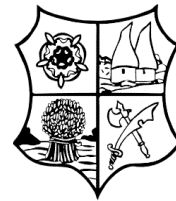


ALTON Town Council



Telephone (01420) 83986
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info@alton.gov.uk

Town Clerk: Pat Harris

Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

30th October 2024

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the **FULL COUNCIL** on **Wednesday 6th November 2024 at 7.00pm** at the **TOWN HALL, MARKET SQUARE**, when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

Patricia M Harris

Pat Harris
Interim Town Clerk

To: All Town Councillors

Councillor Annette Eyre
Councillor Graham Hill
Councillor Matthew Bayliss
Councillor John Chubb
Councillor Mark Boyce-Churn
Councillor Don Hammond
Councillor Matthew Kellermann
Councillor Nick O'Brien
Councillor Doug Richards
Councillor Barbara Tansey
Councillor Janice Treacher
Councillor Peter Wadman
Councillor Jonathan Waugh

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2024
TOWN HALL, MARKET SQUARE, ALTON
AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Town Mayor's announcements
3. Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 9th October 2024 for approval.
4. Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensations - Councillors are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of or vote on any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest. You must withdraw when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.
5. Correspondence received and questions to the Council: Members of the public are invited to make representations.
6. Member Officer Protocol
7. Planning Applications:
 1. Full Planning Application (Part Retrospective): 50817/016 Land East of Lumbry Farm Cottages, Selborne Road
 2. Full Planning Application: 60389/001 Land between 12-16 Market Street, Alton
8. Kings Pond – approval of additional expenditure
9. Community Canopy Project – Public Gardens
10. Kings Arms – Youth Services Report 1st April – 31st August 2024
11. Statement of Accounts to 31st October 2024, including Pension Audit Letter
12. Events Program for 2025
13. Review of Alton Town Council Policies
 1. Bribery & Corruption for Staff Policy
 2. Bribery & Corruption for Councillors Policy
14. Landlords Consent: Alton FC
15. Response to the East Hampshire District LCWIP Consultation

Confidential

16. Code of Conduct complaint update

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL – 6th NOVEMBER 2024**

ITEM 5: CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

FOR INFORMATION

1. Representation from Mr & Mrs Stickland re Planning Application 60389/001 Land between 12-16 Market Street – previously circulated to all councillors

ITEM 6: MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL

FOR DECISION

Councillor Matthew Bayliss, Chair of the Staffing Committee will be introducing this item.

Councillors are aware that a full review of all Council Policies is currently underway. The Member Officer Protocol was reviewed by the Staffing Committee and is tabled with the recommendation that it is adopted by Full Council.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to adopt the Member Officer Protocol as tabled.

ITEM 7: FULL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

FOR DECISION

Members are asked to comment on two planning applications which are:

1. **PLANNING APPLICATION (PART RETROSPECTIVE) 50817/016 – Land East of Lumbry Farm Cottages, Selborne Road**

http://planningpublicaccess.easthants.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=_EHANT_DCAPR_256519

Background:

This application is for 3 Gypsy/Traveller pitches at land east of Lumbry Farm Cottages, Selborne Road, Alton. Members should note that this site is already in use, but the application has been submitted to formalise arrangements and proposes a new entrance.

According to EHDC's March 2024 assessment, they only have a 1.9-year supply of Traveller / Travelling Show people pitches, and there is, therefore, a predicted shortfall of 44 pitches over the next five years. The full report can be obtained by clicking on the above link.

The application is for change of use of land for the formation of 3no. Gypsy/Traveller pitches, comprising the siting of 1 mobile home, 1 touring caravan, and 1 dayroom for each pitch, alongside the formation of new access, bin store, cycle store and shared amenity area and the construction of sound-proof fencing. Each dayroom would be connected to mains water and sewage.

Planning History:

Alton Town Council's response to the previous Planning Application 50817/015 on 9th February 2023 was:

OBJECT for the following material reasons:

1. The site is situated within Flood Zone 3, and thus the development is at the highest risk of flooding.
2. The contour of the site runs a high risk of run off into the Lavant Stream causing potential pollution and contamination and the Case Officer should ensure that the Environment Agency are consulted for a better understanding of the issue

3. The proposed visibility splays appear inadequate for the new access to the main road.

Members attention is also drawn to the EHDC Notice of Refusal issued on 10th June 2024 in respect of planning application: 50817/015:

1. The site is within Flood Zone 3 defined as having a high likelihood of flooding and classified as highly vulnerable in accordance with Annex 3 of the NPPF (Dec 2023). In the absence of an acceptable Flood Risk Assessment and any mitigation measures or information to demonstrate otherwise, the development would place future occupants and occupants of surrounding development at great risk of flooding which would result in significant harm to their amenity and lives and place pressure on rescue services. The development is therefore contrary to Policy CP25 of the East Hampshire District Joint Core Strategy and Paragraph 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. In the absence of information to demonstrate otherwise, the proposed development by virtue of its unsafe vehicular access and lack of visibility splays, would result in significant harm to the safe and effective operation of the highway network. The development is therefore contrary to Policy CP31 of the East Hampshire District Joint Core Strategy and Paragraph 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. The site lies adjacent to the B3006 and commercial development. In the absence of a noise impact assessment report (and details of any necessary mitigation), it has not been demonstrated that future occupiers of the development would not be unacceptably impacted by noise disturbance. The proposal is contrary to policy CP27 of the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy and the advice contained in the NPPF.

Current Application:

Hampshire Highways has yet to comment on the proposed new access to the site which shows wider splays at the entrance. However, the access to the site remains in close proximity to the Lumbry Park entrance which, in the opinion of officers continues to present the same risk to highway users such that it would result in vehicles accessing and leaving the site interfering with the free flow of traffic on the adjoining highway to the detriment of highway safety and cause inconvenience to other highway users.

The location / block plan is as shown below:



The objections in relation to the location being in a Flood Risk Zone 3 area and the high risk of run off into the Lavant Stream remains current.

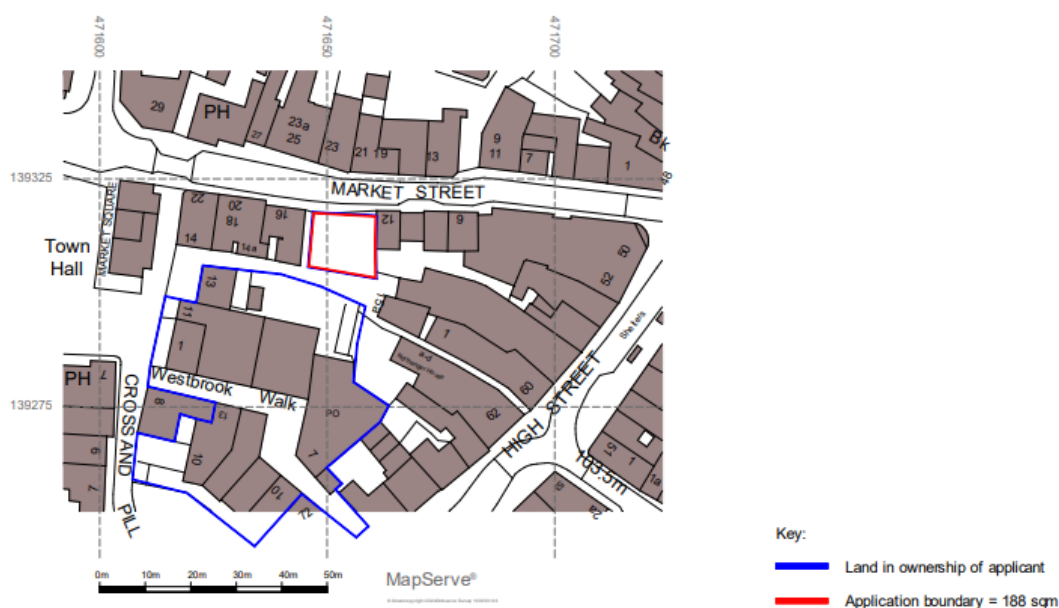
RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to determine their response to the Planning Application 50817/016.

- 2. PLANNING APPLICATION 60389/001 - Land between, 12-16 Market Street, Alton**
Proposal: Proposed mixed used development combining 3 residential units over the two upper floors and commercial use at ground floor.

<http://planningpublicaccess.easthants.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal= EHANT DCAPR 256557>

This application has been received as an infill for the area which is currently used as a service yard for businesses on both the High Street (Boots) and in Market Street (various) as well as access to a private car park serving residential properties.

The two plans below are taken from the application; firstly the block plan which shows (**in blue**) the land in the ownership of the applicant and (**in red**) the application boundary. However, this appears to be at odds with the Ownership Declaration in the planning application which states that the applicant is the sole owner of the land to which the application relates and has been the owner for more than 21 days.





The side of the building (**drawn in purple**) on the following diagram is where the gate into the rear of Boots is located and none of the Swept Path Tracking demonstrates how this area of parking could be accessed from the underpass in the building; indeed the Swept Path Tracking demonstrates very clearly just how tight the access will be. Vehicles bigger than the panel van indicated here (see photo and note below) frequently deliver to the businesses in Westbrook Walk such as Grovelly Pets and Boots, and Post Office vehicles need access to collect and deliver items to WHSmith.



The **red line** on the diagram above indicates where the public right of way shown in the photo below goes. This is a pedestrian access connecting Market Square with the High Street and leads into Loes Alley – the proposed building would extend how enclosed that alley is, and residents already complain about activity in that alley at night.



The application boundary is **shown in red** on the photos above and below. The side of the proposed building completely blocks access to the service area behind Boots and surrounding residential flats, not taking into account their gates at all, as demonstrated here.



The application boundary is drawn in red again in the photo above. The proposal removes five private parking bays and would also block the light into the windows on the side of this building.



The photograph below demonstrates that the service yard is currently used for deliveries by large delivery lorries use the service yard



There is currently a commercial bin storage area behind the building to the front right side of the photograph where a significant number of large bins are stored which serve various local businesses and residential flats, including Hermanos Restaurant, Grovely Pets and the Ten Tun Tap Brewhouse. The current practice is that refuse lorries empty these bins via the service yard. Alternative arrangements would be required to enable emptying of both trade and residential bins would need to be sought that does not involve inconvenience adjoining properties.

The report highlights several concerns for consideration when determining the council's response to this application which includes:

1. Potential to cause inconvenience and obstruction to neighbouring properties, both commercial and residential by restricting safe access to parking areas and access to their properties
2. Would block out light into a neighbouring residential property which would have a detrimental impact to the health and well-being of those residents affected
3. Would create a dangerous situation whereby vehicles would have limited space in which to manoeuvre across a pedestrian walkway / public right of way and which could also lead to vehicles having to reverse back onto the highway
4. Restricts access to bin storage and waste collection which services businesses in Market Square and Westbrooke Walk
5. Represents an overdevelopment of the site where the form and height of development is at variance with the form of the immediately adjoining properties.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to determine their response to the Planning Application 60389/001

ITEM 8: KINGS POND

FOR DECISION

Members attended a councillor briefing workshop on 23rd October to receive a presentation from Councillor Hammond on the survey work that has been carried out to date under the Kings Pond Feasibility Study project. This project was supported by Council at the Extra-ordinary Full Council meeting held on 19th January 2023 with the Council authorising a project budget of £25,000 (minute reference 162 refers).

Following the workshop a Press Release was issued together with a briefing paper entitled “King’s Pond – The Next Steps in Deciding the Way Forward”. These documents plus all other reports and survey results are available on the Town Council’s website <https://www.alton.gov.uk/kings-pond-update/>.

The way forward for Kings Pond will be on the agenda for the Full Council Meeting on 8th January 2025.

However, whatever is decided at that meeting, any major works to the Pond will need Planning Approval and Environment Agency permissions. Applications for these will require comprehensive ecological surveys and impact assessments. Some of this survey work is seasonal and instructions will need to be given soon for any winter season work.

The budget approved in 2023 has expensed £21,782.50 of the allocated £25,000 budget and further funding is required to carry out the further survey work necessary to move the project forward. Council is, therefore, being requested to approve an additional budget of £15,000 to cover the next stage of works as described.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve an additional budget of £15,000 to cover the additional survey work required in preparation of being able to submit applications to both the Environmental Agency & EHDC Planning.

