agenda background information is provided in easily downloadable links.

*Check the draft minutes of the last meeting(s) are on the council's website.*

Minutes are uploaded to the council website, and these are in an accessible format.

*Confirm that the Parish Council's Standing Orders have been reviewed within the last 12 months.*

The standing orders are based on the NALC model. These were reviewed and readopted in the full council meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023. C5551

*Confirm that the Parish Council has adopted and recently reviewed Financial Regulations.*

Financial regulations are based on the NALC model. These were reviewed and readopted in the full council meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023. C5551. The regulations being based on the NALC model contain provisions for the approval of spending, setting of budgets, reconciliation of the bank and reporting to council.

*Check that the council's Financial Regulations are being routinely followed.*

Financial regulations 2.2 deals with bank reconciliations. The council is performing a regular reconciliation which in the past has been fully signed off in accordance with regulations; however, it is noted some of the later reconciliation documents have not been signed, although the "audit pack" to which they were attached was. **I recommend the council review the wording of this regulation and update day to practice as necessary.**

*Financial Regulation 4 Deals with authority to spend. 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by: • the Council or a duly delegated Committee for all items over £2,000; or • the Clerk, for any items up to £2,000. Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by written authority of the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman. Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these Regulations.*

*4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the Council, or duly delegated Committee. During the budget year and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').*

*4.5 In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of Council services, the Clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which in the Clerk's judgement, it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £2,000. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chairman as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.*

*Financial Regulation 11.1.i deals with tenders, quotes and estimates. When it is intended to enter into a contract less than £25,000 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 excepted as set out in paragraph a. the Clerk/RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £100, the Clerk/RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.*

I reviewed the nominal ledger and selected items over £2,000 that were not regular contracts, wages, or insurance. I was able to verify the expense to the physical invoice, and with assistance from the RFO I was also able to verify that council had pre-approved the expenditure in accordance with regulation and that where applicable quotes and estimates had been obtained. There was one instance of a quote not being obtained but this was an outlier in an otherwise perfect sample.

*Financial Regulation 14.2 deals with purchase and sale of assets etc. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.*

*14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 15.2 (should be 14.2) above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.*

Financial Regulation 5 deals with banking arrangements and authorisation of payments.

I was able to see evidence of this regulation being followed.

Financial regulation 6 deals with making payments. The council makes payments by cheque, direct debit, SO and bacs. There is no doubt payments are properly reported to council, approved and the physical payment authorised. The bank system has a dual access requirement.

I am of the opinion the council is following its own regulations and that any changes to financial regulations are to be considered minor and not indicative of errors in the system. I am therefore of the opinion that the control assertion "This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for", has been met.

## C. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

### **Internal audit requirement**

*This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.*

### **Audit findings**

The council has adopted an Internal Control Policy and a Risk Assessment and Management Scheme. These were both most recently approved by council at the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (minute refs C5519 & C5520).

*FR 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment, (per Regulation 18 [should be 17]), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.*

I reviewed these documents, both of which are publicly available. The council demonstrates a strong understanding of its risk management responsibilities, and the development of the Internal Control Policy illustrates the different types of checks conducted during the year.

The Risk Assessment and Management scheme identifies risks by area of the council's business, details the specific risk, determines the likelihood and severity of each risk and lists the mitigation control measures in place.

I confirmed that the council has a valid insurance policy in place with Aviva which expires on 31 May 2026. The policy includes Public Liability and Employers Liability cover of £10 million each and an Internal Crime (Fidelity Guarantee) level of £250,000 which is low for a council of this size. The listed asset cover appears appropriate based on the items recorded on the council's asset register. **I recommend a review of the money cover with the insurers.**

## D. BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES

### **Internal audit requirement**

*The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.*

### **Audit findings**

I confirmed that full council approved the precept for the 2023/24 council year in its 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2022 meeting. Minute ref [C5489]

The Clerk and RFO confirmed that the 2023/24 budget setting process is underway, with deadlines achievable.

