

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Horley Town Council held virtually  
on Tuesday 2 March 2021 at 7.30 pm.

## Present

### Cllrs

David Powell (Chairman)

Samantha Marshall (Vice Chairman)

Hannah Avery

Jante Baird

James Baker

Jordan Beech

Giorgio Buttironi

Mike George

Jerry Hudson

Adrian Kitajewski

Helen Kitajewski

Robert Marr

Simon Marshall

Wayne Phillips

Martin Saunders

Rob Spencer

Fiona Stimpson

## In Attendance

J Walsh (Town Clerk)

J Morgan (Responsible Financial Officer {RFO})

C Fenton (Head of Leisure & Deputy Clerk)

One member of the public

*Prior to the start of the meeting, a minute's silence was held in memory of former Town Councillor & Town Council Chairman, Gordon McGinty, who sadly passed away in January. Cllr Simon Marshall reflected on Gordon McGinty's contribution both to the Town Council and the town of Horley. Members of Gordon McGinty's family thanked the Town Council for remembering Gordon at this meeting and the Chairman thanked the family members for their attendance.*

### Virtual Meeting

C 5084

**RESOLVED:** that in view of the COVID-19 lockdown period, this Full Council meeting be held virtually.

C 5085

### Apologies and Reasons for Absence

There were no apologies for absence and no absences by any member.

**RESOLVED:** noted.

C 5086

### Public Forum

A member of the public posed some financial questions about the Town Council's accounting procedures and final Café costs. The member of public was asked to put their questions in writing, as neither matter was on the agenda of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** noted.

C 5087

### Ordinary Meeting of the Council, 15 December 2020

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 15 December 2020, including all confidential items, be approved.

C 5088

### Full Council Updates - Café in the Park, Horley Recreation Ground

The Town Clerk reported that, subject to there being no change to the Government's Roadmap out of Lockdown, the Café was due to be open for takeaways and outdoor

**C 5088)** dining from 12 April. It was planned to have an official opening of both the Café and the refurbished tennis courts later in the year, again subject to the Government's Roadmap not changing.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5089** **Committee Reports**

**RESOLVED: that the following reports be received:**

- i) Approved Minutes of the Planning & Development Committee held on 8 December 2020 and 12 January 2021.**
- ii) Unapproved Minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on 19 January 2021.**
- iii) Unapproved Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 2 February 2021.**
- iv) Unapproved Minutes of the Planning & Development Committee held on 16 February 2021.**

**C 5090** **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman reported that he had not attended any recent events. He made members aware the Sleep Easy event being planned by the YMCA East Surrey to highlight the plight of young people without living accommodation.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5091** **Joint Meeting with Borough & County Councillors, 19 February 2021**

The Town Clerk updated Members on the recent joint meeting she had attended with divisional member, County Cllr Kay Hammond, along with Cllr Mike George and Borough Cllr Richard Biggs. Updates had been shared regarding each Council's handling of the Covid-19 Pandemic, as well as progress made on Surrey's vaccination programme. It was noted that both SCC and RBBC had set their draft budgets for 2021/2022, with a Council Tax increase of 2.49% for SCC and 1.99% for RBBC. There had been some discussion about projects in Horley which had been posted on the SCC Commonplace Map as part of the Surrey Community Projects Fund (Your Fund Surrey). These included the HTC proposal for a new community centre in the Michael Crescent Centenary Park, the Horley Commercial Hub and various 3G sports pitches. A note of thanks had been recorded to the Borough Council's Horley Community Development Worker for setting up the Horley Food Club at Regent House, which was currently supporting 55 local families.

The Town Clerk added that this was the last of these meetings to be attended by Cllr Kay Hammond, as she was standing down from public office in May. She recorded her thanks for the strong support given by Kay to the Town Council over many years. It was noted that the next joint meeting would be held after the May Elections. (The notes of the joint meeting are appended to these minutes).

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5092** **Horley Town Council & Reigate and Banstead Liaison Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held virtually on 24 March 2021 and chaired by the Borough Leader, Cllr Mark Brunt.

C 5092) **RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5093 Residents Forum Meeting, 27 January 2021**

Members were updated on the first virtual Residents' Forum meeting, which had been very well attended by over forty residents. (Notes of the meeting are appended to these minutes.) The next meeting would be held sometime after the May Elections and it was agreed that consideration be given to inviting some representatives of Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5094 Internal Control Review 20/2021**

Members considered the annual review of the effectiveness of the Town Council's system of internal control & management of risk. The RFO confirmed that all current financial practices had been reflected in the Review.

**RESOLVED: that the Internal Control Review 2020/2021, as appended to these minutes, be approved.**

**Risk Assessment and Management**

**C 5095 RESOLVED: that the Risk Assessment and Management Paper 2020/2021, as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee be approved.**

**C 5096 RESOLVED: that the appointment of the Town Clerk as the named Data Protection Officer, as identified in the Paper be approved.**

**HTC Annual Audit for the year ended 31 March 2020**

**C 5097** It was noted that the audit had been completed and was unqualified, with no Issues Arising requiring any action.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5098 RESOLVED: that the Final External Auditor Report and Certificate for 2019/2020 be received. (A copy is appended.)**

**C 5099 RESOLVED: that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2020 be approved. (A copy is appended.)**

**C 5100 RESOLVED: that thanks be recorded to the RFO and other staff for their hard work in preparing the accounts.**

**Council Meetings**

**C 5101** The Clerk advised that the current Government Regulations permitting Council Meetings to be held remotely were due to expire on 7 May and were unlikely to be extended (subsequently confirmed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government on 25 March 2021). Further details on the holding of public meetings beyond this date would be provided by the Town Council in due course.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5101) (Afternote: as a result of this decision, it was resolved at the Finance Meeting on 30 March to bring the Annual Meeting forward to 4 May 2021.)**

**C 5102** ***RESOLVED: that the Cycle of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2020/2021, as appended to these minutes and taking account of the revised date for the 2021 Annual Meeting, be approved.***

**C 5103** **Notice of Vacancy – Office of Town Councillor, Horley West Ward**

The Town Clerk advised that, following the recent resignation of Town Cllr Ganesh Kumar, there had been no request for an election, so the Town Council was able to co-opt a person to fill the vacancy as soon as practicable. After some discussion, the following was resolved:

***RESOLVED: that the Vacancy on Horley Town Council (Horley West Ward) be filled by co-option at the Annual Meeting on the revised date of 4 May 2021.***

**C 5104** **Horley Town Meeting, 30 April 2021 (Virtual Meeting)**

The Town Clerk updated members on arrangements for this year's virtual Town Meeting. The accounts of Smiths Charity would be presented and it was hoped that representatives of St Bart's Church would be in attendance to give a brief presentation. Updates would be given on plans for this year's "In Bloom" and Photographic competitions, as well as highlighting the winners of last year's spectacular photographic competition. The Environment Working Group would also give a presentation on their recent work, together with updates on their future plans. It was agreed that the meeting would start at 7.00 pm.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

**C 5105** **Councillor Profiles**

***RESOLVED: that the proposal from Cllr Baker that members, should they wish to, add a personal summary to their website profile, be approved.***

**C 5106** **Horley Town Council Communications and Social Media Policy**

***RESOLVED: that the Policy, as reviewed by the Communications Sub-Committee, be approved. (A copy is appended.)***

**C 5107** **Home Working Policy**

***RESOLVED: that the Home Working Policy be approved. (A copy is appended.)***

**C 5108** **HTC Town Plan Projects (Your Fund Surrey)**

The Town Clerk updated members on recent actions taken. She explained that having posted proposals on the SCC Commonplace Map for a new community centre in the Michael Crescent Centenary Park, the proposal had now been submitted to the SCC Ideas Submission Portal. Projects meeting the criteria of delivering a positive benefit for local people would be taken through an application process. It was anticipated that the first "Your Fund" funding would be administered in the Summer of this year.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

**C 5109** The Town Clerk confirmed that smaller projects such as the refurbishment of the changing rooms at the Innes Pavilion would be submitted in due course, once the outcome of the Michael Crescent submission was known.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5110 Grant Application from St Bartholomew's Church**

Members considered an application from St Bart's Church for funding towards the maintenance of the New Churchyard. The Head of Leisure outlined the application and explained that the Town Council regularly made an annual contribution towards the maintenance of the New Churchyard at St Bart's Church, the Old Churchyard having been closed in recent years and its maintenance transferred to Reigate & Banstead Borough Council. (A copy of the Presentation made by St Bart's Church is appended.) The Head of Leisure explained that she was a member of the Churchyards Committee, along with Cllrs George and Powell, and regularly attended meetings, so was fully aware of how any ongoing funding would be spent. It was noted that £6,550 had been included in the HTC 2021/2022 budget figures for the Churchyard Maintenance Grant.