ITEM 9: COMMUNITY CANOPY PROJECT – PUBLIC GARDENS

FOR DECISION

Alton Town Council successfully applied for a grant from the Government Grow Up Fund which is administered by East Hampshire District Council and were awarded £27,358 of funding in support of erecting a permanent structure in the Public Gardens. Following an approach to the Conservation Officer for advice on the type of structure that officers had included in their application, he has advised that planning permission will be required given that the Public Gardens is in a Conservation Area and the structure is a permanent fixture. Given that pre-app advice is to be sought officers are requesting an “in principle” agreement from Council that would allow officers to move forward with this project.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to grant an “in principle” agreement for a permanent structure to be erected in the Public Gardens, subject to planning approval being obtained.

ITEM 10: KINGS ARMS – YOUTH SERVICES REPORT 1ST APRIL-31ST AUGUST 2024

FOR DECISION

Members are aware that continued funding to the Kings Arms Youth Services is subject to a Service Level Agreement (a copy of which is included in Members Bundles) which requires a representative to attend the meeting of the Full Council to answer any questions arising from their latest report. The Service Level Agreement was agreed at Full Council on 7th February 2024 at which time Councillors RESOLVED to agree the continuance of a 2-year Service Level Agreement for the Kings Arms with effect from 1st April 2024 and to note the latest Accounts as presented (Minute ref: 88 refers). Their latest report is presented to Council for comment and to allow Councillors to raise any questions.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to note the Kings Arms Report as tabled and to ask questions arising of the Kings Arms representative.

ITEM 11: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS TO 31ST OCTOBER 2024 & PENSION AUDIT LETTER

FOR DECISION

As the Agenda papers for this meeting are being published prior to month end, the Statement of Accounts bundle will be issued under separate cover, but Members are still requested to scrutinise the accounts and accompanying documents as at 31st October 2024 and to submit any questions they may have to the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting.

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 2024

The balance sheet is presented for sign off by the Chairman of the Council and the RFO (Responsible Financial Officer, Mrs Pat Harris – Town Clerk)

Income & Expenditure

The Statutory Income and Expenditure Report for the period 1st – 31st October 2024

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31st October 2024

The Bank Reconciliation Statements require signing off on behalf of the council that the figures presented reconcile with the original bank statement which will be given to the Chairman on the night.

Payments over £500

The report includes all payments over £500, issued between 1st-31st October in respect of invoices and grant cheques.

Pension Audit Letter

Members are requested to note the Pension Audit letter received in respect of completion of the Pension Audit Return to Hampshire County Council.

Bank Transfer

A transfer of £150,000 has been made from the Unity Current Account to the Unity Deposit Account.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to confirm their approval of:

- 1. The balance sheet dated 31st October 2024**
- 2. The Income and Expenditure account to 31st October 2024**
- 3. The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit & Property Fund Accounts**
- 4. The Payments over £500 covering 1st-31st October 2024**
- 5. The Pension Audit Letter**
- 6. Transfer of £150,000 from the Unity Current to the Deposit Account on 31st October**

ITEM 12: EVENTS PROGRAM FOR 2025

FOR DECISION

Members have previously been provided with a comprehensive 2024 Events report which contained within it officers recommendations for dates for the Alton Town Council events program for 2025.

Tuesday, 18 th February 2025	Pancake Race	Public Gardens
7 th -12 th April 2025	Easter Egg Trail	Public Gardens
Saturday, 11 th May 2025	Spring Garden Fayre	Public Gardens
1 st -31 st May 2025	Alton Walking Festival	Various locations
Sunday, 1 st June	Community Big Lunch	Public Gardens
Saturday, 21 st June 2025	Regency Day & statue unveiling	Assembly Rooms Lawns
June-September 2025	Picnics in the Park	Public Gardens
	Details to be confirmed	
June-August 2025	Wellbeing Wednesdays & Selfcare Sundays	
	Details of exact program to be confirmed	

July-August 2025

Fun Fridays – Summer Holidays Public Gardens

25th July 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th August

14th-20th October 2025

Autumn Walking Festival

Various Locations

Members are reminded that the above events are not the full program for 2025 as Alton Town Council events are supplemented with a full third-party events programme throughout the year.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve the Alton Town Council's Events Program for 2025 as tabled

ITEM 13: REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES

FOR DECISION

The review of council policies is a standing item on the Agenda for Full Council until such time as all current policies have been reviewed and adopted by Council.

This item will be introduced by Councillor Matthew Bayliss as Chair of the Staffing Committee.

The Bribery & Corruption Policy for Staff is a new policy as although referred to in the Staff Handbook, no policy is currently in place. Although tabled at the Full Council meeting held on 4th September it was withdrawn to allow the Town Clerk to investigate best practice within the sector into how more appropriate sector wording could make the Policy more relevant to a Town Council. This has now been undertaken and a reworded policy is tabled having been reviewed by the Staffing Committee with the recommendation that it be adopted by Full Council.

There is currently no Bribery & Corruption Policy for Councillors and therefore, this new Policy is again tabled for adoption having been reviewed by the Staffing Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to review and adopt the Bribery & Corruption Policy for Staff and the Bribery & Corruption Policy for Councillors as tabled

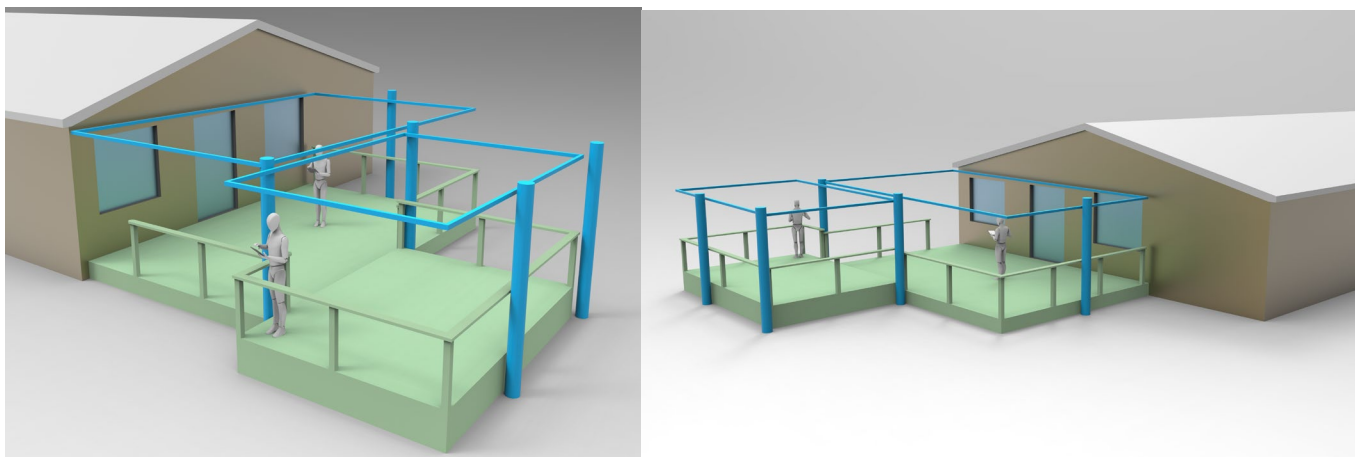
ITEM 14: LANDLORDS CONSENT: ALTON FC

FOR DECISION

Alton FC have approached the Town Council for Landlords Consent as they are looking to commission the installation of a "supporters' refuge" which would provide additional cover for spectators who are having to combat the current inclement weather conditions and thereby improve the matchday experience for their supporters. Please see the "to scale" CAD drawings which the club have commissioned for illustrative purposes in support of their proposal.

The construction would consist of four steel uprights which would sit in the ground to the side and back of the existing decking. A steel canopy structure would be joined to the uprights and the side of the clubhouse.

The steel frame would have two 'awnings' that could be extended/retracted to provide cover overhead as and when required, and 'curtains' that can be rolled up and down over the sides would provide additional protection from the elements should it be required. On an uneventful weather day, the curtains would be stored and spectators would then be able to enjoy the weather.



Should Landlords Consent be granted Alton FC are aware that they will need to contact EHDC with a view to obtaining pre-planning advice through its chargeable service (which takes 20 days and costs £100) to obtain an opinion as to whether their proposal requires the Club to submit a full planning application. As the club do not want to incur unnecessary charges, they are seeking Landlords Consent in the first instance.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are grant Landlords Consent to Alton FC for the installation of a steel structure at the football ground known as The Enclosure in Anstey Park.

ITEM 15: East Hampshire District Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Consultation FOR DECISION

In 2020, Hampshire County Council published the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in response to the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (published in 2017). This was developed by Witteveen+Bos UK Limited.

That year, the government guidance changed, meaning the LCWIP needed further work to meet new standards. To do this, East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) began working with Hampshire County Council (HCC) to jointly develop a revised LCWIP for East Hampshire. This meant engaging with stakeholders again and developing a new LCWIP.

The EHDC consultation was launched on 7th October for a 6-week period which closes at 11.59 p.m. on Sunday, 17th November. Responses can be submitted via online or e-mail with full details available on the Hampshire County Council website where a copy of the draft LCWIP is available including cycle routes and core walking zones and walking routes. <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/climate/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip> Full details of the consultation were circulated to councillors on that date.

The next steps are that following the close of the consultation the responses will be reviewed to help shape the final document with responses from some of the survey questions feeding into the prioritisation process. The prioritisation and next steps chapters will then be added to the LCWIP document which will go to a HCC decision day for consideration in the spring of 2025.

The Climate Change Committee has been working with Cycle Alton in drafting a response on behalf of Alton Town Council. This will be tabled by the Chair of the Climate Change Committee, Councillor Barbara Tansey with a recommendation to approve. The Draft response will be circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Councillors are requested to approve that the draft response tabled by the Climate Change Committee is submitted as on behalf of Alton Town Council.

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2024 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL**

Present: **Councillor** **Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)**
 Mark Boyce-Churn
 John Chubb
 Don Hammond
 Graham Hill
 Matthew Kellermann
 Nick O'Brien

In attendance: **Pat Harris** - **Town Clerk**
 Hayley Carter - **Deputy Clerk**
 12 Members of the public

57 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Jonathan Waugh, Doug Richards, Peter Wadman, Matthew Bayliss, Janice Treacher and Barbara Tansey

58 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members of the public for attending. She reminded all those attending that in accordance with the Council's published Recording of Meetings Policy, as displayed on the door, anyone wishing to record a meeting is requested to let the Chair of the meeting know prior to or at the start of the meeting.

If anyone does not wish to be recorded, they must make the Chair of the meeting aware. No filming of any member of the public is allowed without their consent, or of any child or vulnerable person without the consent of them and their parent, guardian or carer.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 paragraph 41 (1) only the official signed minutes of the council and its committees will be recognised as the formal, statutory and legally binding record of a meeting.

59 Minutes of the Full Council Meetings held on 4th September 2024

Councillor Kellermann wished it to be noted that he did not feel the minutes accurately reflected the meeting and he could not see why technology and AI could not be used to write the minutes.

Councillor Hill thanked the officers, particularly Mrs Harris and Mrs Carter, for producing an excellent, very comprehensive set of minutes and Councillor Chubb added that he was in complete agreement and added his thanks to this. Councillor Hill went on to congratulate the Town Mayor for chairing such a busy meeting as well as she did.

1. On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor O'Brien, it was

RESOLVED

to APPROVE the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 4th September 2024

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O'Brien

Against: Councillor Kellermann

60 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

No Declarations of Interest were noted.

61 **Correspondence Received and Questions to the Council**

61.1 Telephone call followed up with an E-mail confirmation from Treloars College that they have taken delivery of their brand-new electric bus and thanking the Town Council for the £10,000 CIL funding agreed in 2023 towards the cost of the vehicle.

61.2 Mr Paul Fitzgibbon said "At the last council meeting I was one of those raising concerns with the draft neighbourhood plan. I did this to try and help address what seemed an obviously unfair approach that may have failed at referendum. Given where we are with the process I wanted to come this evening and offer the council some support moving forward. To that end I have a simple suggestion. I wonder if the council might make use of the immediate next few weeks to conduct a "lessons learnt" exercise, a simple yet structured reflection while events are still fresh in the mind. It seems to me that this could be done very quickly, be potentially very useful and cost nothing - it may for example help the communications agency being briefed, and with the formation of a new steering group. It would also demonstrate the council wants to learn from the process thus far. I am thinking of a simple survey of various parties, asking three questions about the previous steering group's work - what worked, what didn't work, and what improvements could be made going forward. I would be able to conduct the survey - perhaps with help from Rob Fowell and John Bound, to anonymise the feedback and to make a simple qualitative analysis of the results. The people I would survey - all individually - are the past steering group (who may/may not participate), councillors, EHDC officers, our consultants, residents groups, ATC staff.