I note that there is a regular review of financial information in the Finance Committee and Council meetings, and this is evidenced by the supporting minutes. A review of the income and expenditure report as at the interim audition date shows the council expects to make a £58k surplus this year and is currently at 60% of its expenditure. (This is to be expected at month 7/8)

The council holds circa £366,312 in earmarked reserves, split in the main to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) £280k, Parks & Playgrounds £43k,

The council also holds circa £272k as a general reserve.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's guide states *'the generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure'* (para 5.33).

The general reserve balance is comfortably within this range.

## E. INCOME

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded, and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

Apart from the precept, the council receives income from a range of income streams, including but not limited to income from the café, hall and pavilion lettings, football pitch hires and allotments. A review of the nominal ledger report shows that income is recorded with sufficient narrative detail to identify the source and appears to have been allocated to the correct nominal code.

Council reviewed and agreed the annual fees and charges scale in their October 2023 meeting.

A review of the nominal ledger report and cashbooks shows income is clearly recorded with sufficient narrative description to identify the source.

## F. PETTY CASH

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

The council has no petty cash. This has been replaced with the use of a debit card for incidental expenditure along with some subscriptions payable by card. The card statement is reviewed and signed off by council regularly along with the bank reconciliations.

## G. PAYROLL

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.*

### **Audit findings**

The monthly payroll is processed in house, using Sage payroll package. Staff and councillor allowances are paid via bacs. I tested the tax calculation – there were no errors.

The council has fulfilled its obligations in respect of auto-enrolment and uses LGPS.

Monthly PAYE and NI deductions and returns have been submitted online, on time to HMRC. There were no errors recorded or late payments to HMRC during the financial year under review. **It was noted there is a miscellaneous credit of £280 from month 2. The RFO may want to investigate this with HMRC.**

All Council employees are paid through the payroll for all Council work undertaken. No employees are paid separately for any other Council work undertaken.

It was noted the back pay calculation has been prepared for 6 months instead of 7 – **this will need to be verified and approved for amendment in December 2023.**

## H. ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS

**Internal audit requirement**

*Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.*

**Audit findings**

To be tested at year end

Per regulation 14.6 *The Clerk/RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Fixed Assets Register is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets. An annual review is scheduled for the council year end.*

The council has PWLB borrowing these were tested against the PWLB statements at the year end.

**I. BANK AND CASH**

**Internal audit requirement**

*Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.*

**Audit findings**

*FR 2.2 On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by Full Council.*

Bank reconciliations are completed on a regular basis, independently checked, and presented to council meetings for review. I reviewed the reconciliations presented for the interim audit. I was able to confirm the balances to the bank statements and found no errors.

The council has an investment strategy, which will be published on the council website.

Due to the size of the council's budget, it does not qualify for the protection available under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) but has spread the risk anyway by holding accounts with different financial providers.



**J. YEAR END ACCOUNTS****Internal audit requirement**

*Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.*

**Audit findings****Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement**

	<b>Annual Governance Statement</b>	<i>'Yes', means that this authority</i>	<b>Suggested response based on evidence</b>
1	We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>	<b>YES</b> – accounts follow latest Accounts and Audit Regulations and practitioners guide recommendations.
2	We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>	<b>YES</b> – there is regular reporting of financial transactions and accounting summaries, offering the opportunity for scrutiny.
3	We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>	<b>YES</b> – The internal auditor identified weaknesses in the system– which are being addressed.
4	We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>	<b>YES</b> - the requirements and timescales for 2022/23 year-end were met
5	We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>	<b>YES</b> – the council has a risk management scheme and appropriate external insurance.
6	We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>	<b>YES</b> – the council has appointed an independent and competent internal auditor has completed two audits during the year.
7	We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>	<b>YES</b> – where matters are raised, action taken by council is recorded
8	We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and. Where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>	<b>YES</b> – no matters were raised during the internal audit visits.
9	Trust funds including charitable – In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability	<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole</i>	<b>N/A</b>

	responsibilities for the fund(s)/asset(s), including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	<i>managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>	
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### Section 2 – Accounting Statements