Following further discussion, Cllr Kitajewski proposed and Cllr Baird seconded that a grant of £6,550 be awarded to St Bart's Church for the financial year 2021/2022. (Thanks for the grant were subsequently received from the Church.)

**RESOLVED: that a grant of £6,550 be awarded to St Bartholomew's Church towards the maintenance of the New Churchyard for the Financial Year 2021/2022.**

**C 5111 Reigate & Banstead Community Centres Consultation**

Members considered their response to the RBBC Consultation, in respect of the Regent House Community Centre. The Clerk explained that, having taken over the operation of the three Borough Community Centres from Staywell, RBBC was now seeking views on how the community centres could best meet the needs of their local communities. Members put forward suggestions as to how services at Regent House might be improved, as well as the image of the Centre within the community. It was noted that RBBC planned to provide HTC with an update on the outcomes of the consultation and details would be provided in due course.

**RESOLVED: that the Clerk respond to the Consultation, giving suggestions as to how services at Regent House might be improved for the whole community. (A copy of the Town Council's response is appended.)**

**C 5112 Horley Community Partnership**

Cllr George reported on the recent Horley Network meeting and explained that these meetings were being held quarterly at the present time. There had been updates given on the Borough's Food Banks and newly established Food Clubs, as well as the Borough's pilot project to combat winter fuel poverty. It was noted that YMCA East Surrey had taken on a five-year lease of the Horley Young People's and Family Centre

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5113 Level Up Reigate & Banstead**

Cllr Saunders updated members on the Level Up Project, which was continuing to

**C 5113)** provide refurbished laptops to local schools and disadvantaged families. He explained that Level Up Horley had now been integrated with Level Up Reigate & Banstead to become a partnership project being delivered by Raven Housing Trust with support from Voluntary Action Reigate & Banstead (VARB). To date over 600 laptops had been donated, with the target being 800.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5114** **HTC Environment Group**

It was noted that discussions were ongoing regarding sources of funding for the proposed Horley Commercial Hub project. The Environment Survey for younger generations, including children was in the process of being finalised. Cllr Saunders said that he was currently researching solar panels and battery storage and Government grants which might be available. He was exploring how HTC and local residents might be able to use these flexible tariffs.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5115** **Other Environment Matters**

It was noted that community litter collections were increasing in Horley, with a high demand for litter pickers and the RBBC purple litter sacks, both of which were being regularly collected from the Town Council Offices.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5116** **Leisure Updates**

The Head of Leisure gave a brief update on leisure matters. She explained that, in line with the Government Roadmap out of Lockdown, outdoor sports facilities would re-open from 29 March. The Tennis Courts would be unlocked and closure signs and banners removed from the skate park, MUGA and outdoor fitness equipment. League Football was due to resume at Court Lodge the weekend after this, along with the community tennis coaching at Horley Rec. Provisional approval had been given to Silent Summer Screenings to bring their Open-Air Cinema to Horley Rec in August, although this would of course be subject to any Government restrictions which may be in place at the time.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5117** **Letters Received**

The Head of Leisure reported that the family of Town Councillor Linda Mabbett had been in contact about placing a memorial plaque on a bench outside Horley Boots, which had been Linda's place of work. She explained to newer members of the Council that Linda had been a Town Councillor who sadly passed away in 2019. Reigate & Banstead officers were happy for the plaque to be placed there and Bennetts would install the plaque once it was ready.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 5118**      **Diary Dates**

***RESOLVED: that future dates be noted, including the Aldi presentation on 9 March and Town Meeting on 30 April.***

**C 5119**      **Confidential Business**

***RESOLVED: that, "in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw."***

**C 5120**      **Staffing Matters**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Members received a report of the Staff Committee meeting held on 23 February 2021.

**C 5121**      **Town Award Nomination**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Members approved the Town Award nomination.

**Meeting closed at 9.18 pm**

**Date of next meeting: 4 May 2021 (Revised Date for Annual Meeting)**

**Notes of Joint Meeting: SCC / RBBC / HTC**  
**Held virtually on 19 February 2021, at 3.00 pm**

**Present:** Cllr Kay Hammond (KH)  
Cllr Richard Biggs (RB)  
Cllr Mike George (MG)  
Joan Walsh (JW)

**Not Present:** Cllr Graham Knight (GK)

**Apologies:** Cllr David Powell (DP)

**1. Review of the previous SCC/RBBC/HTC Joint Meeting notes (held on 4 December 2021)**  
Agreed as an accurate record and no actions were made.

**2. (i) Covid-19 Impact – Council Activities**

**SCC:**

KH gave the following update:

- SCC continued to work closely with [Surrey's Local Resilience Forum](#) partners, managing the effects of the Pandemic as an ongoing major incident.
- The vaccination programme through [Surrey Heartlands](#) was well underway and had exceeded anticipated initial targets as more supplies became available. The programme is being rolled out to [local centres](#) with vaccinations running in many community locations, including Centenary Hall, Horley.
- SCC had set its draft budget for 2021/22, outlining how its secure financial position will guide Surrey through the pandemic and invest in recovery due to prudent management over the past three years. The proposed Council Tax increase of 2.49% is half the amount permitted by Government and is much less than that planned by other authorities nationally.

**RBBC:**

RB gave the following update:

- RBBC had set its draft budget for 2021/22 with a proposed Council Tax increase of 1.99% and maintained a good financial position with a slight tap into its reserves to deal with the Covid-19 response.
- Community and welfare support was available for residents struggling to manage as well as access to Food Bank Schemes through the Voluntary Action Group.
- The Community Development Team is delivering a Pilot Scheme to help families living in fuel poverty with the provision of fuel payment top-ups through a simple application process.



- Information on business grants had been made available to assist with temporary loss of revenue with specific help from Covid Support Officers recruited through Central Government funding to provide maximum support and advice.

#### **HTC:**

MG/JW gave the following update:

- The Town Council Precept was set with an increase of 4.56% which is lower than the previous year.
- The financial impact would affect future planned projects identified in the HTC's five year Town Plan but three business grants so far had been received from RBBC to help cover lost income during the pandemic.
- The Council had increased its Council Grants Scheme to be able to support local community projects in the shorter term.
- HTC's parks and playgrounds remained open in line with Government guidelines but the tennis courts would remain closed until safe to reopen.
- Regrettably, the popular Horley Carnival had to be cancelled for another year.

It was noted that all three Councils continued to follow best practice during the pandemic by working remotely and Council meetings being convened in a virtual setting as permitted under the regulations currently in place until 7 May 2021. Government guidance continued to be followed in regard to the use of community buildings, parks, playgrounds, play equipment and open spaces.

### **3. SCC Community Projects Fund ('Your Fund Surrey')**

JW explained that HTC had posted the proposal for Michael Crescent to be redeveloped with a new Community Centre on the SCC Commonplace Map and the Horley Commercial Hub had also been posted as a partnership project. The Q&A sessions offered by the SCC Fund Managers had been very informative, providing information on the application process at each stage. Since there was a requirement for applicants to demonstrate applications for funding having been made through other sources with funding being granted to put towards the project, HTC was following up on this with organisations such as the National Lottery. KH suggested that the Gatwick Airport Community Trust (GACT) could also be approached for partial funding and the organisation had extended the deadline for receipt of deadlines this year to 21 May 2021. There was also potential for larger grants to be given consideration.

It was further noted that additional Horley projects had been posted by other organisations for new 3G sports pitches. RB advised that RBBC were consulting with Horley Hockey Club after being informed that 3G AstroTurf pitches were not suitable for this sport. Borough Councillors were supporting the need to identify a suitable facility for Hockey in Horley, since Crawley was the nearest venue at the present time. The proposal was later endorsed by Claire Coutinho MP, who had received numerous letters for a Hockey Club in Horley as it was becoming an increasingly popular sport and should therefore receive strong support as a youth commitment.