Before making this offer to help I thought I would assess how easy this would be to do and so I have, in the past 48 hours, made a start of sorts - I have asked those three questions of two groups of people and received some very interesting and potentially useful feedback; it was incredibly easy to do.

My simple request is for the council to approve proceeding with this suggestion at this meeting so I can get on with it (I can't think why you wouldn't want to do this); I will work with John and Rob to analyse and summarise the findings and provide them to you all in the next few weeks. That's my offer of help."

The council advised that as this was not on the agenda for decision it could not be a formal resolution this evening. Mr Fitzgibbon therefore said he would just take it upon himself to do it and present his findings to council before their workshop in

November, in the hope that the council would be able to use the information and would find it useful.

61.3 Mr Len Meek spoke about the state of the streets in Alton and what a mess some of the pavements and roads are. He said some pavements are unusable as they are so overgrown, in particular the Ashdell Road / Turk Street junction. He has lived in the town for sixteen years and is sick of the state of the place. The Town Clerk asked Mr Meek to provide her with his phone number before he left so that she could arrange for an officer to call him to find out exactly which areas he felt required maintenance so that it could be reported to the appropriate authority.

61.4 Mr Anthony Furnival raised three points:

- He would like to see recorded voting as he feels it is important for transparency. He suggested that Standing Orders could be changed so that all votes are recorded. However, the Deputy Clerk pointed out that particular Standing Order is worded in law. She pointed out that the vote in minute reference 46, which Mr Furnival was specifically referring to, was not recorded because she had been unable to see all councillors from her position at the front of the Assembly Rooms and so had just counted hands. As no councillor had requested a recorded vote names had not been recorded at the time and so the minute could not later be changed.
- He had raised the involvement of the previous Town Clerk as a consultant and did not get a response following the 4th September meeting. He says it is important to give feedback and get rid of the 'them and us' perception and not responding to people does not encourage them to continue getting involved.
- With regards Kings Pond he asked that councillors consider a motion to commit to spending equal amounts of money on multiple options for the pond. In particular he would like a commitment from council that the option of keeping the pond will also be explored.

Councillor Eyre advised that councillors have two workshops in their diaries over the next two months; one on Kings Pond and one on Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Chubb stated that the appointment of Oneill Homer as consultants on the Neighbourhood Plan had been a council decision, made around eighteen months previously, and retaining them once the former clerk had taken up employment with them was not a decision they had taken lightly, but her local knowledge and care for the town was seen as a positive thing, not a negative. He went on to say that recorded voting is not always a good thing as the council has collective accountability for its decisions and councillors must abide by those decisions whichever way they voted at the time. It is not about political gain for any one individual councillor.

Mr Furnival said that he felt a lot of the problems with ill-feeling in the town comes down to a problem with communication.

Councillor Hill acknowledged this and agreed that communication is a big issue. He went on to point out that the council had already resolved (18th January 2023, *minute reference 162*) to explore all options for Kings Pond and had set aside £25,000 to do so. They had also resolved to set aside £250,000 to undertake whatever work was eventually decided upon following further public consultation.

Councillor Kellermann said that he disagreed with Councillor Chubb in that it is not a collective decision, it is a majority decision.

Councillor Chubb responded by stating that he had said collective accountability, not collective decision.

62 **To receive a report from and ask questions of County and District Councillors**

Councillor Hill told the meeting that he had taken on the responsibility of organising a rota for various District Councillors to ensure the Town Council received a written report once a quarter.

63 **Council Structure – Alton Town Council Ways of Working**

63.1 On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor O’Brien, it was

RESOLVED to:

Confirm the Committee structure of the Council comprising of Full Council, Climate Change, Planning Committee & Staffing

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O’Brien

Against: Councillor Kellermann

63.2 On the proposal of Councillor Boyce-Churn, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

RESOLVED to:

Formally dissolve the position of Champions

All in favour

63.3 On the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED to:

Approve the amended Terms of Reference for the Climate Change Committee

All in favour

63.4 On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

RESOLVED to:

Confirm the appointment of Councillor Doug Richards as Councillor Representative to the Allotment Committee

All in favour

63.5 Councillor Kellermann stated that he had offered to put together a rota for the “meet the councillor” sessions but needed formal approval to do so from the council. He therefore proposed an amendment to the resolution, to add on “with Councillor Matthew Kellermann being requested to organise the rota”. This was seconded by Councillor O’Brien with all voting in favour, therefore the amendment was carried.

Therefore, on the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Boyce-Churn, it was

RESOLVED to:

Confirm the re-establishment of “meet the Councillor sessions” to be held on a Saturday morning in the middle unit of the ground floor of the Town Hall building with Councillor Matthew Kellermann being requested to organise the rota

All in favour.

64 **Jubilee Playing Fields circular path upgrade – appointment of a contractor**

Councillor Kellermann stated that he had a problem with the process and could not understand why councillors were only provided with the tender information as ‘Contractor A, B, C and D’. He felt that the names of the contractors should have been published. He also wanted to know who had authorised Councillor Hammond to take part in the opening of the tenders. The Deputy Clerk pointed out that ATC’s Financial Regulations dictate that all sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council. Coincidentally Councillor Hammond was in the office dealing with another matter and volunteered to undertake this role. Councillor Kellermann went on to demand to know why councillors had not been provided with the full breakdown of the marking and the technical information for the project. The Town Clerk pointed out that all councillors had been sent the full papers almost a week in advance of the meeting and if any councillor felt that they had been provided with insufficient information upon which to base a decision, they should have raised this in advance so the additional information could be circulated to all councillors; Councillor Kellermann should not be haranguing officers in this way in a public meeting.

Councillor Chubb asked whether the recommended contractor had been involved in drawing up the specification. The Deputy Clerk said that two contractors had initially scoped the work for the purposes of the grant applications and the specification drawn from that, and the recommended contractor was one of them. Councillor Chubb said that for the record he felt it had been done fairly.

Councillor Hill added that the council has a team of professional officers who do a very good job of making appropriate recommendations for councillors to make a decision.

On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To award the Jubilee Field Circular Path Upgrade contract to Contractor A – Blakedown Landscapes - at a contract price of £80,684.33.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O’Brien

Against: Councillor Kellermann

65 Neighbourhood CIL – Brewery Heritage trail – Changes to the project to be approved

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor O'Brien, it was

RESOLVED

to confirm that the changes that have had to be undertaken to the original design of the project still satisfy the terms and conditions of the CIL grant awarded by the Town Council

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O'Brien

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

66 Statement of Accounts

Councillor Chubb acknowledged that it was fantastic budgeting but stated that he felt there was too much money in the current account. The Town Clerk confirmed that the second half of the precept had just been received and so a transfer had not yet been done into the Deposit Account.

Councillor Kellermann stated that he would be abstaining because he did not feel that he had been provided with sufficient time to absorb all the financial information.

On the proposal of Councillor Boyce-Churn, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

to confirm approval of:

- 1. The balance sheet dated 30th September 2024**
- 2. The Income and Expenditure account to 30th September 2024**
- 3. The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit & Property Fund Accounts**
- 4. The Payments over £500 covering 1st August-30th September 2024**
- 5. The Internal Auditors report to the period 30th September 2024**
- 6. The Financial Risk Assessment 2024/25**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O'Brien

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

67 External Auditors Report

Councillor Kellermann stated that he could not possibly approve the External Auditors Report as he could not be sure of their impartiality. The Town Clerk confirmed that the External Auditor is provided to the council by a higher authority, not appointed by the council itself or officers.

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Chubb, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the content of the external auditors report for 2023/24 financial year

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O'Brien

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

68 **Road Naming – Lord Treloar site**

Councillor Chubb noted that for future sites the council should perhaps be taking into account people who have done good work in the town and should be recognised, rather than just historical references, as history is being made all the time.

On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

to approve the following road names at the former Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital site: Andrews Way; Argyle Gardens and Smart Close which followed consultation with local historian Jane Hurst.

All in favour.

69 **Lease Arrangements**

69.1 On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

To grant a new 35-year Lease to Alton Tennis Club.

All in favour

69.2 On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

To grant a new 35-year Lease to Alton Rugby Club.

All in favour

70 **Alton Neighbourhood Plan update**

Councillor Kellermann declared that he was not happy that the clerk had issued a press release, which had been copied to all councillors for information. He felt this was over-reaching yet again by officers. In his opinion he stated that the sentence about Oneill Homer was inflammatory, which served to negate the bland nature of the statement. The Town Mayor pointed out that the Town Clerk at the workshop had asked twice for clarification of

what councillors wanted to see in the press release while she made notes, and that the Town Clerk had consulted with the Mayor on it before sending. Councillor Hill pointed out that for clarity of process, the Town Clerk and the Town Mayor may issue a factual press release, which this was. Oneill Homer are our consultants and remain as such, and on balance he felt it was right to confirm that in the statement. Councillor Chubb said that for the record he felt that the Town Clerk and the Town Mayor were acting in the best interests of the Council. Councillor O'Brien added his thanks to the Town Clerk for getting the statement out in a timely manner following the workshop and Councillor Hammond confirmed that everything in the statement was factually correct.

On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor O'Brien, it was

RESOLVED

to confirm the action placed on the Town Clerk to scope a briefing paper and submit to professional communication companies

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O'Brien

Against: Councillor Kellermann

71 **Alton Town Council's response to the Government consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the planning system**

Councillor Kellermann stated that he had been misrepresented as he had replied to the Town Clerk when she circulated the Draft Council Response to councillors, telling her that he could not put his name to it as he did not agree with all of its content.

Councillor Boyce-Churn said that meetings were for decision making, not attacks on officers.

Councillor Hill said that before he went any further, he would like to thank the Town Clerk for putting in a very detailed response and for working on a Sunday to get this done before the deadline. He said that we must appreciate that our officers work hard to respond quickly and put together expert responses. The Town Clerk's response was very much in line with EHDC's, and they had a whole team working on it.

Councillor Kellermann replied that he had made it perfectly clear that he wanted a note attached that he did not support it.

Councillor Hill pointed out that this response was on behalf of the council, not individual councillors, but that the consultation was open to everyone, and all councillors were welcome to submit their own individual responses. He asked if any councillor had. The answer was "No".

Councillor Eyre clarified that this response was submitted from Alton Town Council and not from just a few councillors who wanted to put their name to it. Councillors must respect a majority decision. She went on to thank the Town Clerk for preparing the response, circulating it for agreement and then adding it to the agenda for retrospective approval, which was the only way the council could have submitted it by the deadline. She said she thought the Town Clerk had done an excellent job on the document and had picked up points she would not have even thought of.

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Chubb, it was

RESOLVED

to retrospectively approve the submission as on behalf of Alton Town Council.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Boyce-Churn, Chubb, Hammond, Hill and O'Brien

Against: Councillor Kellermann

72 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and, as per subsection 3A, where the public are excluded from a meeting of a relevant local government body under subsection (2), the body may also prevent any person from reporting on the meeting using methods-
(a) which can be used without that person's presence at the meeting, and
(b) which enable persons not present at the meeting to see or hear the proceedings at the meeting as it takes place or later.

All in favour.

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION

73 **Code of Conduct complaint**

See confidential minute.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER-OFFICER PROTOCOL



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Protocol is to provide clear guidelines for councillors and officers of the council in their relations with one another. The Protocol's intention is to build and maintain good working relationships between councillors and officers as they work together. Employees of the Council are referred to as "officers" throughout.

A strong, constructive, and trusting relationship between councillors and officers is essential to the effective and efficient working of the council.

This Protocol also seeks to reflect the principles underlying the Code of Conduct which applies to councillors and the employment terms and conditions of officers. The shared objective is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government.

The following extract from the Local Government Association guidance on the 2020 Model councillor Code of Conduct states that:

"Both councillors and officers are servants of the public and are indispensable to one another. Together, they bring the critical skills, experience and knowledge required to manage an effective local authority."

At the heart of this relationship is the importance of mutual respect. Councillor-officer relationships should be conducted in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, it is important that any dealings between councillors and officers should observe reasonable standards of courtesy, should show mutual appreciation of the importance of their respective roles and that neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or seek to exert undue influence on the other party.