AGAR box number		2021/22	2022/23	Auditor notes
1	Balances brought forward	219,626	326,943	Agrees to 2021/22 carry forward (box 7)
2	Precept or rates and levies	428,088	464,794	Figure confirmed to central records
3	Total other receipts	<del>139,738</del> 142,222	115,417	Agrees to underlying records – prior year restated for debtors outstanding at the year end
4	Staff costs	<del>177,880</del> 184,387	189,040	Agrees to underlying records – prior year restated for staff costs understated And included in a prior year
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	47,141	47,141	Verified against PWLB records
6	All other payments	<del>227,143</del> 231,465	255,453	Agrees to underlying records
7	Balances carried forward	<del>335,288</del> 326,943	415,520	Casts correctly and agrees to balance sheet

8	Total value of cash and short-term investments	327,636	425,037	Agrees to bank reconciliation
9	Total fixed assets plus long-term investments and assets	2,466,295	2,480,033	Matches asset register
10	Total borrowings	638,455	608,634	Verified against PWLB records

For Local Councils Only		Yes	No	N/A	
11a	Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable)		✓		<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b	Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable)			✓	<i>The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

The year-end accounts have been correctly prepared on an income and expenditure basis with a box 7 and 8 reconciliation properly completed.

The AGAR correctly casts and cross casts and last year's comparatives match the figures submitted for 2021/22.

#### **K. LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW**

##### **Internal audit requirement**

*IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")*

##### **Audit findings**

The council did not certify itself exempt in 2022/23 due to exceeding the income and expenditure limits and this test does not apply.

**L: PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation*

**Audit findings**

The council's income and expenditure is in excess of £200,000 and as such it is required to follow the "Local Government Transparency Code 2015" which is recommended practice not a statutory requirement.

The 2015 Code requires local authorities in England to publish the following information quarterly:

Expenditure exceeding £500	Is published monthly
Government Procurement Card transactions	Council does not have this
Procurement information	Council does not have this

Additionally, local authorities are required to publish the following information annually:

Local Authority Land	This is on the finance tab of the website
Social Housing Assets	Council does not have this
Grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations	This is on the finance tab of the website
Organisational Chart	TBC
Trade union facility time	Council does not have this
Parking account	Council does not have this
Parking spaces	Council does not have this
Senior salaries	This is on the finance tab of the website
Constitution	This is on the finance tab of the website
Pay multiple	This is on the finance tab of the website
Fraud	Council does not have this

I recommend the council review the layout of the information and consider an alternative presentation to make it clearer and easier to locate. I suggest a review of the Salisbury City Council website as good practice.

<https://salisburycitycouncil.gov.uk/our-council/about-your-council/transparency-code/>

All councils are required to follow The Accounts and Audit Regulations which include the following requirements:

**13(1)** An authority must publish (which must include publication on that authority's website)

- (a) the Statement of Accounts together with any certificate or opinion entered by the local auditor in accordance with section 20(2) of the Act; and
- (b) the Annual Governance Statement approved in accordance with regulation 6(3)

**13(2)** Where documents are published under paragraph (1), the authority must

- (a) keep copies of those documents for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum; and
- (b) ensure that those documents remain available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which those documents were first published in accordance with that paragraph.

I was able to confirm that pages 4 (Annual Governance Statement), 5 (Accounting Statements) and 6 (External Auditor's Report and Certificate) of the AGAR are available for review on the council website for the last five years.