#### 4. Highways Matters

The latest highways issues were noted, as follows:

- **Massetts Road – Potholes: - Part of resurfacing programme for 2021**  
HTC Ward Councillors wrote to Cllr Matt Furniss (SCC Cabinet Member for Transport) expressing their concerns about the very poor state of the road and attaching photographic evidence. Cllr Furniss had replied, stating that the road was inspected again in December 2020 and any defects would be rectified in due course.
- **Ringley Avenue - Pavement Flooding: - Possible fix 2021**  
The location was recently inspected and the SCC Highways Officer had put in a proposal for two new carriageway gullies to be installed. It was estimated that the proposed improvement works would take 4-5 days to complete and would be programmed into general works to be undertaken during the next financial year.
- **Junction of Lumley Road & A23 - Pavement Flooding**  
SCC had cleared the blocked gully of leaf debris which had worked well and resolved the problem of pavement flooding at the location.
- **Junction of Victoria Rd and A23 on side of road OPPOSITE to Air Balloon- Pavement Flooding**  
SCC Highways investigated the problem and found that the first two road gullies on the left towards Victoria Road via Brighton Road clearly needed jet cleaning. The gullies were not included on SCC's current system of works and therefore had not been cleaned out for some time. These would, however, be added to the next cycle of jet cleaning by RBBC scheduled in the month of February 2021 and would be included for regular maintenance in the future.
- **Oakwood & Langshott Schools: Resident request for wooden bollards to deter parking on grass verges**  
The resident had been updated on several possible options to pursue, including a request be submitted for the Reigate and Banstead Parking Review to be considered by the Local Committee in June 2022. Another option would be make an application through the [SCC Safer Routes to School Scheme](#) or to investigate the possibility of getting assistance from the SCC Members' Allocation Fund.
- **Consort Way Pavement Defects: Trip Hazard**  
HTC had received several complaints from residents and this was clearly a serious trip hazard. HTC had contacted the landowner who had engaged a contractor to deal with the underground tree routes which were pushing the paving upwards. As there was a TPO on the tree, the Tree Officer advised that the contractor needed to submit a planning application to RBBC to have the remedial works approved. The contractor had been reluctant to do this and HTC consequently reminded the landowner of their legal obligations. It was later understood that the landowner would be following up on the matter with an application being made to RBBC accordingly.

- **Traffic Congestion – A23 Bonehurst Road Junction with Cross Oak Lane and Westvale Park**
- It was noted that Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council had written to KH to request a full traffic survey be carried out on the full stretch of the A23/Bonehurst Road to consider the impact from the North Gatwick Gateway Distribution Centre on Cross Oak Lane and the junction opposite with Westvale Park. There was also concern that the proposal by Aldi to open a store nearby would exacerbate the situation and this needed to be addressed the highways authority at the pre-application stage. It was felt that SCC should look at the road as a whole and not just take a piecemeal approach as planning applications come forward. They needed to look at the bigger picture and take account of all the existing and potential new developments. Traffic levels on Bonehurst Road affect both Councils so it seemed a sensible approach to work together. KH suggested that a joint letter from both Councils should be sent to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Cllr Furniss with a request that a full traffic survey and impact assessment be carried out at the earliest opportunity and this would be followed up.

#### **5. Feedback from Virtual Horley Residents' Forum**

It was noted that the Horley Residents' Forum, held on 27 January 2021 and the first of its kind to be held remotely, had been well attended by residents and representatives from the County, Borough and Town Councils. KH had chaired the panel and the meeting was well controlled with participation invited from residents who had submitted questions or topics for discussion in advance. During the proceedings, KH gave an overview on the SCC £100m Community Fund ("Your Fund Surrey") and further updates were received on the Horley Commercial Hub proposal. A copy of the meeting notes are available to view on the [HTC website](#). The next forum meeting would be arranged in due course and it was likely to be held after the local Elections in May.

#### **6. HTC Town Meeting**

It was noted that the annual Town Meeting would be held virtually on 30 April 2021, 7pm.  
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#### **7. Horley Young People and Family Centre**

It was noted that the YMCA had taken on a 5 year lease of the Young People and Family Centre on Albert Road. They were running universal youth work sessions and an open access youth club. A family programme, supporting local families in Horley was also being offered along with various social counselling sessions. The centre manager was seeking help in promoting the new centre to the wider community and this had been supported by HTC through its social media channels and monthly eNewsletter.

**8. Town Councillor Vacancy**

It was noted that the new vacancy in the Horley West ward would be filled through Co-Option since an election had not been called within the statutory notice period. It was anticipated that the vacancy would be advertised by HTC shortly and filled through an online poll from the shortlist of candidates at a future Full Council meeting.

**9. Any other business**

No matters were raised.

**10. Date of next meeting**

To be arranged in due course.

*RBBC/SCC/HTC Joint Meeting / JW*

## **Notes of the Virtual Residents' Forum Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 27 January 2021**

### **Panel Members:**

Cllr Kay Hammond, Surrey County Council (Chairman)

Cllr Richard Biggs, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council (substitute for Cllr Graham Knight)

Cllr Samantha Marshall, Horley Town Council (substitute for Cllr David Powell)

### **Apologies:**

Apologies were received from Panel members Cllr David Powell (Horley Town Council) and Cllr Graham Knight (Reigate & Banstead and Surrey County Council)

### **Surrey Community Projects Fund ("Your Fund Surrey")**

SCC Cllr Kay Hammond gave an overview of the Projects Fund. She explained that £100m capital funding had been made available over a five-year period, designed to bring community-led projects to life. Residents, community groups, businesses and organisations were invited to submit proposals and offer feedback on others' ideas. People were able to log their ideas on the CommonPlace map, as well as support other projects already logged, with the full application process anticipated to open in March. (Full details available on the SCC website.)

An example of a project was one put forward by Horley Town Council. The proposal was to demolish the aged former Scout Hut in the Michael Crescent Centenary Park and to build a new community centre for Horley residents.

A representative of the Horley Local History Society asked about the parameters that would be used by SCC to support projects. Cllr Hammond explained that the projects would need to support the SCC Community Vision for 2030 (full details on the SCC website). The HLHS representative went on to explain that the History Society was seeking to raise funds (in the order of £20,000) to build an Archive Building and that to date he had failed to receive any support from either Borough or County Councillors. Cllr Hammond suggested that the representative contact her directly. Another resident suggested that it might be possible to use under-utilised areas of existing buildings for some of the projects.

### **Proposed Horley Commercial Hub**

HTC Cllr Mike George updated those present on the proposal. He explained that this was a joint project between Horley Town Council (led by its Environment Group) and the Horley & District Chamber of Commerce. Cllr George said that the Hub would be a facility for remote working, meeting rooms and pop-up shops for small local businesses, with its uses expanding over a period of time. Advice would be available for those looking to start up a business, improve their skills or change career direction. Other local businesses would also benefit from the local footfall in the town. Longer term it was hoped to provide links with local schools and to offer such facilities as PO Boxes and printing. A bid had been submitted to Your Fund Surrey and both SCC and RBBC Leaders had offered their support for the project. A town centre facility was envisaged, possibly the vacant unit next to the new Horley Library, however Cllr George pointed out that the funding required was considerable.

## **Topics and Questions Posed by Local Residents**

Two local residents asked for an update on plans by the owners of Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) to use the Emergency Runway at the airport as a second runway. HTC Cllr Mike George, also a member of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee explained that this runway was currently used when the main runway was unavailable. The plan was to bring the Emergency Runway into regular use for departures only by smaller aircraft. Mike explained that the Project would be under the Development Consent Order [DCO] process which would mean that Crawley Borough Council, the local planning authority for Gatwick & other local borough/district councils would be statutory consultees. The DCO process, including public consultation was a legal process overseen by the Planning Inspectorate with the final decision being taken by the Secretary of State. The Public Consultation process would need to fit in with any COVID restrictions in force at the time. Work would be required to fully separate the two runways. The Emergency Runway was slightly closer to Horley however it wasn't anticipated that it would have a major impact on the town. GAL was keen to move as many passengers onto public transport as possible so the local infrastructure should be able to manage. Cllr George said that there were varying expectations as to when passenger levels at Gatwick would return to 2019 levels, possibly not until 2029. He added that he would be happy to update residents further if required.

A resident asked for an update on trees which had been felled on the site for the proposed RBBC Business Park, adjacent to the Balcombe Road in Horley. RBBC Cllr Richard Biggs said that he had attended the site as soon as this happened and had been totally shocked at the devastation. No planning applications were in place to permit this work and Surrey Police and the Forestry Commission were carrying out ongoing investigations. Further information would be shared with local residents as soon as it became available, prosecutions would follow as maybe necessary, with the support of the RBBC Legal Dept.

A resident asked about the purpose of the road leading from Bonehurst Road, which seemed to be just a Service Road at the present time. Cllr Biggs explained that this road was a link through to the last phase of Westvale Park from the A23. Special kerbs and bollards, where the road crossed Meath Green Lane, prevented vehicles turning left or right onto this road. Another resident expressed concern that some of the kerbs on Meath Green Lane seemed to make it easier for vehicles to turn south onto Meath Green Lane. Cllr Biggs agreed to make information available regarding these kerbs, which could be sent onto local residents.

Several residents expressed concern about the new three-way traffic lights at the junction of the Westvale Park road, which were close to existing lights and were slowing down traffic on the main road. Cllr George said that HTC had concerns about this whole stretch of road, as whilst it was mostly in the Salfords & Sidlow area, it had a direct impact on Horley. He added that it was vital that SCC looked at the impact on the whole area, when planning any new developments. It was hoped that all the traffic lights in the area would be better synchronised once all the works were complete.