Councillors provide a democratic mandate to the local authority and are responsible to the electorate whom they represent. They set their local authority's policy framework, ensure that services and policies are delivered and scrutinise local authority services.

Chairs and vice chairs of committees have additional responsibilities. These responsibilities will result in increased expectations and relationships with officers that are more complex. Such councillors must still respect the impartiality of officers and must not ask them to undertake work of a party-political nature or compromise their position with other councillors or other officers.

Officers provide the professional advice and managerial expertise and information needed for decision making by councillors and to deliver the policy framework agreed by councillors. They are responsible for implementing decisions of councillors and the day-to-day administration of the local authority.

The roles are very different but need to work in a complementary way.

It is important for both sides to respect these differences and ensure that they work in harmony. Getting that relationship right is an important skill. That is why the code requires councillors to respect an officer's impartiality and professional expertise. In

turn officers should respect a councillor's democratic mandate as the people accountable to the public for the work of the local authority. It is also important for a local authority to have a councillor-officer protocol which sets out how this relationship works and what both councillors and officers can expect in terms of mutual respect and good working relationships."

This Protocol covers:

- The respective roles and responsibilities of councillors and officers;
- Relationships between councillors and officers;
- Where/who a councillor or an officer should go to if they have concerns;
- Who is responsible for making decisions.

BACKGROUND

This Protocol is intended to assist councillors and officers, by addressing some of the sensitive circumstances which arise in a challenging working environment.

The reputation and integrity of the council is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of councillors and officers working together to support each other's roles.

The aim is effective and professional working relationships characterised by mutual trust, respect and courtesy.

ROLES OF COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

The respective roles of councillors and officers can be summarised as follows:

- Councillors and officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another, but their responsibilities are distinct.
- Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only for their term of office.
- Officers are responsible to the council. Their job is to give advice to councillors and to the council, and to carry out the council's work under the direction and control of the council and relevant committees.

Councillors

Councillors have four main areas of responsibility:

- To determine council policy and provide community leadership;
- To monitor and review council performance in implementing policies and delivering services;
- To represent the council externally; and
- To act as advocates for their constituents.

All councillors have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with the officers, regardless of their status and should be treated equally.

Councillors should not involve themselves in the day to day running of the council. This is the responsibility of the officers, and the officers will be acting on instructions from the council or its committees, within an agreed job description.

In line with the councillors' Code of Conduct, a councillor must treat others with respect, must not bully or harass people and must not do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the council.

Officers can expect councillors:

- to give strategic leadership and direction and to seek to further council's agreed policies and objectives, with the understanding that councillors have the right to take the final decision on issues based on advice
- to act within the policies, practices, processes and conventions established by the council
- to work constructively in partnership with officers acknowledging their separate and distinct roles and responsibilities
- to understand and support the respective roles and responsibilities of officers and their associated workloads, pressures and reporting lines
- to treat officers fairly and with respect, dignity and courtesy
- to act with integrity, to give support and to respect appropriate confidentiality
- to recognise that officers do not work under the instruction of individual councillors or groups
- not to subject officers to bullying, intimidation, harassment, or put them under undue pressure
- to treat all officers equally, and not discriminate based on any characteristic such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation
- not to request officers to exercise discretion which involves acting outside the council's policies and procedures
- not to authorise, initiate, or certify any financial transactions or enter into any contract, agreement or undertaking on behalf of the council or in their role as a councillor without proper and lawful authority
- not to use their position or relationship with officers to advance their personal interest or to influence decisions improperly
- to comply, at all times, with the councillors' Code of Conduct, the law, and such other policies, procedures, protocols and conventions agreed by the council
- to respect the impartiality of officers and not to undermine their role in carrying out their duties
- not to ask officers to undertake work, or act in a way, which seeks to support or benefit a particular political party or gives rise to an officer being criticised for operating in a party-political manner
- not to ask officers to exceed their authority where that authority is given by the Council

Chairs and vice-chairs of council and committees

Chairs and vice-chairs have additional responsibilities as delegated by the council. These responsibilities mean that they may have to have a closer working relationship with officers than other councillors do. However, they must still respect the impartiality of officers and must not ask them to undertake work or anything else which would prejudice their impartiality.

Officers

The primary role of officers is to advise, inform and support all councillors and to implement the agreed policies of the council.

Officers are responsible for day-to-day managerial and operational decisions within the council, including directing and overseeing the work of any more junior officers. Councillors should avoid inappropriate involvement in such matters.

In performing their role, officers will act professionally, impartially and with neutrality. Whilst officers will respect a councillor's view on an issue, officers should not be influenced or pressured to make comment or recommendations which are contrary to their professional judgement or views.

Councillors can expect officers:

- to implement decisions of the council and its committees which are lawful, which have been properly approved in accordance with the requirements of the law and are duly recorded. This includes respecting the decisions made, regardless of any different advice given to the council or whether the decision differs from the officer's view
- to work constructively in partnership with councillors in an impartial and professional manner
- to treat councillors fairly and with respect, dignity and courtesy
- to treat all councillors equally, and not discriminate based on any characteristic such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation
- to assist and advise all parts of the council
- to act in the best interests of the council as expressed in the council's formal decisions
- to respond to enquiries and complaints in accordance with the council's relevant policies and protocols
- to be alert to issues which are, or are likely to be, contentious or politically sensitive, and be aware of the implications for councillors, the media or other sections of the public
- to act with honesty, dignity and integrity, respecting appropriate confidentiality
- to provide support and learning and development opportunities for councillors to help them in performing their various roles in line with the council's training and development policy

- not to use their relationship with councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly
- to act within the policies, practices, processes and conventions established by the council

Officers have the right not to support councillors in any role other than that of councillor, and not to engage or participate in actions incompatible with this Protocol.

In giving advice to councillors, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the officer to express his/her own professional views and recommendations. An officer may report the views of individual councillors on an issue, but the recommendation should be the officer's own. If a councillor wishes to express a contrary view they should not pressurise the officer to make a recommendation contrary to the officer's professional view, nor criticise an officer for discharging his/her responsibilities.

There are exceptional circumstances where a councillor can fulfil the role of officer, for example where there is a vacancy. This can only be done if the councillor is not paid for the role and should only ever be short-term while the council seeks to fill a vacancy.

The Relationship: General

Councillors and officers are indispensable to one another. However, their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are accountable to the public, whereas officers are accountable to the council as a whole.

At the heart of this Protocol is the importance of mutual respect and also of civility. Councillor/officer relationships are to be conducted in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, it is important that any dealings between councillors and officers should observe standards of courtesy and that neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position nor seek to exert undue influence on the other party.

Individual councillors should not seek to undermine majority decisions of the council, as this could then bring them into conflict with officers who have been charged with promoting and implementing the council's agreed course of action.

Councillors shall not criticise or complain about officers, nor raise faults relating to the conduct or capability of any officer (or officers collectively), at meetings held in public, in the press, on social media, or in any other public manner, or in any manner that is incompatible with this Protocol.

A councillor who is unhappy about the conduct of an officer must:

- avoid personal attacks on, or abuse of, the officer at all times
- ensure that any criticism is well founded
- ensure that any criticism is raised in private (not in public)

- raise the concern with the Town Clerk in respect of officers, or the Chair of the Staffing Committee in respect of the Town Clerk

Neither shall an officer raise in public matters relating to the conduct or capability of another councillor or officer or to the internal management of the council. If any such matters need to be raised, they shall only be raised in private and in a manner that is incompatible with the objectives of this Protocol.

Potential breaches of this Protocol are considered below.

Expectations

All councillors can expect:

- A commitment from officers to the council, and not to any individual councillor, group of councillors or political group
- Officers to understand and support respective roles, workloads and pressures
- A timely response from officers to enquiries and complaints, respecting workloads and pressures
- Officers to provide professional and impartial advice, not influenced by political views or personal preferences
- Timely, up to date, information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities or positions that they hold
- Officers to be aware of and sensitive to the public and political environment locally
- Respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality from officers and other councillors
- Training and development opportunities to help them carry out their role effectively
- Not to have personal issues raised with them by officers outside the council's agreed procedures
- That officers will not use their contact with councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly

Some general principles

- The Proper Officer (usually called the Clerk) is the head of paid services and has a line-management responsibility for all other staff. Communications should be made directly with the Proper Officer, unless it is agreed by the Proper Officer that such communications may take place directly with other officers over a particular matter. Councillors should not give instructions directly to the council's staff without the express approval of the Proper Officer.
- Close personal relationships between councillors and officers should be avoided as they can confuse their separate roles and get in the way of the proper conduct of council business, not least by creating a perception in others that a particular councillor or officer is getting preferential treatment

COUNCILLORS' ACCESS TO COUNCIL'S INFORMATION AND COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

Councillors are free to approach officers to request them to provide such information, explanation and advice as they may reasonably need to assist them in discharging their role as members of the council. This can range from a request for general information about some aspect of the council's activities to a request for specific information on behalf of a constituent. Such approaches should normally be directed to the Proper Officer.

The legal rights of councillors to inspect council documents are covered partly by statute and partly by the common law.

The common law right of councillors is based on the principle that any member has prima facie right to inspect council documents so far as their access to the documents is reasonably necessary to enable the member to properly perform their duties as a member of the council. This principle is commonly referred to as the "need to know" principle.

The exercise of this common law right depends therefore upon the councillor's ability to demonstrate that they have the necessary "need to know". In this respect a member has no right to "a roving commission" to go and examine documents of the council. Mere curiosity is not sufficient. The crucial question is the determination of the "need to know". This question shall be determined by the Proper Officer.

In some circumstances (e.g. a committee member wishing to inspect documents relating to the functions of that committee) a councillor's "need to know" will normally be presumed. In other circumstances (e.g. a councillor wishing to inspect documents which contain personal information about third parties) a councillor will normally be expected to justify the request in specific terms. Any council information provided to a councillor must only be used by the councillor for the purpose for which it was provided i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the councillor's duties as a member of the council.

Information provided to councillors in confidence shall be kept confidential.

For completeness, councillors do, of course, have the same right as any other member of the public to make requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

CORRESPONDENCE

Confidential correspondence between an individual councillor and an officer should not normally be copied (by the officer) to any other councillor. Where exceptionally it is

necessary to copy the correspondence to another councillor, this should be made clear to the original councillor. In other words, a system of “silent copies” should not be employed. Acknowledging that the “BCC” system of e-mailing is used, it should be made clear at the foot of any e-mails if another councillor has received an e-mail by adding “cc Councillor X.”

Official letters or emails on behalf of the council should normally be sent out under the name of an officer, rather than under the name of a councillor. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter or email to be issued in the name of the chair, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. Letters or emails which, for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the council should never be sent out in the name of a councillor.

Correspondence to individual councillors from officers should not be sent or copied to third parties if they are marked “confidential”. In doing so, the relevant officer should seek to make clear what is to be treated as being shared with the councillor in confidence and why that is so.

PRESS AND MEDIA

Councils are accountable to their electorate. Accountability requires local understanding. This will be promoted by the council, explaining its objectives and policies to the electors and customers. Councils use publicity to keep the public informed and to encourage public participation. The council needs to tell the public about the services it provides. Good effective publicity should aim to improve public awareness of the council’s activities.

Publicity is a sensitive matter in any local government environment because of the impact it can have. Expenditure on publicity can be significant. It is essential to ensure that decisions on publicity are properly made in accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity and the council’s own Communication and Social-Media Policy.

The Proper Officer may respond to press enquiries, but should confine any comments to the facts of the subject matter and the professional aspects of the function concerned. On no account must an officer expressly or impliedly make any political opinion, comment or statement.

Any press release that may be necessary to clarify the council’s position in relation to any matter should be approved by the Proper Officer.

The chair (or chair of a committee) may act as spokespersons for the council in responding to the press and media and making public statements on behalf of the council but should liaise with the Proper Officer on all forms of contact with the press and media. The council may also appoint individual councillors as spokespeople where there is an area of particular expertise but this should only be done with the agreement of the council.

The council must comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1986 (“the Act”)

regarding publicity. All media relations work will comply with the national Code of Practice for Local Government Publicity. The Code is statutory guidance and the council must have regard to it and follow its provisions when making any decision on publicity.

The LGA has produced useful guidance on the Publicity Code -
<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/short-guide-publicity-during-pre-election-period>

For more detailed information and guidance regarding the role of councillors in connection with the use of social media, reference should be made to the council's Communication and Social Media Policy.