**M: EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS - INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority, during the previous year (2022-23) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set*

**Audit findings**

Inspection – key dates	2022/23 Actual
Date AGAR signed by council	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Date inspection notice issued	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Inspection period begins	3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2023
Inspection period ends	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Correct length (30 working days)	Yes
Common period included (first 10 working days of July)	Yes

**Audit findings**

I was able to confirm that the inspection requirements for 2022/23 have been met and the Notice of Public Rights is published on the council website.

**N: PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23. Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website / webpage.*

*Before 1 July 2023 authorities must publish:*

- *Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited*
- *Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2022/23, approved and signed, page 4*
- *Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2022/23, approved and signed, page 5*

*Not later than 30 September 2023 authorities must publish:*

- *Notice of conclusion of audit*
- *Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate*
- *Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.*

*It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.*

**Audit findings**

I was able to confirm that the publication requirements for 2022/23 have been met and the Notice of Public Rights is published on the council website.

**O. TRUSTEESHIP****Internal audit requirement**

*Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.*

**Audit findings**

The council has no trusts. This test does not apply.

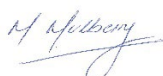
**Achievement of control assertions at interim audit date**

Based on the tests conducted during the interim audit, our conclusions on the achievement of the internal control objectives are summarised in the table below. A further review and update of this opinion will be conducted at the final audit.

	<b>INTERNAL CONTROL OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NOT COVERED</b>
A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year	✓		
B	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for	✓		
C	This authority assesses the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these	✓		
D	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for	✓		
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for			✓ None
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			✓ Test at final
I	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K	If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			✓
L	The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements	✓		
M	The authority, during the previous year (2022-23) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	✓		
N	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR.	✓		
O	Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Mark Mulberry**  
For Mulberry & Co

## Interim audit 2024 – audit points

Audit Point	Audit Findings	Council comments
<b>Books of account</b>	it was noted that there were instances of income being netted off against expenditure especially in code 4230 Utilities. I remind council that income and expenditure must be shown gross. <b>I recommend journals are posted to correct this.</b>	
<b>Bank reconciliation</b>	The council is performing a regular reconciliation which in the past has been fully signed off in accordance with regulations; however, it is noted some of the later reconciliation documents have not been signed, although the “audit pack” to which they were attached was. <b>I recommend the council review the wording of this regulation and update day to practice as necessary.</b>	
<b>Financial regulations</b>	<p><i>Typo 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 15.2 (should be 14.2)</i></p> <p><i>Typo FR 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment, (per Regulation 18 [should be 17]), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.</i></p>	
<b>Insurance</b>	(Fidelity Guarantee) level of £250,000 which is low for a council of this size. The listed asset cover appears appropriate based on the items recorded on the council’s asset register. <b>I recommend a review of the money cover with the insurers.</b>	
<b>Payroll</b>	<p>It was noted there is a miscellaneous credit of £280 from month 2. The RFO may want to investigate this with HMRC.</p> <p>It was noted the back pay calculation has been prepared for 6 months instead of 7 – <b>this will need to be verified and approved for amendment in December 2023.</b></p>	
<b>Transparency</b>	<p><b>I recommend the council review the layout of the information</b> and consider and alternative presentation to make it clearer and easier to locate. I suggest a review of the Salisbury City Council website as good practice.</p> <p><a href="https://salisburycitycouncil.gov.uk/our-council/about-your-council/transparency-code/">https://salisburycitycouncil.gov.uk/our-council/about-your-council/transparency-code/</a></p>	