A resident asked about the Gatwick Storage site off the Bonehurst Road, where vans waiting to collect deliveries were having to park along the main road. Cllr Biggs suggested that this was mainly vans waiting to pick their loads from the Amazon Depot and advised that Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council write to Amazon about the issue.

Concerns were raised about the Crossoak/Orchard Drive junction and the impact of illegal vehicle turns on the many pedestrians in the area. All Councils in the area were aware of the ongoing issues and numerous site visits had been made. A Petition had been received by the Reigate & Banstead Local Committee and HTC Cllr Martin Saunders, one of the leaders of the Petition said that there was strong support to change the layout back to a regular junction.

Questions were raised about the increasing number of traveller caravans in the Picketts Lane field. Cllr Kay Hammond said that Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council were very aware of this and enforcement proceedings were taking place to try to remove the travellers. An Appeal was to be heard by the Planning Inspectorate, however this would be later in the year as the travellers had requested a face to face meeting. It was confirmed that no Residential Licence was in place at the site in question.

Concerns were raised about the proposed siting of the Aldi Store along the Bonehurst Road and its impact on local traffic in the area, especially emergency vehicles. Furthermore residents were worried that this might increase the likelihood of the Linden Homes development adjacent to Emlyn Meadows going ahead, further impacting on the local traffic flow. Cllr Biggs responded that he had spoken to Aldi representatives and reiterated that traffic in the area needed to be looked at as a whole. With regard to the proposed Linden Homes site, Cllr Biggs explained that this site was a Sustainable Urban Extension in the RBBC Development Management Plan and RBBC currently had no need to release the site for development.

RBBC & HTC Cllr Jerry Hudson, a member of the RBBC Planning Committee added that no official planning application had been received from Aldi and stressed the need for Surrey Highways to assess traffic levels along the whole stretch of the A23. RBBC Cllr Christian Stevens, also a member of the Planning Committee agreed that all developments added issues to this stretch of road, although he was not hopeful of help from Surrey Highways in the short term. HTC Cllr Samantha Marshall added that people trying to turn right out of Cross Oak Lane were also affected by the recent traffic light additions etc, especially when cars on the main road did not move lanes to avoid blocking the junction.

A resident expressed concern at the removal of mature oak trees on the east side of Meath Green Lane, near the junction of the access road to Westvale Park. Cllr Biggs agreed to investigate this and report back to the concerned resident. (After the meeting another resident forwarded a photo of the stumps of the trees to Cllr Biggs.)

Finally thanks were recorded to the Environment Agency for removing rubbish and debris from the stretch of the Burstow Stream alongside the Cambridge Lodge Mobile Home Park.

Cllr Hammond thanked everyone who had attended this first Virtual Forum and said that it was hoped that another meeting would be held sometime after the May Elections.

**Meeting concluded at 8.08 pm.**



## HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW 2020/21

### Background

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, *Regulation 4 (2)* requires “the Council to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control which includes the arrangements for the management of risk.”

An effective system of internal control is split into three parts:

1. **Risk Assessment**
2. **Control or procedures in place to mitigate the risks identified**
3. **System for testing the adequacy of internal controls (Internal Audit)**

### Risk Assessment

The Council’s Finance Committee conducted a full risk assessment on 2 February 2021. In that risk assessment, it reviewed financial controls, inter alia:

- Risk of consequential loss of income
- Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty
- Financial controls and records
- Compliance with HM Customs and Excise Regulations
- Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept
- Compliance with borrowing restrictions
- Business continuity
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Protection of physical assets
- Safety of staff and visitors
- Security of buildings, equipment etc.

### Control Systems

The Council has manual reconciliations in place to detect error. Duties are segregated between staff for the operation of its banking systems, **with the RFO creating payments** and in turn, **the Clerk and two** Councilors, authorising payments (three signatories in total). Members review summaries of receipts and payments, preventing or detecting budget overspends and unauthorized expenditure. A Member (who is neither the Chairman of the Council nor a cheque signatory) signs the bank reconciliations and the bank statements as evidence of the verification. Insurance cover is reviewed periodically.

### Internal Audit

An independent Auditor is in place to check that the internal controls are in place. The scope of internal audit, independence, competence, planning and reporting are shown overleaf.



## **Audit Programme Content**

The Local Councils Governance and Accountability Guidelines have been taken into account in establishing the range of audit work and level of testing. Audit work has been programmed under the following five areas:

*Corporate Governance* - This has included a review of the Council's system of administrative control for providing information and instruction to Councillors and staff in relation to their responsibilities and compliance with legal and statutory requirements.

*Accounting Practices* – The Audit review has assessed the systems for recording and controlling day-to-day accounting transactions. It has included a review of controls covering the recording of income and expenditure, computerised accounting systems, petty cash and budgetary control practices. Attention has also been paid to control procedures relating to periodic income and expenditure and the accounting process associated with reconciling the SCRIBE system to Local Government accounting requirements.

*Expenditure* - In the main, work has been conducted reviewing the Council's systems of incurring, validating and authorising payments. Other work included an assessment of system controls covering payroll, General Power of Competence expenditure and miscellaneous payments including expenses.

*Income* - The Council's systems for requesting, receiving and controlling income has been reviewed in relation to accuracy of postings, banking arrangements and debtor control.

*Annual Accounts* - Work on the 2019/20 annual accounts will include validation of the accuracy of the final accounting papers and preparation of supporting documentation required by the external auditor.

## **LIST OF AUDIT PROGRAMMES**

### **Corporate Governance**

- A1 - Control environment
- A2 - Legality
- A3 - Risk management and insurance
- A4 - Fraud and corruption
- A5 - Committee papers and Minutes
- A6 - Assets and investments

### **Accounting Practices**

- B1 - Books of accounts
- B2 - Bank reconciliation
- B3 - Petty cash
- B4 - Budgetary control
- B5 - Reserves/cash balances

## **Expenditure**

- C1 - Accounts for payment
- C2 - Payroll
- C3 - General Power of Competence
- C4 - Capital
- C5 - Miscellaneous income and expenses

## **Income**

- D1 - Receipts and banking arrangements
- D2 - Precept and grants
- D3 - Main areas of expected income
- D4 - Miscellaneous income

## **Annual Accounts**

- E1 -Year-end controls
- E2 -Year-end accounts

## **Other**

- F1 - Salary Payments and PAYE in Real Time (RTI)
- F2 - Café Pavilion Project
- F3 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Annual review of the effectiveness of internal control and the management of risk 2020/21

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Yes or No	Areas for Development
1. Scope of internal audit	<p>Terms of reference for internal audit were approved by Full Council on 27.11.07</p> <p>Internal audit work takes into account both the Council's risk assessment and wider internal control arrangements</p> <p>Internal audit work covers the Council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>
2. Independence	<p>Internal audit has direct access to those charged with governance (see Financial Regulations)</p> <p>Reports are made in own name to management</p> <p>Internal Audit does not have any other role within the Council</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>
3. Competence	<p>There is no evidence of a failure to carry out internal audit work ethically, with integrity and objectivity</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>
4. Relationships	<p>All responsible officers (Clerk/RFO and Finance Chairman) are consulted on the internal audit plan.</p> <p>Respective responsibilities for officers and internal audit are defined in relation to internal control, risk management and fraud and corruption matters (job descriptions and engagement letter)</p> <p>The responsibilities of council members are understood; training of members is carried out as necessary</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>

5. Audit Planning and Reporting	The annual Internal Audit Plan properly takes account of all the risks facing the Council and has been approved by the Council following the adoption of the Risk Assessment and Management Paper 2020-2021.	Yes	No development necessary
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Horley Town Council has considered the effectiveness of the Internal Audit control including the arrangements for the management of risk. The review took place by the Internal Audit Review Sub-Committee and the paper was approved at the Full Council meeting held on 2 March 2021.