IF THINGS GO WRONG

Procedure for officers:

Occasionally the relationship between councillors and officers may break down or become strained. Whilst it is always preferable to resolve matters informally, the law requires all employers to have disciplinary and grievance procedures. Adopting a grievance procedure enables individual employees to raise concerns, problems or complaints about their employment in an open and fair way.

The Staffing Committee under delegated responsibility shall deal with all personnel matters.

The principal council's monitoring officer may be able to offer a mediation/conciliation role, or it may be necessary to seek independent advice.

If a matter concerns a formal written complaint alleging a breach of the councillors' Code of Conduct the matter must be referred to the principal council's monitoring officer in the first instance in line with the Localism Act 2011. The council may however try to resolve any concerns raised informally before they become a formal written allegation.

Procedure for councillors:

If a councillor is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of the Proper Officer or another employee, the matter should be reported to the Proper Officer in the case of employees or in the case of the Proper Officer to the chair of the Staffing Committee. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the matter will be considered by the Staffing Committee who will determine the appropriate action to be taken having regard to the applicable policies and procedures of the council and, if necessary, appropriate independent professional advice.

Alton's Community Canopy



We have had letters of support from many local organisations including bands that perform on Sunday afternoons as part of our social prescribing initiative '*Picnics in the Park*' who find the bandstand is too small to fit the larger groups and from the smaller ones who found the old marquee great for their audiences to use to shelter from the sun on hot days.

Along with letters of support from community groups and charities who would use the canopy to support their events like The Lions '*Party in the Park*' in the summer and St Michaels Hospice '*Reindeer Run*' in December. Meaning they wouldn't need to hire in an expensive marquee or source as many individual gazebos as they could use the shelter instead for their fundraising activities.



Plus a letter of support from the instructor who ran a series of free wellbeing park yoga classes in the park this summer.

It would also be helpful for ATC events like the Spring Garden Fayre and Fun Fridays children's entertainment.

As this would be an all weather permeant structure is will also benefit anyone visiting the park who is looking for shade or shelter from the rain.



Examples of canopy designs.....



Following discussions the minimum size of canopy to accommodate Alton Concert Orchestra is:

Size: 15m x 8m



As we are in a conservation area we have been advised that a timber frame structure would need a solid roof not Polycarbonate.



Example of a Bitumen Felt Shingle roof option



Planting climbing roses at the base of the upright posts. We would like to suggest the Jane Austen charity climbing roses to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen.

Mrs E Messenger
Alton Town Council
Town Hall
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

Enquiries to: Julie McLatch
Direct line: 07786 395322
Email: julie.mclatch@easthants.gov.uk
Reference: REPF 2
Date: 7th October 2024

Emailed to: events@alton.gov.uk

Dear Emily,

Request for Rural Grant Fund Applications Reference: Community Canopy

Thank you for your recent application submission for East Hampshire District Council's consideration.

Following consultation with relevant officers and the portfolio holder, East Hampshire District Council can now advise that approval has been given for:

Alton Town Council

Funding Type: Rural Economic Prosperity Fund (DEFRA/ MHCLG)

Award: up to £27,358

Purpose: Community Canopy

Approval is subject to project specific conditions: None

The approval is subject to standard conditions:

Alton Town Council

- a) is responsible for budgeting for ongoing costs to maintain and manage the project;
- b) must seek any necessary permissions (e.g. Planning, Building Regulations, landowner, highways or drainage);
- c) shall keep East Hampshire District Council updated on the project implementation;
- d) must ensure that the project is delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- e) must ensure that any contractor(s) being employed have the necessary public liability insurance cover in place while delivering the project and they have ongoing insurance cover once the project has been delivered;



Funded by
UK Government



- f) ensure that publicity for the completed project is carried out and includes East Hampshire District Council in any publicity material and acknowledged on the final capital purchase (as approved);
- g) note that funds will be paid in arrears upon satisfactory completion of the project, accompanied by evidence such as supplier/contractor invoices & photographs. Rural Grant Fund Team Officers shall arrange to attend the relevant site to assess completion of the project before approving payment or otherwise;
- h) note that it is at East Hampshire District Council's discretion to withdraw the funding if the project is not completed and monies spent in a timely manner. DEFRA requires funds to have been spent and claimed back from East Hampshire District Council before the end of March 2025.

Should you have any further questions, or need any further information, please contact the Rural Grant Fund Team using the contact details supplied at the top of this letter.

Once the necessary permissions have been obtained and project specific conditions have been met, please contact the Rural Grant Fund Team to provide evidence that you have met the conditions above.

Yours Sincerely

Julie McLatch
Business Development Lead, Regeneration & Economy Team



Funded by
UK Government



Report to Alton Full Town Council Meeting: 1st April 2024 – 31st August 2024

We are pleased to provide the Council with the following information regarding KA youth work for Alton-area young people during the period stated above.

After School (Monday-Friday 3-4.30pm), at the Alton KA Youth Centre

Programme Manager: Dominic Clarke

Number of sessions: 54

Number of different young people: 59

Number of attendances: 524

After School has continued to be a vitally important part of The King's Arms work and is often the way in which we first engage with young people. This term we have continued to make every session open and available for all year groups and this has been very successful with most sessions continuing to be full.

It has been encouraging to see an increased number of young people from Eggar's School attend this term. We also carried out a really successful transition programme this term for the more anxious year 6's who are moving up to secondary school in September.

Due to more complicated than anticipated planning permission process we have not yet been able to start work on our new air-source heating system. We can't wait to finally get proper heating fitted soon with many thanks for the support of Alton Town Council in achieving that. We hope to get the work underway soon.

Our volunteer base for after-school provision has remained the same from last term but we continue to advertise and promote the opportunity of volunteering with us.

Over the summer holidays we were able to offer a couple of fun trips to the after-school group, including a trip to go bowling in Basingstoke and to play Laser Quest in Portsmouth.

Mentoring Programmes at the KA Alton Youth Centre

Programme Manager: Jen Hammersley

Total of all mentoring programmes: 7

Total number of sessions: 95

Total number of young people reached: 64

Total number of attendances: 307

Breaking this down:

- Well-Being/Thrive (3 groups)
 - o Total number of sessions: 27
 - o Total number of young people reached: 23
 - o Total number of attendances: 146

- Aspire Groups (1 group)
 - o Total number of sessions: 12
 - o Total number of young people reached: 9 (6 in this year's cohort and 3 from last year who attending KAfe)
 - o Total number of attendances: 53
- Believe (1 group)
 - o Total number of sessions: 9
 - o Total number of young people reached: 5
 - o Total number of attendances: 34
- RSE sessions
 - o Total number of sessions: 2
 - o Total number of young people reached: 20
 - o Total number of attendances: 20
- 1:1 Mentoring
 - o Total number of sessions: 45
 - o Total number of young people reached: 7
 - o Total number of attendances: 54 (we see 2 young people together)

Our summer term with the young people was fantastic. We were delighted to welcome our lovely new youth worker Naomi, the young people have warmed quickly to her which not only shows her skills with young people but also the feeling of belonging and trust that the young people have in The King's Arms.

In addition to our usual focus on aspirations, choices, anxiety and anger (amongst many other topics), we hosted our first KAfe, a coffee morning for the local community. All of our mentoring groups were involved in the run up to the day; we made biscuits, cakes and decorations for the event and discussed being part of a community and their value within one. It also gave us the opportunity to think about careers. The young people shared their career aspirations with us and we had some fantastic discussions opening up possible routes that they had not considered in the past. We had a guest speaker (female BA pilot) to talk to them about the huge variety of jobs around an airport – from engineering to air stewards or catering. The young people really engaged with this topic and a couple left saying that they would now consider a career in that area. On the day, our Aspire group (current and past) helped us to host; they made drinks, offered cake and spoke to adults who they had not met before, which was a real challenge for many; they worked hard in managing themselves and interacted positively and politely throughout the session. The Head of the local school commented how beneficial the day was, pushing the young people out of their comfort zone and allowing them to succeed in a real-world situation.

Target Work at the Alton KA Youth Centre and for Alton-area young people at the Petersfield KA Youth Centre

Programme Manager: Mandy May-Martin

Supersonics

Summer Term Report – Alton

ALTON YOUTH WORK REPORT



Number of sessions: 13
Number of attendances: 109
Number of different persons: 10
Trip: 2

Over this period in Alton, we have had one young person finish on the program, due to feeling as though he didn't need the support anymore, as he had grown in confidence and had sports clubs he wanted to attend. We ran two trips, a BBQ for all of our Target work young people and their families and then a summer fun session at KA. Over this period Naomi has joined the staff team and has settled in really well. Each session includes games and lots of craft activities, which the young people really like, the young people are now taking a bigger lead in choosing what activities they do, which is great. This term we have also been lucky enough to have recruited another young adult volunteer, whom the young people really like.

Young Carers

Programme Manager: Mandy May-Martin

Total number of different young carers: 19
Number of Club nights: 13
Number of attendances at club nights: 44
Number of 1-1/Lunch Club sessions: 37
Number of different young carers at 1-1/Lunch Clubs: 8
Trips: 3
Number of attendances on the Trips: 13

Over this term we have had lots of new referrals and some young people no longer needing our support, which is great. We continue to support both Eggars and Amery, by seeing the young carers 1-1 and at a lunch club. We were lucky enough to have support from The Petersfield Lions and take the young carers to Marwell, which was a wonderful day. We also put on a BBQ for all the target work families and ran a Summer Party at the end of term. Throughout the term we ran an exploration program helping the young people to understand their role as a young carer and find commonality amongst their peers at the support groups.

Journey Programme – faith development.

Programme Manager: Dom Clarke

Number of sessions: 9
Number of different young people: 12
Number of attendances: 49

Our new Unite programme has continued to be well attended by a range of young people, some connected to local churches, and others who have asked to join Unite from other programmes. Each session includes a time to share the weeks highs and lows, to pray together, eat together and then to spend some time exploring a question of faith. This term we have used a well known and well regarded resource called, Youth Alpha to allow the group to dig deeper into many of the elements of the Christian faith that prompt exploration and discussion. This was well received.

Our lunch club at Eggar's school also meets weekly and is well attended by an enthusiastic group of motivated young people. We run this club in collaboration with the school and one of the maths teachers there. We use the time to pray together for the school and for each other and to support and encourage a deeper understanding of the faith of those who come. This term we also managed to make arrangements with Amery Hill School to start a similar lunch club in September. Over the summer holidays we also enjoyed a fun trip to go bowling in Basingstoke.

We continue to be supported in the Journey Programme by a volunteer from a local parish church.

Youthlink

Programme Manager: Lisa Hillan

Through the East Hants LCP and the newly-launched Alton Community Exchange (ACE), valuable information about resources, programmes and support services is shared. Lisa Hillan serves as Chair of this LCP and Facilitator and co-organiser of ACE (volunteer roles). KA staff take active roles in the LCP and ACE, leading training and sharing best practice regarding EBSA, mental health of YP, young carers, behaviour training, equality and drugs/vaping education.

Youthlink provides valuable opportunities for signposting and support. The LCP and ACE include opportunities to share information about funding. We are grateful for the ongoing support of charities, groups and individuals in this community. From Councillor Grants to funds raised through the Alton Beer Festivals to programme funding from Resurrection Furniture, we depend on myriad sources to continue our work.

The Youthlink Programme concluded at the end of August.

A quote from Lisa Hillan (Youthlink Manager) "I will continue to use my community roles to support The King's Arms Youth Project. Many thanks to the Alton Town Council, whose councillors and staff have made KA a priority, to the benefit of young people and the community. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have served as Youthlink Manager for The King's Arms."

Additional Information

Our work to improve the energy efficiency and warmth in the Alton youth centre continues and we are currently waiting for planning permission to begin work on installing a ground source heat pump system in the centre – a project which is now fully funded. Our newest youth worker, Naomi has settled in well and has quickly become an indispensable part of the Alton team. We also began a project this term to improve the grass verge outside the entrance to KA with planting and a seat. This work should be completed next term.

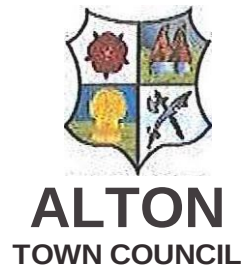
"Ziggy the Zebra", our Alton-based mascot, attended community events, strolled the towns and appeared on centre window displays and promotional materials. The Conga Line video, shared on the Alton Lions' website, was a highlight. A "Contribution KAfe" on 14th June also helped to spotlight our youth work and recruit volunteers.