Audit Point	Audit Findings	Council Action
<b>Books of account</b>	<p>it was noted that there were instances of income being netted off against expenditure especially in code 4230 Utilities. I remind council that income and expenditure must be shown gross. <b>I recommend journals are posted to correct this.</b></p>	<p>We have journaled to correct code and ensure that utilities income is correctly coded in future.</p>
<b>Bank reconciliation</b>	<p>The council is performing a regular reconciliation which in the past has been fully signed off in accordance with regulations; however, it is noted some of the later reconciliation documents have not been signed, although the “audit pack” to which they were attached was. <b>I recommend the council review the wording of this regulation and update day to practice as necessary.</b></p>	<p>We have amended our Councillor Guidance Audit Sheet to give more clarity regarding the good practice of signing both the bank reconciliation sheet and the bank statements. We anticipate achieving this good practice in future</p>
<b>Financial regulations</b>	<p><i>Typo 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 15.2 (should be 14.2)</i></p> <p><i>Typo FR 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment, (per Regulation 18 [should be 17]), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.</i></p>	<p>We have corrected the typos.</p>
<b>Insurance</b>	<p>(Fidelity Guarantee) level of £250,000 which is low for a council of this size. The listed asset cover appears appropriate based on the items recorded on the council’s asset register. <b>I recommend a review of the money cover with the insurers.</b></p>	<p>We are in touch with our brokers to review as suggested</p>
<b>Payroll</b>	<p>It was noted there is a miscellaneous credit of £280 from month 2. The RFO may want to investigate this with HMRC.</p> <p>It was noted the back pay calculation has been prepared for 6 months instead of 7 – <b>this will need to be</b></p>	<p>RFO investigated HMRC anomaly and identified overpayment made in April 2023. To be considered for next pay run and credit to be recovered.</p> <p>Payroll to be corrected in December with one</p>

**verified and approved for amendment in December 2023.**

additional month back pay to be paid with the December pay

**Transparency**

**I recommend the council review the layout of the information** and consider an alternative presentation to make it clearer and easier to locate. I suggest a review of the Salisbury City Council website as good practice.

Comments taken into consideration and website to be reviewed.

<https://salburycitycouncil.gov.uk/our-council/about-your-council/transparency->



<b>Precept 2024/25</b>							
		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Projection</b>	
		<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Expenditure/Income</b>							
F&GP Expenditure		346,450		428,741	444,659	461,371	
F&GP Income		-13,000		-19,800	-18,600	-18,200	
Leisure & Amenities Expenditure		183,336		180,047	0	0	
Leisure & Amenities Income		-45,383		-46,756	-46,756	-46,756	
Full Council, Grants, Loans etc		37,346		37,346	37,549	37,757	
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>508,749</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>579,578</b>	<b>416,851</b>	<b>434,172</b>	
Net Expenditure		508,749		579,578	416,851	434,172	
Earmarked Funds requirement (below)		35,000		70,000	30,000	30,000	
Total Expenditure		<b>543,749</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>649,578</b>	<b>446,851</b>	<b>464,172</b>	
Council Tax Support Grant		0		0	0	0	
Double Taxation Grant		-43,733		-45,482	-47,301	-49,193	
CIL							
General Reserve funds(- used /+increased)		25,000		-40,000	10,000	20,000	
		525,016	0	564,096	409,550	434,979	
<b>Precept requirement</b>		<b>525,016</b>		<b>564,096</b>	<b>409,550</b>	<b>434,979</b>	
<b>Summary 2023/24</b>		<b>(Band D Parish Element of Council Tax)</b>					
						<b>Tax</b>	
<b>No of Households 2024</b>	11,186.20		24/25			<b>50.43</b>	
<b>No of Households 2023</b>	10,991.72		23/24			<b>47.76</b>	
<b>Increase in no of households</b>	194	<b>Annual Increase per household</b>				<b>2.67</b>	
						<b>% increase</b>	<b>5.59</b>
<b>Predicted Movements on Reserves</b>	<b>1.4.23</b>	23/24	23/24			<b>1.4.24</b>	
		movements	spend	earmark			
<b>General fund</b>	233,631					233,631	
predicted underspend 23/24						40,000	
						233,631	
<b>Earmarked Funds</b>		<b>movement 23/24</b>	<b>earmark 23/24</b>	<b>bal</b>			
CIL	59,493	-16,717		42,776			
Election Contingency	20,000	-20,000		0			Pay for May 23 Election
Edmonds Hall	20,000	-20,000		0			Move to Office Expansio
Parks and Playgrounds	43,560	-23,560		20,000	40,000		Yr 1 of a 3 yr plan to fun
Office Expansion and Sustainability		20,000		50,000	70,000		
CIL SIP (2) - 17 Allotment Resurface					35,806		
CIL SIP (2) - 18 Office Expansion					106,000		Second tranche to be pa
CIL SIP (2) - 19 MC Playground					70,000		
CIL SIP (2) - 20 Horley Rec Perimeter					28,170		
sub total	143,053	-60,277	0	70,000	392,752		
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>143,053</b>	<b>-60,277</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>626,383</b>		