***Adopted by Horley Town Council 2 March 2021***

***Next Review Date: February 2022***



**HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT 2020/21**

Area	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Control
Assets	Protection of physical assets	L	M	All buildings insured. Value increased annually by index linking.
	Security of buildings, equipment etc	M	H	Alarms (security, smoke and panic) installed at Council Buildings and serviced and tested regularly, in accordance with current regulations. Passwords and keys strictly restricted to nominated personnel. Additional butterfly locks installed on the interior of the two Council Office entry doors to enable safe access and to comply with fire safety regulations. Contents insured. Smartguard Security act as keyholder and attend to callouts to all Council Buildings. New Fire Panel installed at Innes Pavilion and Café Pavilion with automatic alarm monitoring. Keys to all access and internal areas of the Café Pavilion were handed over by the contractor to HTC on Practical Completion (20.11.20). New Café build will have a valuation and full risk assessment carried out prior to Final Completion (post retention period).
Finance	Banking	L	M	Accounts are spread between our bankers, HSBC, and other approved Deposit Takers.
	Business Continuity	L	M	Insurance cover is £450,000 (to cover loss of income and relocating office during maximum indemnity period of 24 months).
	Loss of cash	L	H	Liability limited to £2000. No petty cash is kept and most receipts are cashless. Safe used for storage of all cash receipts, mayoral chain of office etc. in alarmed office. Office keys strictly restricted to nominated personnel.
	Financial controls and records	L	M	Monthly reconciliation prepared by RFO, checked by Town Clerk and reported to Finance Committee. Three signatures on cheques or internet banking have been retained for good practice. Two nominated Councillors conduct a review prior to F&GP Committee meetings, our Internal Auditor checks procedures and External Auditors review our accounts.

	<b>Compliance with HMRC Regulations</b>	L	M	VAT payments and claims calculated by RFO and checked by Clerk. Internal and external auditor provides double check. Appropriate systems in place to comply with new legislation on VAT rules and mandatory submissions of VAT Returns to HMRC electronically.
	<b>Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept</b>	L	M	Finance & General Purposes Committee and Full Council receive detailed budget vs. actual reports. Precept derived directly from this and prior committee review of needs.
	<b>Compliance with borrowing restrictions</b>	L	L	Advice sought from Surrey ALC as appropriate.
<b>Liability</b>	<b>Risk to third party, property, or individuals</b>	M	M	Public Liability Insurance held amounting to £15m cover. Open spaces checked regularly. Playgrounds, equipment, and trees checked regularly. Incidents fully investigated if damage reported. A full tree survey of all the trees in the Councils' open spaces is conducted every three years and was completed most recently in October 2020. All recommended tree works will be carried out by March 2021.
	<b>Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership (especially playgrounds)</b>	H	H	Daily and weekly reports of inspections of multi-purpose court, playgrounds and skateboard park and all other equipment as stated in the Asset Register. Annual playground checks made to RoSPA criteria.
	<b>Compliance with HM Revenue and Customs Requirements</b>	L	M	Regular advice available from HMRC, VAT Helpline and Sage etc. Internal and external auditors carry out annual checks.
	<b>Safety of Staff and visitors</b>	L	M	Regular Health & Safety Risk Assessment checks of Council Offices particularly before public events. Fire Risk Assessments undertaken by accredited Fire Protection Company at Council Offices and Innes Pavilion and modifications completed, as required. HTC Officers trained in accredited Fire Safety Training programme, covering new legislation. Panic alarm installed with feed to Surrey Police. Additional security measures put in place following advice received from the Surrey Police Crime Reduction Officer in December 2016. A detailed COVID-19 Risk Assessment was carried out on 4 August 2020, documented, published and is kept under regular review with all secure measures put in place and all Government guidance followed. A new Homeworking Policy is to be implemented.
<b>Legal Liability</b>	<b>Confirmation that activities are within legal powers</b>	L	H	Town Clerk clarifies legal position on any new proposal. Legal advice sought where necessary.

	<b>Proper and timely reporting via the Minutes</b>	L	M	Full Council meets every six weeks and receives and reviews cycle of minutes. Minutes made available to press and public via website.
	<b>General Data Protection (GDPR)</b>	L	L	Councillors and staff will ensure full compliance with current legislation during the course of Council business. A dedicated email inbox named 'Data Protection' is in place to receive enquiries received and this will be managed by HTC Officers. The Town Clerk will oversee the process and sign all correspondence as the appointed Data Protection Officer (DPO). There is no requirement for individual Town Councillors to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). HTC remains GDPR compliant following the Brexit transition period.
	<b>Proper document control</b>	L	M	Leases and legal documents locked in secure cabinets. Scanned electronic copies of all such documents are kept in a secure, confidential area on office computer server. Other data storage to comply with Data Protection Act and successor legislation (General Data Protection Regulations).
<b>Admin</b>	<b>Data integrity and resilience</b>	M	H	Broadband used for all internet traffic, real-time virus scans on all workstations and the dedicated server and use of up-to-date virus libraries. All data is stored in SharePoint. A copy of the data in SharePoint is backed-up to the Council's server and, in turn, backed-up to external disks as an extra security measure. Security software has been set up on HTC Officers' desktops, laptops and other Council owned devices (eg iPads) with multi-factor authentication as extra verification of identity by the user. All Staff and Councillors will be provided with a Cyber Security Training Guide and ongoing support from the Council's IT provider.
<b>Councillor Propriety</b>	<b>Registers of Interests</b>	L	H	Members' Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests completed by all members and reviewed regularly. Available for public inspection on website or at the Town Council offices by prior appointment.

***Adopted by Horley Town Council 2 March 2021  
Next Review Date: March 2022***

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

**HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed		"Yes" means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
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.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
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.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
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.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		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.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
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.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

30/06/20

and recorded as minute reference:

C 4940

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman



Clerk



**Other information required by the Transparency Codes** (not part of Annual Governance Statement)  
Authority web address

<https://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk>



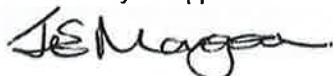
## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

### HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	407,087	340,841	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	351,333	372,755	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	108,847	590,174	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	136,928	177,586	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	34,263	33,323	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	355,235	779,490	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	340,841	313,371	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	388,716	301,912	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1,883,415	1,886,795	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	240,484	695,881	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date 26/05/2020

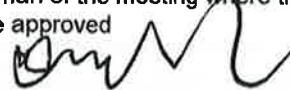
I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

30/06/20

as recorded in minute reference:

C 4941

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



### Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of **Horley Town Council – SU0046**

#### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

#### 2 External auditor report 2019/20

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None.

#### 3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

External Auditor Name

**PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP**

External Auditor Signature

*Paul Littlejohn*

Date

08/10/2020

\* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2019/20 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))

# CYCLE OF MEETINGS 2021/2022

Date	Meeting	
Tuesday	06-Apr	
Tuesday	13-Apr	
Tuesday	20-Apr	Planning Full
Tuesday	27-Apr	
Friday	30-Apr	TOWN MEETING
Tuesday	04-May	Annual Council and Full Council
Thursday	06-May	County, Borough and PCC Elections
Tuesday	11-May	
Tuesday	18-May	Planning Full
Tuesday	25-May	Leisure
Tuesday	01-Jun	
Tuesday	08-Jun	Finance (AGAR Submission) Cycle 1
Tuesday	15-Jun	Planning P&C
Tuesday	22-Jun	
Tuesday	29-Jun	Full Council (AGAR Submission)
Tuesday	06-Jul	Leisure
Tuesday	13-Jul	Finance
Tuesday	20-Jul	Planning Full
Tuesday	27-Jul	
Tuesday	03-Aug	
Tuesday	10-Aug	Cycle 2
Tuesday	17-Aug	Planning P&C
Tuesday	24-Aug	
Tuesday	31-Aug	
Tuesday	07-Sep	Full Council
Tuesday	14-Sep	
Tuesday	21-Sep	Planning Full
Tuesday	28-Sep	Finance
Tuesday	05-Oct	Leisure
Tuesday	12-Oct	Cycle 3
Tuesday	19-Oct	Planning P&C
Tuesday	26-Oct	
Tuesday	02-Nov	Full Council
Tuesday	09-Nov	Finance
Tuesday	16-Nov	Planning Full
Tuesday	23-Nov	
Tuesday	30-Nov	Leisure
Tuesday	07-Dec	Planning P&C
Tuesday	14-Dec	Full Council (Precept) Cycle 4
Tuesday	21-Dec	
Tuesday	28-Dec	
Tuesday	04-Jan	
Tuesday	11-Jan	Planning Full
Tuesday	18-Jan	
Tuesday	25-Jan	Finance
Tuesday	01-Feb	Cycle 5
Tuesday	08-Feb	Planning P&C
Tuesday	15-Feb	
Tuesday	22-Feb	Leisure
Tuesday	01-Mar	Full Council
Tuesday	08-Mar	
Tuesday	15-Mar	Planning Full
Tuesday	22-Mar	
Tuesday	29-Mar	Finance
Tuesday	05-Apr	
Tuesday	12-Apr	
Tuesday	19-Apr	Planning P&C
Tuesday	26-Apr	Leisure
Friday	29-Apr	TOWN MEETING
Tuesday	03-May	
Thursday	05-May	Borough Elections
Tuesday	10-May	Annual Council and Council
Tuesday	17-May	Planning Full
Tuesday	24-May	

Reduce the number of cycles in a year to six

Avoid School Holidays (greyed out) where possible

Every other Planning meeting to be plans and consultations only to meet deadlines (P&C)



# Horley Town Council

## Communications and Social Media Policy

### Part 1 – Communications Generally

#### 1. Introduction

The aim of this Communications and Social Media Policy is to set out a Code of Practice to provide guidance to Councillors and Officers about the use of communications, such as, general correspondence, emails, social networking sites, podcasts, forums, messages boards or comments on web articles such as Twitter, Facebook and other relevant social media sites.