Promotional adverts (for fundraising and volunteer sourcing) have been placed in the Altonian, displayed on an Alton bus shelter poster—featuring a zebra—and KA purchased a branded gazebo topper, first displayed at Thank You Day.

On 26th July, we held a “KA Walk Between the Centres” that raised much-needed funds, celebrated both of our centres, and shone a spotlight on our youth work.

On the heels of the “Empower” programme in Petersfield, which supported 7 Year 11 EBSA students from The Petersfield School through GCSEs that they had not been predicted even to sit, we have launched Empower with six Eggar’s students. Through a service-level agreement with the school, these students come into the youth centre every weekday morning, where they work with tutors and KA staff.

All KA staff members are committed to our work across East Hampshire. We continue to explore the possibility of setting up a third youth centre in Horndean, after being invited to come into that community.



Service Level Agreement

1 General Overview

This is a Service Level Agreement effective from 1st April 2024 under the jurisdiction of the law of England between:

Alton Town Council Town Hall, Market Square, Alton, Hampshire GU34 1HD

The King's Arms (KA), a charitable company limited by guarantee and a registered charity at

The Courtyard Buildings, Heath Road, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU314DX, charity number 1087176.

2 Service Description

To continue offering Youth Services in the Community of Alton for young people aged 11-18 (work with young carers may involve children from the age of 8, and those with special needs up to age 25), working together with all those who work with young people in the locality, and to continue providing a base for service provision in the town from which to deliver an organised programme of drop in sessions, mentoring and workshops and other activities to help the development and advancement of young people. This work is funded by the Town Council under its General Power of Competence.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 King's Arms

- To ensure that the Youth Services Programme is delivered, using appropriately qualified and vetted staff and volunteers.
- To develop and maintain excellent relationships with all relevant stakeholders within the community, ensuring clear communication throughout the area and helping agencies to work together in a variety of ways; delivery of this agreed term is funded through a separate and unrelated grant secured by the King's Arms;
- To attend Full Council meetings at Alton Town Council on a quarterly basis with a written report submitted in advance detailing the current service provision and outcomes.
 - To follow up any actions from Town Council meetings and report back on progress;
- To analyse the benefit and impact of the youth programme to young people;
 - To provide access to all information (anonymised when necessary under data protection laws for the protection of young people and their families) required by the Town Council for the purposes of the project;
- To agree any changes to the plan or service description so as to improve the outcomes for the benefit of the project

3.2 Alton Town Council

- To agree any changes to the plan or service description so as to improve the outcomes for the benefit of the project.
- To arrange an annual performance review to assess service level provision and report back to Full Council.

4 Payment Terms

Alton Town Council will provide payment of £20,000 (twenty thousand pounds) per annum for two years for the service, payable in two equal payments on 1st June and 1st December each year. This will be paid within 14 days of receipt of an invoice for services and covers all agreed costs under this Service Level Agreement for work undertaken by the King's Arms.

5 Records and Information

The King's Arms will ensure any relevant forms, agreements, applications and/or other documents which may be required under the project are completed and held by the King's Arms.

6 Partnership

It is expected that both parties will ensure the good reputation of the other is maintained and work towards excellent levels of relationship and communication. In consideration of making available any confidential information for the permitted purpose of the contract, both parties agree not to use or divulge that information in any other way than in connection with the project and agree that all copyright and intellectual property of the King's Arms will remain the exclusive property of the King's Arms. All staff and volunteers representing the King's Arms under this agreement will demonstrate the values and standards of both the Town Council and The King's Arms.

7 Termination or Changes to Contract

This agreement may be cancelled by either party at any time subject to six calendar months' notice being given to the other. Any such notice of cancellation must be made in writing and posted to the address above or sent by email to the persons below with a read receipt. Any changes to this agreement shall require the approval and agreement of those persons signed below or their successors. Without limitation, The King's Arms may terminate this agreement immediately if there is a breach of any conditions of this contract that are not remedied within an agreed period, or if there is incompetence or gross misconduct in respect of the obligations in this contract.

8. Circumstances Beyond the Parties' Control

8.1 Neither party shall be liable to the other for any failure to fulfil its obligations under this Agreement if such a failure is caused by circumstances which are beyond its reasonable control such as adverse weather conditions, natural disasters or civil disturbances.

For and on behalf of The King's Arms

Print Name:

Signed:

Dated:

For and on behalf of Alton Town Council

Print Name:

Signed:

Dated: ;

Subscription contract note

Mrs Harris
Alton Town Council
Markets Street
Alton
GU34 1HD

29 October 2024

Account name: **ALTON TOWN COUNCIL**
Account number: **PS3078535-001**

Subscription transaction details

Contract reference	7747548
Order date and time	28 Oct 2024 11:56:00
Valuation date and time	29 Oct 2024 11:30:00
Settlement date	29 October 2024
Fund name	The Public Sector Deposit Fund SC4
International Securities Identification Number (ISIN)	GB00B3LDFH01
Name/designation	ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
Order type	Value
Number of units/shares	150,000.000
Value	£150,000.00
Unit/share price	100 pence

Please retain this document for future reference as evidence of the transaction(s) stated above.

We wish to maintain up-to-date records of your account. Should there be any changes to your account details, please contact Client Services.

Correspondence address: PO Box 12892, Dunmow, Essex CM6 9DL

clientservices@ccla.co.uk

Freephone 0800 022 3505

www.ccla.co.uk

Fund documentation is available at www.ccla.co.uk/investments, or may be requested from our Client Services team. Telephone calls are recorded.
CCLA Investment Management Limited (registered in England & Wales, No. 2183088) is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
Registered address: One Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB.

Statement of Account

Mrs Harris
Alton Town Council
Markets Street
Alton
GU34 1HD

5 October 2024

Account name: **ALTON TOWN COUNCIL**
Account number: **PS3078535-001**
Statement period: **31/08/2024 to 30/09/2024**

Account summary

Total valuation as at 30 September 2024 **£1,646,989.82**
Total valuation as at last statement at 31 August 2024 **£1,639,974.52**

Holdings as at 30 September 2024

Fund name	Unit/share holdings	Price per unit/share	Value
The Public Sector Deposit Fund SC4 GB00B3LDFH01	1,646,989.8200	£1.00	£1,646,989.82
			Total value
			£1,646,989.82

Transactions for the period from 31 August 2024 to 30 September 2024

The Public Sector Deposit Fund SC4

Transaction date	Transaction type	Unit/shares	Price per unit/share	Amount (GBP)
03/09/2024	Income Reinvestment	6,789.0700	£1.0000	£6,789.07
04/09/2024	Income Reinvestment	226.2300	£1.0000	£226.23

Correspondence address: PO Box 12892, Dunmow, Essex CM6 9DL

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Registered address: One Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB.

The average Fund yield for this period was 4.99% p.a.

Income for the period is as follows:

Month	Date paid	Method	Amount (£)	Destination
Aug 2024	03/09/2024	Reinvestment	£6,789.07	PS3078535-001
Aug 2024	04/09/2024	Reinvestment	£226.23	PS3078535-001

Before making any additional investments into CCLA funds, please read the most recent version of the relevant fund's key information document (KID). KIDs can help investors understand the nature, risks, costs, potential gains and potential losses of fund, and compare the fund with other products. The KIDs for our funds are available in the investments section of our website at, www.ccla.co.uk. Or, you can ask us to send you copies, free of charge, by emailing our Client Services team at clientservices@ccla.co.uk.

Please keep all documents (including this statement) safe as you may need to refer to the information in the future.

If you would like to discuss any of the information on your statement please contact Client Services.

A glossary of terms used in this communication is available on www.ccla.co.uk/glossary. If you would like the information in an alternative format or have any queries, please call us on **0800 022 3505** or email us at [**clientservices@ccla.co.uk**](mailto:clientservices@ccla.co.uk).

Statement of Account

Mrs Harris
Alton Town Council
Markets Street
Alton
GU34 1HD

5 October 2024

Account name: **ALTON TOWN COUNCIL-ALTON TOWN COUNCIL**
Account number: **LA3077669-001**
Statement period: **31/08/2024 to 30/09/2024**

Account summary

Total valuation as at 30 September 2024 **£326,456.14**
Total valuation as at last statement at 31 August 2024 **£326,156.58**

Holdings as at 30 September 2024

Fund name	Unit/share holdings	Net Asset Value price per unit/share (£)	Net Asset Value valuation (£)	Bid price per unit/share (£)	Bid Value valuation (£)
The Local Authorities Property Fund Inc GB0005216642	118,266.0000	2.760355	326,456.14	2.717569	321,396.02

Mid Value	Bid Value
£326,456.14	£321,396.02

Correspondence address: PO Box 12892, Dunmow, Essex CM6 9DL

clientservices@ccla.co.uk

Freephone 0800 022 3505

www.ccla.co.uk

Fund documentation is available at www.ccla.co.uk/investments, or may be requested from our Client Services team. Telephone calls are recorded.
CCLA Fund Managers Limited (registered in England and Wales, No. 8735639) is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
Registered address: One Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB.

Before making any additional investments into CCLA funds, please read the most recent version of the relevant fund's key information document (KID). KIDs can help investors understand the nature, risks, costs, potential gains and potential losses of fund, and compare the fund with other products. The KIDs for our funds are available in the investments section of our website at, www.ccla.co.uk. Or, you can ask us to send you copies, free of charge, by emailing our Client Services team at clientservices@ccla.co.uk.

Please keep all documents (including this statement) safe as you may need to refer to the information in the future.

Please note due to a change in which the Fund's income distribution calculation is now completed, your income payments may display two values on this statement if a transaction took place during the period in question.

If you would like to discuss any of the information on your statement please contact Client Services.

A glossary of terms used in this communication is available on www.ccla.co.uk/glossary. If you would like the information in an alternative format or have any queries, please call us on **0800 022 3505** or email us at [**clientservices@ccla.co.uk**](mailto:clientservices@ccla.co.uk).



HAMPSHIRE PENSION FUND

Patricia Harris
Alton Town Council
Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

administered by
Hampshire Pension Services
*The Castle, Winchester,
Hampshire, SO23 8UB*

*Telephone: 01962 845588
www.hants.gov.uk/pensions*

Enquiries to	Employer Services	My reference	AR / Employer Performance
Telephone	01962 845588	Your reference	00089
Date	September 2024	Email	Pensions.EOY@hants.gov.uk

Dear Patricia,

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – 2023/2024 Employer Performance

The pensions administration team have now completed a review of scheme employer performance as part of our commitment to improving the quality of membership data help to support our management of the Pension Scheme.

The performance of all scheme employers has been benchmarked for timeliness, financial control, and data quality evidenced in your 2023/2024 annual return submission.

I am pleased to confirm that during the 2024 benchmarking exercise Alton Town Council has been rated positively across all three criteria and would like to thank you for your ongoing work and support to ensure such a positive outcome. The results of this exercise for your organisation have been attached as an appendix to this letter.

I hope that you will continue to work towards maintaining this position in future years, and if you do need any support or have concerns about anything that may affect your ability to provide the information we require please let us know as soon as possible so that we can continue to work in partnership.