Draft Precept 2024/25 Working Doc Scenario B

<b>Precept 2024/25</b>								
				<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Projection</b>
				2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
				£	£	£	£	£
<b>Expenditure/Income</b>								
F&GP Expenditure				346,450		428,741	444,659	461,371
F&GP Income				-13,000		-19,800	-18,600	-18,200
Leisure & Amenities Expenditure				183,336		180,047	0	0
Leisure & Amenities Income				-45,383		-46,756	-46,756	-46,756
Full Council, Grants, Loans etc				37,346		37,346	37,549	37,757
<b>Net Expenditure</b>				<b>508,749</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>579,578</b>	<b>416,851</b>	<b>434,172</b>
Net Expenditure				508,749		579,578	416,851	434,172
Earmarked Funds requirement (below)				35,000		110,000	30,000	30,000
Total Expenditure				543,749	0	689,578	446,851	464,172
Council Tax Support Grant				0		0	0	0
Double Taxation Grant				-43,733		-45,482	-47,301	-49,193
CIL								
General Reserve funds(- used /+increased)				25,000		-40,000	10,000	20,000
				525,016	0	604,096	409,550	434,979
<b>Precept requirement</b>				<b>525,016</b>		<b>604,096</b>	<b>409,550</b>	<b>434,979</b>
<b>Summary 2023/24</b>			(Band D Parish Element of Council Tax)					
								Tax
No of Households 2024	11,186.20				24/25			<b>54.00</b>
No of Households 2023	10,991.72				23/24			<b>47.76</b>
Increase in no of households	194		Annual Increase per household					<b>6.24</b>
								<b>13.07</b>
<b>Predicted Movements on Reserves</b>	<b>1.4.23</b>		23/24	23/24				<b>1.4.24</b>
			movements	spend	earmark			
<b>General fund</b>	233,631							<b>233,631</b>
predicted underspend 23/24								40,000
								233,631
<b>Earmarked Funds</b>			movement 23/24		earmark 23/24			bal
CIL	59,493		-16,717					42,776
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sub total	143,053		-60,277	0	110,000		432,752	
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>143,053</b>		<b>-60,277</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>110,000</b>		<b>666,383</b>	