Horley Town Council is committed to active community engagement through a wide range of channels, including online and social media.

The Town Council is committed to the provision of accurate information in respect of its functions, decisions and actions. Accordingly, care needs to be taken when addressing communications within the Town Council and to external organisations and other local government authorities, outside bodies or community groups.

#### 2. Town Council correspondence

The point of contact for Horley Town Council is the Town Clerk and it is to the post holder that all correspondence to the Town Council should be addressed. The Town Clerk (or delegated Officer) should deal with the correspondence and will ensure that information or direct enquiry is passed to Councillors as appropriate. No individual Councillor or Officer shall be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the Town Council, a Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group. In particular, Councillors and Officers do not have the right to obtain confidential information/documentation unless they can demonstrate a “need to know”.

All official correspondence should be sent by the Town Clerk in the name of the Town Council using letter headed paper. Where correspondence to a Councillor is copied to another person, the addressee should be made aware that a copy is being forwarded to that other person.

#### 3. Agenda items for Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups

Agendas should be clear and concise. They should contain sufficient information to enable Councillors to make an informed decision and for Councillors and the public to understand what matters are being considered and what decisions are to be taken at a meeting. Items for information should be kept to a minimum on an agenda. Where the Town Clerk or a Councillor wishes fellow Councillors to receive matters for “information only”, this information should be circulated via the Town Clerk or delegated Officer.

#### **4. Communications with the Press and Public**

The Town Clerk will discuss press reports, or comments to the media with the Chairman and Council Leaders, as appropriate. If the Chairman is absent, the report or comments will be discussed with the Vice- Chairman. Press reports from the Council, its Committees or Working Groups should be from the Town Clerk or an Officer or via the reporter's own attendance at a meeting. Unless a Councillor has been authorised by the Council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be recorded as their personal view.

When responding to social media comments/statements, the same should apply by advising that this is a personal view and not necessarily the view of the Council. In their reply, a Councillor should report that they are responding on a non-Councillor basis. Unless a Councillor is absolutely certain that he/she is reporting the view of the Council, even if they did not agree with the decision when it was made, the Councillor must make it clear to members of the public they are expressing a personal view. If Councillors receive a complaint from a member of the public, this should be dealt with by the Town Clerk in accordance with the Town Council's Complaints Policy.

#### **5. Councillor correspondence to external parties**

As the Town Clerk will be sending most of the Council's correspondence from the Council to other bodies, partners or organisations, it needs to be made clear that it is written in their official capacity and has been authorised by the Town Council unless it is an operational or other matter requiring the Town Clerk to respond by delegated authority as the Proper Officer.

Where after discussion with the Town Clerk, Councillors wish to pursue an initiative on an unofficial/individual basis, they should be mindful of the following:

- a. The need to take care not to give the impression that the initiative has the support of or represents official Town Council Policy;
- b. The dangers of the public or other partners or external bodies in their expectations;
- c. Publicity or media coverage which may reflect on the Town Council.

Accordingly, Councillors should make it clear that they are acting in an unofficial or personal capacity. As a general rule, individual Councillors should not approach another body, statutory, voluntary or commercial organisation, other than in a personal capacity, seeking information which might be related to any Town Council function. Such approaches should be made formally by the Town Clerk or delegated Officer, on behalf of the Councillor in an official capacity. In this respect, Councillors are advised to contact the Town Clerk as above. If a Councillor is dissatisfied with the actions/advice given, then they may ask for an item to be included on the agenda for a Council meeting or appropriate Committee. A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the Council or a Councillor's role within it, should be sent to the Town Clerk, and for it to be noted on the correspondence "copy to the Town Clerk" so that the recipient is aware that the Town Clerk has been advised.

#### **6. Communications between Councillors and Staff**

Whilst all Councillors and Staff are encouraged to develop contact with each other, both Councillors and Staff need to be conscious of the "Employer" and "Employee" relationship and professional standards should be maintained at all times. Both should be aware that requests directly from Councillors to employees to action given matters, whether established Council Policy or not, can disrupt established routines and work programmes and could confuse line management.



Councillors wishing to have urgent action taken, should contact the Town Clerk who can then reschedule staff priorities if necessary. Councillors must not give instructions to any member of staff, unless specifically authorised to do so (for example, 3 or more Councillors sitting as a Committee or Working Group with appropriate delegated authority from the Town Council). In such circumstances, Councillors who wish to investigate or promote any issue for possible adoption and/or action should, in any event, discuss the matter with the Town Clerk so that preliminary consideration can be given to the legal, financial, technical, and staffing implications and to the possible impact and relationship to existing projects or policies in which the Town Council is currently involved.

## **7. Email and Phone Communication**

Instant replies to emails and phone requests should not be expected and reasons for urgency should be clearly stated. Information to Councillors should normally be directed via the Town Clerk or delegated Officer. Emails from Councillors to external parties regarding Council business should be copied to the Town Clerk. Councillors should acknowledge their emails when requested to do so.

## **8. Meetings with the Town Clerk or other Officers**

Wherever possible, an appointment should be agreed and made in advance. Meetings should be relevant to the work of that particular Officer. Councillors should be clear that the matter is legitimate Town Council business and not matters driven by personal or political agendas.

# **Part 2 – Social Media**

## **1. Introduction to Social Media**

As Horley Town Council takes on additional responsibilities, it will seek to grow its social media presence to maintain positive interaction with residents on local government matters and to support the local community. This Communications and Social Media Policy provides a framework for the appropriate and safe use of corporate (i.e. Town Council operated) social media channels by Councillors and Officers.

## **2. Scope**

This Communications and Social Media Policy sits alongside the Press Protocol used by the Town Council as well as the Council's Standing Orders in informing Councillors and Officers of acceptable practice when operating Council social media accounts. It applies to all employees and elected Councillors of Horley Town Council.

## **3. Policy Statement**

This Communications and Social Media Policy provides a framework for the appropriate use of social media and will ensure that its use is effective, lawful, and does not bring the Council into ill-repute. It will also ensure that Council computer networks and stored information remain uncompromised.

#### **4. Aims of Social Media**

This Communications and Social Media Policy will clearly set out how social media can be managed effectively and how any risks can be avoided or mitigated. Social media offers great potential for building relationships and improving Council interaction with local residents. The Town Council aims to use social media channels to:

- Improve engagement with individuals, communities, and to successfully promote Council services;
- Apply a consistent and corporate voice across Town Council social media platforms;
- Operate within existing policies, guidelines, and relevant legislation;
- Ensure that the Council's reputation is never damaged or adversely affected via online communications;
- Rapidly disseminate information to interested parties;
- Adopt a structured approach to using social media that will ensure its use is effective, lawful, and does not compromise Town Council information or its computer systems and networks;
- Encourage users (regardless of whether they are using a personal or official account) to use social media sensibly, responsibly, and in a manner that will not adversely affect the Town Council or violate its policies.

#### **5. Risks Posed by the Use and Misuse of Social Media**

The following risks associated with social media use have been identified:

- Breach of GDPR through the accidental or malicious disclosure or loss of personal data processed by the Council;
- Breach of Safeguarding regulations through the dissemination of media relating to minors and other vulnerable people without obtaining appropriate consent;
- Reputational damage to the Council caused by the clumsy or malicious handling of sensitive topics;
- Harassment or abuse of staff, Councillors, and residents through online comment and messaging systems;
- Infection of computer devices from infected sites and malicious links;
- Social engineering attacks and online scams
- Civil or criminal legal action arising from the failure to comply with relevant legal requirements.

#### **6. Responsibilities of Officers and Councillors to Mitigate Risk**

Many of the risks relating to the use of social media bear resemblance to the risks and challenges faced by the Council on a regular basis, namely the risks relating to breach of GDPR, breach of safeguarding, risk of reputational damage (albeit that social media has the potential for greater fallout from the poor handling of sensitive topics), and the potential for harassment or abuse as mentioned above.

Horley Town Council's social media channels will be administered by Council Officers. Councillors are welcome to contribute content but generally will not have direct access to

Council operated accounts. The Town Council's social media accounts shall remain separated from the personal, social media accounts of Councillors and Officers, currently facilitated by a Town Clerk Facebook account.