If you have any questions about the content of this letter and would like to speak to a member of the administration team, please email Pensions.EOY@hants.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Baulcomb
Assistant Head of Pensions – Employer Services
Hampshire Pension Fund

Rob Carr
Director of Corporate Operations
Hampshire County Council

Appendix 1 – 2023/2024 Benchmarking Results

Description	Key	2024	2023	2022								
Timeliness: The deadline for a correct and completed annual return to be submitted to the fund is 30 April.	<table><tr><th>Performance</th><th>RAG</th></tr><tr><td>Return received before deadline</td><td> Green</td></tr><tr><td>Return received between 1 May and 31 May</td><td> Amber</td></tr><tr><td>Return received more than a month late</td><td> Red</td></tr></table>	Performance	RAG	Return received before deadline	 Green	Return received between 1 May and 31 May	 Amber	Return received more than a month late	 Red	16/04/2024	24/04/2023	22/04/2022
Performance	RAG											
Return received before deadline	 Green											
Return received between 1 May and 31 May	 Amber											
Return received more than a month late	 Red											
Financial Control: The contributions due as detailed on the annual return should match the pension contributions received by the Fund and reported as part of monthly reconciliation. If there are genuine reasons for a discrepancy, then these should be detailed on the return so contributions can be reconciled.	<table><tr><th>Performance</th><th>RAG</th></tr><tr><td>No reconciliation issues</td><td> Green</td></tr><tr><td>Minor reconciliation issues quickly resolved</td><td> Amber</td></tr><tr><td>Major reconciliation issues or slow to respond</td><td> Red</td></tr></table>	Performance	RAG	No reconciliation issues	 Green	Minor reconciliation issues quickly resolved	 Amber	Major reconciliation issues or slow to respond	 Red	Minor reconciliation issues, or quickly resolved.	No reconciliation issues.	No reconciliation issues.
Performance	RAG											
No reconciliation issues	 Green											
Minor reconciliation issues quickly resolved	 Amber											
Major reconciliation issues or slow to respond	 Red											
Data Quality: The information contained on the annual return should match the member records that we hold for that organisation e.g. notification of starters, leavers, amendments to records.	<table><tr><th>Performance</th><th>RAG</th></tr><tr><td>No data quality issues (below 2% of membership)</td><td> Green</td></tr><tr><td>Minor data quality issues (between 2 and 5% of membership) quickly resolved</td><td> Amber</td></tr><tr><td>Major data quality issues (more than 5 queries or 5% of membership, whichever is higher) or slow to respond</td><td> Red</td></tr></table>	Performance	RAG	No data quality issues (below 2% of membership)	 Green	Minor data quality issues (between 2 and 5% of membership) quickly resolved	 Amber	Major data quality issues (more than 5 queries or 5% of membership, whichever is higher) or slow to respond	 Red	Minor data quality issues quickly resolved.	Minor data quality issues quickly resolved.	No data quality issues.
Performance	RAG											
No data quality issues (below 2% of membership)	 Green											
Minor data quality issues (between 2 and 5% of membership) quickly resolved	 Amber											
Major data quality issues (more than 5 queries or 5% of membership, whichever is higher) or slow to respond	 Red											

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS & INITIATIVES IN 2024

1. Warm Winter Community Lunch – Saturday 13th January 2024

An Alton Town Council initiative

A 'Warm Winter Community Lunch' was organised on Sat 13th January 2024 at the Assembly Rooms with the support of and volunteers from the A31 PCN Social Prescribing team, Dementia-Friendly Alton and the Parish of the Resurrection. Some of the most vulnerable and isolated members of our community were invited to come along to share a lunch and enjoy the company of others who found themselves in a similar situation. The lunch was provided free to all invitees who were also able to spend some time with the event sponsors which included Resurrection Furniture, The Complins Trust, County Councillor Andrew Joy, and EHDC Councillors Barbara Tansey, Emily Young and Warren Moore.

Note for 2025: Now that Dementia Friends and the Social Prescribers are established in the Assembly Rooms they have plans for similar events to continue in 2025 and, therefore, ATC will no longer need to lead on this event going forward.

2. Pancake Race – Tuesday 13th February 2024

This popular annual event is staged in the Public Gardens and this year, we had approximately 60 children enter. The races take place along the avenue and are split into age categories. ATC supplied the pans which included a cut out of a pancake. (We do not supply real pancakes as it can get very messy!)

Prizes of sweet cones and medals are handed out to the winner in each age group with everyone else receiving a pancake sticker for taking part.

Note for 2025: suggested date – Tuesday 18th February (Half Term)

3. Community Grow Club sessions – 20th March, 10th April and 24th July 2024

An Alton Town Council initiative

This was a new initiative for 2024 and comprised of a series of community gardening family- friendly workshops made possible due to officers securing grant funding from East Hampshire District Council's Grow Up programme (through the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).

The project was well received with lots of interest and positive feedback from the public, whose ages ranged from 8 months to 80 years; all coming together to sow vegetable and fruit seeds to be shared in the Community Kitchen Garden beds in the Public Gardens complemented by the planting of pollinator friendly flower seeds both in the Gardens as well as the town centre planters.

The sessions were designed to encourage and educate families who have never really gardened before and to give them the inspiration and key skills to go on to grow their own food and flowers and were supported by local volunteer gardeners who were keen to come and share their knowledge with the families.

The first two sessions in the spring were seed sowing with the option of taking sunflower seeds home to grow and the enter the Alton in Bloom tallest sunflower

competition if they wished to. The third session was an educational pollinator survey with Alton Natural History Society members advising on how to carry out pollinator surveys of the pollinator friendly flower bed, traditionally planted flower bed, bare lawn and the kitchen garden beds identifying which pollinators could be spotted.

Feedback on the sessions was extremely positive.

Note for 2025: as the two early seed sowing grow club sessions worked well, especially the Easter half term date and as we have the equipment and some keen volunteers it is advocated that Alton Town Council fund more seeds and compost to continue with this initiative.

4. Easter Trail Public Gardens – Easter Holidays

During the Easter holidays (29th March to 12th April 2024) officers set up a free family fun activity to find 11 Easter themed decorations hidden throughout the gardens. Each decoration displayed a letter and by collecting all of the letters, participants had to crack the secret password. Once the code was cracked could claim an 'Easter prize' from Acorns Coffee while supplies lasted and this year 480 eggs were handed out.

There was also a “Design your own Easter Egg” competition with the chance to win a special prize (cuddly Easter Bunny). The winners were from Belgium and were just visiting Alton.

Note for 2025: We will need to consider how this will operate in 2025 as Acorn Coffee is no longer operating. Officer will review but the suggested date will be from 7th-21st April, again the school Easter holiday period.

5. Spring Garden Fayre – Saturday 11th May 2024

Originally organised as part of a series of local themed outdoor markets during the Covid pandemic this event has continued to be a popular feature in the events calendar.

The main attractions are the ALFI seedling swap and the local growers charity plant sale stalls that raise money for local charities including Cardiac Rehab and HIOW Air ambulance.

Local bands are on hand to showcase their musical talents and this year we had performances from The Stringalongs, Tilly Lukeman and Blue Eyed Soul as well as a free wellbeing session of Tai Chi with local instructor Sue Kelly.

Note for 2025

The event is usually the 2nd Saturday in May, to avoid the bank holidays when people are away and the third Saturday when another very popular local village plant fair takes place. However, this means it is the same weekend as the Hampshire Farmers and Lions Craft Market.

Officers recommend merging the two and moving the ALFI seedling swap, local charity plant sale stalls and the live bands into the Market Square. We don't currently organise any events in the Square and the pubs and eateries there have been asking us to as they hope it will support their businesses and enable them to feel included in community events.

2025 suggested date – Saturday 10th May

6. Alton Walking Festival – 1st to 31st May

97 walks in the programme

1701 Places available

1410 Places booked

291 not filled

636 individuals took part

512 Cancellations in total over the month but **230** of the spaces were filled by waiting lists or another person booking.

This year was another very successful walking festival. Please see a separate report about the festival which includes feedback from participants. The new booking system was successful and will continue to be used in 2025 – booking and cancelling much easier for people and reporting package provides walk participant lists for walk leaders.

Note for 2025:

1. *Event continues to be held during the month of May i.e. 1st to 31st May 2025*
2. *Not to produce a booklet, instead produce a leaflet. We have over 900 people registered to receive information about our walking festivals.*

7. Community Big Lunch – 2nd June

Alton joined thousands of communities across the UK for The Big Lunch, coordinated by Eden Project Communities. This event forms part of our series of social prescribing initiatives, providing residents with the perfect opportunity to get to know one another a little better whilst enjoying a picnic lunch and an open-air concert from our local Alton Concert Band.

To make the day a little more special we run a themed family trail with a sweet treat as a prize for completing it.

Note for 2025:

1. *Event date: Sunday, 1st June*
2. *We would suggest focussing on Jane Austen as part of the JA250 Hampshire wide celebrations.*
3. *The Regency Week Committee have offered to provide costumed characters to add to the fun and it would be a great opportunity to promote Regency Week and the Jane Austen statue unveiling.*

8. Picnics In the Park – June to September

An Alton Town Council initiative

Picnics in the Park are “informal” afternoons throughout the summer whereby residents and visitors to the town can enjoy the simple pleasures of live music, good company, and alfresco dining in the Public Gardens.

These are also part of our social prescribing initiative and follow on from the Community Big Lunch event at the beginning of June. They are very popular and

require minimal involvement from ATC officers on the day (we just provide the chairs and electric) as the bands that have been booked just turn up on the day and play!

Performances this year were scheduled from 2.00pm on the following Sundays:

30th June - Saxophony

21st July - The Stringalongs

28th July - Blue Sky Big Band

4th August - Alder Valley Brass

11th August - Basingstoke Silver Band

18th August - Cactus Brass

1st September - South Berks Concert Band

Note for 2025: suggested dates – June to September but exact number of picnics will be dependent on the band's availability.

9. Wellbeing Wednesdays and Selfcare Sundays – Various dates

An Alton Town Council initiative

This was a new series of health and wellbeing focused sessions in response to requests for more accessible opportunities from the Alton Health and Wellbeing Forum. The instructors volunteered to host each session for free, enabling anyone no matter of their circumstances to have the opportunity to participate. In return it was a way of advertising their businesses, clubs and business ventures for free. The following sessions were held during 2024

Sunday 9th June - Rock Choir

Sunday 16th June - Yoga Therapy for the Mind - improve your mental health

Sunday 16th June - Yoga Therapy for the Peri/Menopause - restore balance and thrive

Wednesday 26th June - Intuitive Collaging with The Soul Shed

Sunday 14th July - Chris Stamp Park Yoga

Wednesday 17th July - Kate breathe in the forest

Sunday 21st July - Chris Stamp Park Yoga

Sunday 28th July - Chris Stamp Park Yoga

Wednesday 7th August - Tai Chi

Wednesday 14th August – Zumba Gold

Wednesday 21st August - Alton Choral Society

Sunday 25th August - Intuitive Collaging with The Soul Shed

Feedback from the participants and instructors was that some felt it was easier to try something new in a relaxed park setting with others who were also perhaps trying it for

the first time rather than having to join a class or gym where they felt everyone already knew how to do it. Others instead chose to watch the park session and then spoke to the instructor afterwards about joining a class or even just saw the session on social media and it then prompted them to take up an activity.

Note for 2025: Some sessions worked better than others, the Park Yoga proved to be particularly popular and there were lots of comments from park users if they were weekly classes. Officers will investigate the possibility of finding some funding/sponsorship to support a weekly Free Park Yoga session from June – September to try and encourage residents to take time out to focus on their health and wellbeing.

10. Fun Fridays – Summer holidays

A firm Friday afternoon favourite during the school summer holidays. A planned programme for children to sample a variety of fun activities, games and performances in the Public Gardens (switched to the Assembly Room if raining). Every session in 2024 was very well attended and received positive feedback.

This year's line-up was:

Friday 26th July – Magic Wanda (2pm – 3pm)

Friday 2nd August – Zumba Kids (2pm – 3pm)

Friday 9th August – Party Kidz (2pm – 3pm)

Friday 16th August – Scotty's Circus Skills (2pm – 3pm)

Friday 23rd August – Pumpkin Pantos

Friday 30th August – Professor Potty (3pm – 4pm)

Note for 2025: Dates for 2025 - Friday 25th July, Friday 1st August, Friday 8th August, Friday 15th August, Friday 22nd August, Friday 29th August

11. Harvest Festival featuring the Community Grow Show – 14th September

An Alton Town Council initiative

This event was the last in the series of community events in the Public Gardens and aimed at providing an opportunity for residents to showcase their prize produce and creative talents.

The event began with traditional Alton Morris dancing, followed by a performance from a small section of the Alton Concert Orchestra and concluded with the headline band, Blue Eyed Soul.

A highlight of the event was the Tour of the Trees in the Public Gardens with Alton's tree warden, Fiona Lapraik. It was very well attended and incredibly interesting. The ACAN sustainability cookery demos and food tasting stall were also very well received.

Disappointingly footfall at the event was lower than expected and the community grow show didn't receive any entries other than the Tallest Sunflower Competition.

Note for 2025: We would not recommend running this event again given the poor response from the number of people who attended. It may well be that given the number of events held in the Public Gardens people were "events-exhausted" but it could also be that the weekend before the highly successful Food Festival was staged by a third party in the Public Gardens.

12. Autumn Walking Festival – 14th to 20th October 2024

Although not yet taken place, this is the 5th year of the Autumn Walking Festival. The programme is made up of 19 of the most popular walks from the May Walking Festival together with 1 new walk which this year is to South Downs Roastery. An evening ghost walk staged by an outside company will also be available, but participants need to book separately and directly with the company staging the walk.