Precept 2024/25									
				<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Projection</b>	
				2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
				£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Expenditure/Income</b>									
F&GP Expenditure				346,450		428,741	444,659	461,371	
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Double Taxation Grant				-43,733		-45,482	-47,301	-49,193	
CIL									
General Reserve funds(- used /+increased)				25,000		-40,000	10,000	20,000	
				525,016	0	634,096	409,550	434,979	
<b>Precept requirement</b>				<b>525,016</b>		<b>634,096</b>	<b>409,550</b>	<b>434,979</b>	
<b>Summary 2023/24</b>		(Band D Parish Element of Council Tax)							
						Tax			
No of Households 2024	11,186.20			24/25		<b>56.69</b>			
No of Households 2023	10,991.72			23/24		<b>47.76</b>			
Increase in no of households	194			Annual Increase per household		<b>8.93</b>			
				% increase		<b>18.69</b>			
<b>Predicted Movements on Reserves</b>	<b>1.4.23</b>	23/24	23/24			<b>1.4.24</b>			
		movements	spend		earmark				
<b>General fund</b>	233,631					233,631			
predicted underspend 23/24						40,000			
						233,631			
<b>Earmarked Funds</b>		movement 23/24			earmark 23/24	bal			
CIL	59,493	-16,717				42,776			
Election Contingency	20,000	-20,000			10,000	10,000		Pay for May 23 Election	
Edmonds Hall	20,000	-20,000				0		Move to Office Expansion	
Parks and Playgrounds	43,560	-23,560			30,000	50,000		Yr 1 of a 3 yr plan to fund	
Office Expansion and Sustainability		20,000			100,000	120,000			
CIL SIP (2) - 17 Allotment Resurface						35,806			
CIL SIP (2) - 18 Office Expansion						106,000		Second tranche to be paid	
CIL SIP (2) - 19 MC Playground						70,000			
CIL SIP (2) - 20 Horley Rec Perimeter						28,170			
sub total	143,053	-60,277	0	140,000		462,752			
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>143,053</b>	<b>-60,277</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>140,000</b>		<b>696,383</b>			

Zero Hour is the campaign for the Climate and Ecology Bill (formerly the CEE Bill) – a plan for a new UK law that addresses the full extent of the climate and nature crisis. The Bill currently before parliament is due its second reading on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

The Bill which was first introduced in Parliament by Caroline Lucas MP in September 2020 now has the backing of over 150 parliamentarians representing all major political parties.

### **Key proposals**

The Bill if it became law, would ensure that the UK government:

- Creates a joined-up plan—the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined, requiring a plan that considers both together.
- Cuts emissions in line with the Paris agreement —ensuring UK emissions are reduced rapidly, for the best chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C.
- Not only halts, but also reverses the decline in nature—setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030 as agreed at COP15.
- Takes responsibility for our overseas footprint—both emissions and ecological.
- Prioritises nature in decision-making, and ends fossil fuel production and imports as rapidly as possible.
- Ensures no-one is left behind—through fairness provisions.
- Involves the public—giving people a say in finding a fair way forward through a Climate & Nature Assembly, an essential tool for bringing the public along with the unprecedented pace of change required.

### **What is asked of the Council?**

- That the Council support the bill. A copy of their draft motion to Council can be found in ANNEX ONE below or at [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bFpuOJtgI2\\_Avr2qyRpv3T5NqX1IstC2Npzd\\_d-MJNA/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bFpuOJtgI2_Avr2qyRpv3T5NqX1IstC2Npzd_d-MJNA/edit)
- Write to the local MP asking them to support the bill in parliament. A copy of the letter to the MP can be found in ANNEX TWO below or at <https://www.zerohour.uk/write-to-your-mp/>

### **Zero Hour Supporters**

Zero Hour claims to have 1120 supporters which includes:

Over 240 Local Councils details can be found at <https://www.zerohour.uk/councils/> ;

Other supporters are: the Climate Coalition; Oxfam; Greenpeace; The Co-operative bank; Lush; The Body shop; The Countryside Charity; The Wildlife Trusts; A full list can be found at <https://www.zerohour.uk/supporters/> .

## ANNEX ONE – Draft Climate & Ecology Bill motion For Council

### ***Preamble***

Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt in the UK, and around the world. The global temperature has already increased by 1.2°C above pre-industrial levels and—alongside this—the natural world has reached crisis point, with [28% of plants and animals](#) threatened with extinction. In fact, the UK is [one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world](#) as more than one in seven of our plants and animals face extinction, and more than 40% are in decline.

Climate change remains a major concern for voters with 66% of people (according to YouGov) expressing they are ‘worried about climate change and its effects’. Alongside this, the popularity of Sir David Attenborough’s *Save Our Wild Isles* initiative demonstrates public concern that UK wildlife is being destroyed at terrifying speed.