Officers and Councillors involved in the creation and operation of the Council's social media channels should follow the following guidelines:

1. Be aware of and recognise the risks identified in this Communications and Social Media Policy.
2. Remember that you are personally responsible for the content you publish on any form of social media on behalf of Horley Town Council.
3. Never give out the personal details, such as home addresses and telephone numbers, of any person unless you have their express consent. Ensure that any personal or sensitive information is processed in line with the Council's Data Protection Policies.
4. Social media sites are available in the public domain and it is important to ensure that you are confident about the nature of the information you publish. Permission must be sought if you wish to publish or report on meetings or discussions that are meant to be private or internal to Horley Town Council. Do not cite or reference customers, partners, or suppliers without prior approval.
5. Do not use insulting, offensive, or racist language or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace. Show consideration for others' privacy and avoid topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory such as politics or religion.
6. In the six-week run up to an election (the "pre-election" period), local or general – councils must not do or say anything that can be seen in any way to support any political party or candidate. It is good practice for Councillors and Officers to avoid using the Council's social media channels in any way that could be construed as favouring a candidate or party and extra care should be used during election periods.

## 7. The Law and Social Media

This Communications and Social Media Policy, as well as the Council's response to harassment and abuse via social media, is informed by the [Crown Prosecution Service's Guidance on Communications sent via Social Media](#), as well as the following legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018 (notably including GDPR)
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998



**8. Evaluation and Review Date**

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated by Horley Town Council.

**This Communications and Social Media Policy was adopted by Horley Town Council on 2 March 2021.**

**Policy Review Date: 2024**

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## Home Working Policy

### 1. Introduction

Horley Town Council (HTC) understands that there may be instances when an employee needs to work from home. Depending on the nature of the employee's role, the Council may consider flexible home working appropriate. This Home Working Policy enables home working to support the Town Council's business and employee needs and demands. It remains flexible whilst identifying the responsibilities, measures, and the risk-based approach to be carried out within the home environment to ensure the safety and well-being of staff. Whilst homeworking is categorised as a type of flexible working, employees should not assume that other aspects of flexible working (such as amended hours) are automatically part of a homeworking arrangement.

### 2. Home Working Application Process

- 2.1 Applications for home working may be granted where it is satisfied that the needs of the Town Council can continue to be met while the employee works from home. Working from home must be cost-effective and ensure that there is no significant increase in workload on colleagues. The work carried out by the employee must be capable of being carried out from home.
- 2.2 Employees who wish to apply to temporarily work from home should submit an application via email to the Town Clerk who will aim to respond within one calendar month of the application being received unless it is a matter of urgency where a quicker interim decision may be made. The Town Clerk may need to visit the employee's home to carry out a risk assessment.
- 2.3 On approved applications, written confirmation will be provided, detailing arrangements and timescales for the employee to sign and return to the Town Clerk. Each request will be considered on its own merits. The Town Council is under no obligation to permit a period of working from home just because it has agreed to it in the past.
- 2.4 If an employee's application is rejected, the reasons for this will be issued in writing to the employee. The employee may appeal the decision within 5 working days of the decision being issued. The reasons for the appeal shall be set out in writing and sent to the Staff Committee.

### 3. Definition

- 3.1 Flexible home working is defined as time split between home and the office when an employee undertakes some of their duties from home on an agreed basis. This is usually planned in advance and may be for complete or part days. Examples of the type of work considered suitable for home working include report writing, preparations for meetings, project work etc. The holding of physical meetings at home is not permitted due to public liability insurance.
- 3.2 There may be times when home working is required by HTC to meet business needs during times of emergencies or as required by law. This is not defined as "flexible" home working.

- 3.3 Working from home may enable work to be carried out efficiently and without disruption. It may also prove a more efficient use of time if employees who have been away from their work base for part of day and are closer to their home on their return journey, to complete the working day at home rather than at their normal place of work.
- 3.4 In cases where office facilities are shared or the employee risks continual interruption, the Town Clerk in consultation with the Council Chairman may agree that an employee may work from home. This may include agreeing to home working on a regular basis or for a fixed period as well as shorter ad hoc periods. All employees should be aware of the potential impact home working could have on teams e.g. isolation from the teams and/or Council activities and a reduction in managerial support, or supervision (if applicable).
- 3.5 It should be recognised that where certain tasks cannot be carried out by an employee at home, they must be carried out at the workplace or designated to another employee as agreed with the Town Clerk.

#### **4. Eligibility**

Employees are eligible to apply for working from home in the following circumstances:

- where the employee has successfully completed the probationary period attached to their job role;
- where the employee's role does not involve supervisory duties that require undertaking in person alongside the team members involved;
- where their home working environment is suitable;
- where no aspect of the employee's recent appraisal was marked as unsatisfactory;
- where the employee's disciplinary record is clean;
- where arrangements for full office cover during core business hours, Monday to Friday, may be arranged by the remaining complement of staff.

#### **5. Conditions**

- 5.1 Home working arrangements must suit both the Town Council and the employee.
- 5.2 In general, the Town Council will be supportive of employees working up to 2 days per week from home as long as core business needs are met and that the employee can meet all the requirements of their role from home. Longer periods of home working may also be approved at the discretion of the Town Council as directed by the Town Clerk in consultation with the employee.
- 5.3 The working environment should be distraction free for home working.
- 5.4 Risk assessments of the home working environment, in line with legal requirements, must be undertaken. A self-assessment form (Appendix 1) must be completed by the employee and agreed by the Town Clerk before home working can commence.
- 5.5 Requests shall be considered on their own merits, taking into account resources, impact on colleagues and working relationships.
- 5.6 When working from home, employees are responsible for ensuring they are contactable during normal working hours. This should be via a Council mobile telephone (where provided) or the employee's home or mobile telephone numbers. Microsoft Teams and/or Zoom are considered to be acceptable means of being contactable. Details of personal telephone numbers will remain confidential within the Town Council and messages will be taken and forwarded on.

- 5.7 As a general rule, it is not considered necessary for those working from home to require supplies of stationery etc. Large volumes of printing and collating of documents should be carried out on the Town Council premises where possible.
- 5.8 Home working agreements will be reviewed periodically in light of any change of circumstances, whether relating to the employee, the work they are required to undertake, the working environment or any new changes to legislation.

## **6. Home Working Trial Period**

- 6.1 The aim of the trial period (one calendar month) is for both the employee and the Town Council to evaluate whether the new working arrangements are working out as planned. At the end of the trial period, the Town Clerk will meet with the employee to evaluate the success of the trial and if working from home by the employee may continue.
- 6.2 During the trial period or at the evaluation meeting, either side may propose that reasonable adjustments be made to facilitate a smoother working arrangement. The Town Council reserves the right to terminate working from home by declaring that the trial has been unsuccessful or if the proposed amendments are deemed unreasonable.

## **7. Responsibilities**

- 7.1 **Health & Safety** - In line with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (“the Act”) and the Health & Safety Policy, the Town Council will ensure, as far as reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees, including those working from home. The Town Council reserves the right to inspect home working premises in order to ensure that current risk assessments and Council Policies and procedures are being adhered to. Reasonable notice will be given to employees before any inspection is to be carried out. Employees are expected to carry out their work in such a way as to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, that there is no risk to health and safety to themselves, members of their family or visitors.
- 7.2 **Data Protection, Security & Confidentiality** - Arrangements for home working shall ensure that the employee can maintain the security and confidentiality of documents whilst complying with Data Protection legislation. Employees must follow set protocols on the use of the Town Council’s Office 365 User Account, internet and computer usage at all times whilst discharging their duties. They must remain fully compliant with the General Data Protection Act Regulations (GDPR). All Data Protection, security and confidentiality measures must be adhered to along with all password protection in place for HTC computer systems as directed by the Town Clerk.
- 7.3 **Remote Access** - To enable remote access, employees shall use their Council issued laptop and office 365 User Account allowing full remote working with collaboration tools including Microsoft Teams, Outlook, Word and Excel. They must ensure that all Council owned equipment, such as, laptop and other devices are password protected and locked when not in use for a period of time and switched off at the end of the working day, to maintain data and information security.
- 7.4 **Running costs and expenses** – Where an employee is choosing to work from home, the Town Council will not normally contribute towards costs – for example, heating and lighting unless in exceptional circumstances to complete an urgent deadline or project which shall be considered on its own merits by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Council Chairman.
- 7.5 **Accidents, Incidents & Dangerous Occurrences** - In line with the Council’s Accident Reporting Procedure, employees must inform the Town Clerk of any accidents, incidents or dangerous

occurrences which take place whilst working from home. The initial report should be via telephone with the appropriate paperwork being completed on the employee's return to the workplace.

- 7.6 **Policies and Procedures** - All work carried out on Town Council business is covered by the requirements of the Council's Policies and procedures, even if this work is undertaken from home.
- 7.7 **Council Tax** - If the area of the house being used for home working is also used by the rest of the family at other times there are no implications regarding Council Tax. However, if the area is used solely for business and is not available to the family there may need to be a change of definition. In such cases the employee should check the details with the Billing Authority.
- 7.8 **Taxation** - Employees choosing to work from home are not entitled to tax relief on additional outgoings. As there is no requirement to work from home there would be no tax relief on any proportion of the costs for heating, lighting and rent on rooms used for business purposes.
- 7.8.1 An employee may, however, be able to claim tax relief for additional household costs if they work from home on a regular basis, either for all or part of the week. This includes if they have to work from home because of the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) (if it remains in existence at the time when HTC adopts the Policy). This must be kept under regular review and amended as appropriate.
- 7.9 **Insurance** - If any equipment owned by the Council becomes unusable due to theft or accidental damage by an employee, it will be covered by the Town Council insurance under its 'All Risks' Policy. Employee must, however, ensure that reasonable care is taken with all Council owned property in their possession.
8. **Working from Home Arrangements (COVID-19) – [ACAS Guidance](#)**
- 8.1 Employers and employees should be practical, flexible and sensitive to each other's situation when working from home because of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic.
- 8.2 There might be a need for ongoing changes to working arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, because of changes to [Government rules](#) or employees' circumstances.
- 8.3 When making decisions about working from home, it's important employers and employees communicate regularly. For example, to discuss:
- which roles can and cannot be done from home
  - who may or may not want to work from home
  - any concerns and how best to handle them
- 8.4 This can also help make sure that decisions about working from home are fair and [follow discrimination law](#). An employee's pay and other terms and conditions of their employment stay the same, apart from having to work from home on a temporary basis. Employees working from home are still covered by [the law on working hours](#).

**This Home Working Policy was adopted by Full Council on 2 March 2021**

**Next Review Date: 2024**

## **Presentation to the Horley Town Council 2021**

We are grateful to the Council for its continuing support in helping us maintain the New Churchyard in a way that is aesthetically pleasing & safe for the public.

As you are aware though it is called the "New Churchyard" it is really a public cemetery for the use of any resident of Horley

### **Grass & Hedge Maintenance April 2020- March 2021**

We were pleased with the quality of work by Idverde. Several members of the public have complimented them on their performance. We had increased the frequency of cuts, 2 years ago.

### **New contract with idverde for April 2021 –March 2022**

We had negotiated with idverde who took over Burleys, for a contract for 2 years at the beginning, of 2020, at same contract price + CPI. We had also provided them with the schedule of maintenance from the previous year which they have followed.

### **Their charges for April 2021 – March 2022 - £8,484.00 incl. VAT**

#### **Expenses incurred in 2020**

- 1) Cost of Grass & Hedge maintenance by idverde -£8,376 including VAT
- 2) Cost of cutting down a dead Ash – posing a risk to allotment holders - £354
- 3) Cost of Pollarding a large Oak – posing a risk to neighbouring houses -£900, being the cheapest of 3 quotes.

#### **Volunteer contribution;**

Volunteers continue to help maintain a safe environment by backfilling sunken graves, attending to any tree work that does not require professional help & by keeping the place free of debris.

They have taken down 2 dead Elms, cut back masses of Bramble thus exposing some hidden graves.

Marker posts have been put in to coincide with the grid held in the parish office, thus making it easier for relatives to locate the grave of a loved one.

County Care Volunteers under the supervision of James Baker have cleaned the moss from the entrance gates. The painting of the gates has been held back by the current restrictions.

#### **Grants received during 2020.**

Council Grant - £6,550 for the maintenance of the New churchyard

Kay Hammond County Cllr from member's allocation fund - £750 towards tree work

### **Anticipated expenses for year beginning April 2020**

#### **For the New Churchyard**

Cost of contract for grass & hedge maintenance by idverde -£8,484.

5 Year Tree Survey due in 2021 – Cost £365 + extra for cost of tree tagging.

Additional costs may accrue from any work identified in the Tree Survey.

#### **For the Old Churchyard –**

Grass & Hedge maintenance is by RBBC. They will also do a 5 year tree survey during 2021.

### **Request for Council grant for year beginning April 2021**

In view of the extra expenses already incurred & more expenses anticipated, we would be grateful if the Council could cover the whole of cost of the Grass maintenance contract.

#### **PCC contribution**

Any shortfall will be covered by the PCC, but this is becoming more difficult, with falling church membership the ageing population, & also due to reduced church attendance during the Pandemic.

Dr Thiru Jesudason.

Church warden

St Bart's Horley



# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Joan Walsh**

**Town Clerk**

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Isabel Wootton

RBBC Community Partnerships

Sent by Email: [communitypartnerships@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:communitypartnerships@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

18 March 2021

Dear Isabel

## **Reigate & Banstead Community Centres Consultation – Closing Date: 22 March 2021**

Thank you for providing Horley Town Council (HTC) with an opportunity to respond to the above Community Centres consultation by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council (RBBC). The matter was considered by our Members at our Full Council meeting held on 2 March 2021, at which time, the following comments and observations were made in regard to 'Regent House', Albert Road, Horley.

Regent House is situated close to the town centre of Horley with good public transport links nearby. In the past, it has been well known as a busy community centre, providing welfare and social support and wide-ranging community group activities as well as a focal point for extensive public information. As such, it has served as an important community hub with many health, well-being, educational and recreational activities on offer with the benefit of bringing people of all age groups together, regardless of ability, to connect and socialise.

However, it is generally felt that, in recent years, the overall level of community service provision, under the former private management of Regent House, has deteriorated rapidly for a number of reasons which we now set out below:

- The perception of Regent House in general terms has become very outdated and requires a full transformation and a widespread promotion to reflect its purpose to provide a well-managed, Council run community facility.
- Although the building provides good accessibility with a roomy car park, disabled access on entry and a lift and stairs to the upper floor, it lacks any visual signage by the entrance to direct visitors, especially for those visiting for the first time.
- The upstairs Café is set out in a reasonably sized area but it has not been operational for some considerable time now. Similarly, the licensed bar which previously catered for private functions, is no longer available which requires hirers to supply their own drinks for their functions. As such, these now appear to be redundant facilities.
- Many patrons have objected to having to pay an annual membership fee in the past and this has been widely criticised as an unfair levy imposed for using a community-based facility. This is especially so since the introduction of these charges happened to coincide with a vast reduction in the services offered, including a poor lunch time meal service with very little choice and inability to cater for vegetarians. We understand that the Banstead and Woodhatch centres both do levy a membership charge which might be more acceptable in Horley if such services were to be vastly improved. At the same time, membership fees should be kept at a reasonable rate since the age demographic within this context are to a large degree, senior citizens.

.....Continued



- Since the building itself provides a versatile space, it could be much better utilised with additional recreational provision, such as, film screening.
- The 'Dial-a-Ride' door-to-door transport service had provided an excellent service to many patrons requiring transport in the past but it was withdrawn some years ago.

For the reasons stated above, we would like to put forward the following recommendations to be considered for making improvements to Regent House:

1. To rename the building to 'Regent Community Centre' or something similar and upgrade the building with a contemporary makeover to invigorate its appeal as a popular community facility.
2. To install clear directional signage by the entrance and to the car park along with a new contemporary community notice board to provide information on the facilities and services available.
3. To reopen the upstairs Café to increase visitors with wide-ranging healthy menu choices at reasonable prices. To provide the licensed bar for private and other functions.
4. To abolish or significantly reduce annual membership fees for regular patrons with value for money for the services provided.
5. To consider providing a small cinema and/or a multi-arts centre as part of the main service provision.
6. To support an affordable transport service to and from the community centre for the elderly.

Since Regent House is situated within close proximity to the Horley Town Council offices, our Members would welcome an opportunity to build on their good relationship with centre managers and staff to help promote the new centre as well as work in close partnership with County and Borough Councillors to make it the very best that it can be. We feel very encouraged by the fact that RBBC has taken over the management of Regent House and for sharing its vision for community centres across the Borough in these modern times. Your response to the Covid-19 pandemic with the introduction of the Foodbank club (along with many other community schemes) is to be highly commended and we wish to pass on this positive feedback to everyone involved in these vital community initiatives.

We do hope that you will take our comments on board and we look forward to hearing the outcomes of the consultation at the planned virtual RBBC briefing to be held for our Members on 20 April 2021, at 6.30 pm.

Yours sincerely



Joan Walsh  
Town Clerk  
Horley Town Council

cc: Justine Chatfield – RBBC Head of Community Partnerships