### ***Climate & Ecology Bill***

The Climate & Ecology Bill, a private member’s bill currently before the House of Commons, seeks to address the challenges that this situation poses by creating a whole-of-government approach to deliver a net zero and nature positive future.

Based on the latest science, the Bill aims to align current UK environmental policy with the need to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030, which was goal agreed to at COP15, via the [Kunming-Montreal Framework](#) (22 December 2022); and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with a fair share of the remaining global carbon budget to give the strongest chance of limiting global heating to 1.5C, which was the goal agreed to at COP21, via the [Paris Agreement](#) (12 December 2015).

By bridging the gap between the UK Government’s current delivery, and what has been agreed at international levels, Britain has a chance to be a world leader on the environment; seizing the opportunities of the clean energy transition, including green jobs and reduced energy bills; and boosting the UK’s food and energy security.

**[Council]** notes that:

The [Climate and Ecology Bill](#), which has been introduced in the UK Parliament on four occasions since 2020, including most recently in the House of Commons 10 May 2023. The Bill is backed by **[168]** cross-party MPs and Peers, **[237]** local authorities, alongside the support of eminent scientists, such as Sir David King; environmental NGOs, such as The Wildlife Trusts and CPRE; businesses, such as The Co-operative Bank; and 30,000 members of the public.

The Bill would require the UK Government to develop and deliver a new environmental strategy, which would include:

1. Delivering a joined-up environmental plan, as the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined, requiring a plan that considers both together;
2. Reducing emissions in line with 1.5°C, ensure emissions are reduced rapidly, for the best chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C;
3. Not only halting, but also reversing the decline in nature, setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030;

4. Taking responsibility for our overseas footprint, both emissions and ecological;
5. Prioritising nature in decision-making, and ending fossil fuel production and imports as rapidly as possible;
6. Ensuring that no-one is left behind, by providing for retraining for people currently working in fossil fuel industries; and
7. Giving people a say in finding a fair way forward through an independent and temporary *Climate & Nature Assembly*, representative of the UK population, an essential tool for bringing public opinion along with the unprecedented pace of change required.

**[Council]** therefore resolves to:

1. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;
2. Inform local residents, and local press/media of this decision;
3. Write to **[local MPs' names]** to inform them that this motion has been passed, urging them to sign up to support the CE Bill, or thanking them for already doing so;
4. Write to [Zero Hour](https://www.zerohour.org.uk), the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the CE Bill, expressing its support ([campaign@zerohour.org.uk](mailto:campaign@zerohour.org.uk)).

## **ANNEX TWO - DRAFT LETTER TO MP**

As one of your constituents, I'm writing about a vitally important matter—the need to ensure that the UK has the strongest laws in place to reverse the destruction of nature, and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5°C. Two key targets that are essential to the UK's future.

Specifically, I'm writing to ask if you will support the Climate & Ecology Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 10 May. It is a vital, new, cross-party proposal—drafted by world-leading scientists—to ensure that the UK plays its full role in tackling biodiversity loss and climate change.

Though the UK has a record of environmental legislation, from the Climate Change Act 2008 to the 2050 Target Amendment Order 2019, there is a gap between what is currently being delivered—and what the Government needs to do to act in line with the latest science.

The Climate and Ecology Bill, or CE Bill, would:

- 1) Provide a clear, joined-up plan—as the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined, requiring a plan that considers both together.
- 2) Reduce UK emissions in line with the Paris Agreement—ensuring that UK emissions are reduced rapidly, for the best chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C.
- 3) Halt and reverse the decline in nature—setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030, as agreed at COP15.
- 4) Ensure that the UK takes responsibility for our overseas footprint—both emissions and ecological.
- 5) Involve the public—giving people a say in finding a fair way forward through a 'climate and nature assembly'.

Thank you for considering your support for the CE Bill. I look forward to hearing from you, and if possible, please copy [parliament@zerohour.uk](mailto:parliament@zerohour.uk) in your reply.