Bookings opened on Monday 16th September and to date:

336 Places Available

307 Booked as of 10th October

29 spaces available (although there are waiting lists for some walks)

Note for 2025: Suggested 2025 date – 13th to 19th October 2025

13. Third Party Events on Town Council Land

The following events were held on Alton Town Council land (The Butts, Public Gardens, Jubilee Playing Fields, Anstey Park and Diggers) throughout the year. All hirers of the land who wish to stage an event must complete an online booking form and supply the Town Council with the appropriate paperwork and/or licences including: Public Liability for the event, Food Hygiene, Risk Assessment and TEN license:

Events during 2024 were:

Fun Fair – The Butts (April & September)

Circus – The Butts (July)

Victorian Cricket – The Butts (June)

Lions Safari in The Park – Public Gardens (June)

Family Fun Day (Williams Syndrome) – Anstey Park (July)

Family Fun Day (school event) – Anstey Park (July)

Alton Food Festival – Public Gardens (September)

French Market – Public Gardens (August)

Dog Shows x 3 – Diggers (May – September)

Thank You Day – Anstey Park (July)

Nursery Graduation Day and sports Day – Anstey Park (July)

Alton runners Picnic – Anstey Park (July)

Alton Arts Festival Events x 2 – Public Gardens (June /July)

Skate Jam – Jubilee Playing Fields (August)

Third Party Events supported by ATC (some limited administration only)

Alton Regency Day – High Street

Alton Lions Classic Car Show – High Street and Assembly Rooms Lawn

Ethical Vegan Markets – High Street

Weekly Tuesday Markets

Monthly Hampshire Farmers Markets

Monthly Lions Craft Markets

St Michaels Hospice Reindeer Run – 1st December 10am to 12pm

Carols Around the Tree - 21st December

14. Upcoming Town Council Events for 2024 (please see covering e-mail for up to date details)

Alton Remembrance Service and Parade – 10th November 2024

High Street, Market Square and Assembly Rooms

Christmas Lights Switch on and Market – 22nd November from 3pm to 7pm

High Street, Market Square and Assembly Rooms

15. *New* Events for 2025 – JA250 – Jane Austen’s 250th Birthday

Hampshire wide plans are well advanced to celebrate the 250th birthday of world-famous author Jane Austen and meetings to coordinate events and promotion are being held regularly across the region.

Alton will play a key role in the celebrations as it was Jane Austen’s closest town, which she regularly frequented, being just a short stroll from her home in Chawton where she lived from 1809-1817 and it is where she wrote and revised her six world famous novels.

Jane Austen Sculpture Unveiling at Alton’s Regency Day – Saturday 21st June 2025

The new Jane Austen Garden at the Assembly Rooms was largely funded with £46,705.36 from the EHDC’s Rural Grant fund with additional funding from Alton Town Council. The garden design includes a Regency-inspired planting scheme incorporating flowers mentioned in her books and letters, as well as charity rose varieties that are named after the author and her novels. Two innovative carriage style picnic pods, designed to recall the wheels of a horse-drawn carriage, have also been installed to provide a dry and comfortable space for friends to meet and relax. The patio and path landscaped areas makes the garden accessible to all and ensures that it can be enjoyed by the community all year round.

The jewel in the crown of the new garden design will be the Jane Austen bronze sculpture, which is being created by world-renowned artist Mark Coreth and made at the local Morris Singer Foundry in Lasham. The artwork is the perfect present to the town to celebrate Jane Austen’s 250th birthday and will be unveiled at 11am at Alton’s Regency Day on 21 June 2025 – more details and invitations to follow.

Jane Austen Discovery Trail

The reason the Assembly Rooms lawn was chosen for the Jane Austen Garden was because of the important link this part of the town shares with the author. Jane Austen visited Alton regularly and many of the buildings are still standing today and very much still resemble how they would have looked in her time. Discussions are currently underway with ATC officers, the Regency Week Committee and local historian Jane Hurst about how we can merge the existing trails and booklets into an interesting and easy to follow self-guided digital trail.

16. Potential resurrection of Proms in the Park – Summer of 2025

In previous years, this was often described as the Jewel of the Events Calendar when the Alton Concert Orchestra entertained hundreds of residents/visitors in the Public Gardens on a summers evening to take in the best of musical offering that Alton could muster. Expensive to stage with the costs of a marquee, orchestra music costs and most of all sound. Officers are currently investigating whether it can resurrect this favourite and will advise:



ALTON TOWN COUNCIL ANTI CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY POLICY FOR STAFF

1. Policy statement

1.1 It is our policy to conduct all our business in an honest and ethical manner. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption, and we are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships wherever we operate and in implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter bribery.

1.2 We will uphold all laws relevant to countering bribery and corruption. However, we remain bound by the laws of the UK, including the Bribery Act 2010.

1.3 The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) set out our responsibilities and of those working for us, in observing and upholding our position on bribery and corruption; and
- (b) to provide information and guidance to those working for us on how to recognise and deal with bribery and corruption issues.

1.4 Bribery and corruption are punishable for individuals by up to ten years' imprisonment and if we are found to have taken part in corruption, we could face an unlimited fine, be excluded from tendering for public contracts and face damage to our reputation. We therefore take our legal responsibilities very seriously and we have conducted a risk assessment to identify any key areas which may potentially pose a particular risk to our organisation.

1.5 In this policy, **third party** means any individual or organisation you meet while you work for the Town Council, and includes actual and potential clients, customers, suppliers, distributors, business contacts, agents, advisers, public bodies, including their advisors, representatives and officials, politicians and political parties.

2. Who is covered by the policy?

This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels and grades, including the Town Clerk, employees (whether permanent, fixed-term or temporary), consultants, contractors, trainees, seconded staff, casual workers and agency staff, volunteers, interns, agents, sponsors, or any other person associated with us, or any of our subsidiaries or their employees, wherever located (collectively referred to as **workers** in this policy).

3. What is bribery?

A bribe is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided to gain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage.

4. Gifts and hospitality

4.1 This policy does not prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality (given and received) to or from third parties.

4.2 The giving or receipt of gifts is not prohibited, if the following requirements are met:

- it complies with Alton Town Council's current Financial Regulations.
- it complies with local law.
- it is given in our name, not in your name.
- it is appropriate in the circumstances. For example, it is customary for small gifts to be given at Christmas time.
- the reason for the gift; it is of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time.
- it is given openly, not secretly

5. What is not acceptable?

It is not acceptable for you (or someone on your behalf) to:

- accept payment, gifts or hospitality from a third party that you know, or suspect is offered with the expectation that it will obtain a business advantage for them;
- threaten or retaliate against another worker who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy; or
- engage in any activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

6. Facilitation payments and kickbacks

6.1 If you are asked to make a payment on our behalf, you should always be mindful of what the payment is for and whether the amount requested is proportionate to the goods or services provided. You should always ask for a receipt which details the reason for the payment. If you have any suspicions, concerns or queries regarding a payment, you should raise these with the Town Clerk.

6.2 Kickbacks are typically payments made in return for a business favour or advantage. All workers must avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, that a facilitation payment or kickback will be made or accepted by us.

7. Donations

We do not make contributions to political parties. We only make charitable donations that are legal and ethical under local laws and practices.

8. Your responsibilities

8.1 You must ensure that you read, understand and comply with this policy.

8.2 The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. All workers are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.

8.3 Any employee who breaches this policy will face disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal. We reserve our right to terminate our contractual relationship with other workers and organisations if they breach this policy.

9. Record-keeping

9.1 We must keep financial records and have appropriate internal controls in place which will evidence the business reason for making payments to third parties.

9.2 You must declare and keep a written record of all hospitality or gifts accepted or offered in accordance with Alton Town Council's Financial Regulations. You must also ensure that all expenses claims relating to hospitality, gifts or expenses incurred to third parties are submitted in accordance with such regulations.

10. How to raise a concern

10.1 You are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of malpractice at the earliest possible stage. If you are unsure whether a particular act constitutes bribery or corruption, or if you have any other queries, these should be raised with the Town Clerk (or with the Staffing Committee in the case of the Town Clerk). You should raise a concern as soon as possible if you believe or suspect that a conflict with this policy has occurred or may occur in the future.

11. What to do if you are a victim of bribery or corruption

It is important that you tell the Town Clerk (or the Staffing Committee in the case of the Town Clerk) as soon as possible if you are offered a bribe by a third party, are asked to make one, suspect that this may happen in the future, or believe that you are a victim of another form of unlawful activity.

12. Protection

12.1 Workers who refuse to accept or offer a bribe, or those who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing, are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

12.2 We are committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment (including dismissal) as a result of refusing to take part in bribery or corruption, or because of reporting in good faith their suspicion that an actual or potential bribery or other corruption offence has taken place, or may take place in the future. Detrimental

treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment and you are:

- (a) an employee, you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure, or
- (b) a person external to the organisation, you should raise it formally using our Complaints Procedure.

13. Communication

Our zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption must be communicated to all suppliers, contractors and business partners at the outset of our business relationship with them and as appropriate thereafter.

14. Who is responsible for the policy?

14.1 The Town Clerk has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations, and that all those under our control comply with it.

14.2 The Town Clerk has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, and for monitoring its use and effectiveness and dealing with any queries on its interpretation. They are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them are made aware of and understand this policy.

14.3 The Town Clerk will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, regularly considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible. Internal control systems and financial procedures will be subject to regular audits to promote best practice in countering bribery and corruption.

14.4 All workers are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.

Reviewed: Staffing Committee 24th October 2024
Adopted: Full Council (6th November 2024)

Appendix

Potential risk scenarios: "red flags"

The following is a list of possible red flags that may arise while you are working for the Town Council and which may raise concerns under various anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws.

The list is not intended to be exhaustive and is for illustrative purposes only.

If you encounter any of these red flags while working for the Town Council, please report them promptly:

- you become aware that a third party connected to the Town Council in some way engages in, or has been accused of engaging in, improper business practices
- a third party requests that payment is made to a country or geographic location different from where the third party resides or conducts business
- a third party requests an unexpected additional fee or commission to "facilitate" a service
- a third party requests that you provide employment or some other advantage to a friend or relative
- you receive an invoice from a third party that appears to be non-standard or customised
- a third party insists on the use of side letters or refuses to put terms agreed in writing
- you notice that we have been invoiced for a commission or fee payment that appears large given the service stated to have been provided
- a third party requests or requires the use of an agent, intermediary, consultant, distributor or supplier that is not typically used by or known
- you are offered an unusually generous gift or offered lavish hospitality by a third party



ALTON TOWN COUNCIL ANTI CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY POLICY FOR COUNCILLORS

The Council will not tolerate fraud or corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether from inside or outside the Council.

Introduction

In following best practice and managing its responsibilities, Alton Town Council (the Council) is determined to protect itself against fraud and corruption both from within the Council and from external sources.

The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for Councillors and Financial Regulations which provide clarity about accountabilities of Councillors).

This Policy seeks to bring together the key elements of those key documents.

The Council is committed to an effective Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy designed to:

- Promote an anti-corruption and bribery culture
- Ensure prevention
- Facilitate detection
- Identify a clear pathway for investigation and remedial action
- Encourage the application of sanctions where appropriate
- Maximise recovery

Key Message

The Council's expectation of propriety and accountability is that Councillors and staff at all levels will lead by example in ensuring adherence to legal requirements, rules, procedures and practices.

In all their work, they will adhere to the following Principles of Good Conduct:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of public interest. They should not do so to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Honesty and Integrity

Holders of public office should be truthful and must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. This would cover such areas as making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.

Personal Judgement

Holders of public office may take account of the views of others, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

Holders of public office should promote equality by not discriminating against any person and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability or as defined by the Equality Act 2010. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the Council's Proper Officer and other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

Holders of public office should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

Holders of public office should do whatever they are able to do, to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence. They should also be willing to challenge poor behavior wherever it occurs.

The Council also expects those individuals and organisations (e.g suppliers, contractors, service providers) whom it comes into contact with, will act towards the Council with integrity and without thought or actions involving fraud and corruption.

Key Controls

The key controls regarding the prevention of financial irregularities are that:

- (a) The Council has an effective anti-corruption and bribery response plan and maintains a culture that will not tolerate fraud, corruption and bribery.
- (b) There are effective recruitment and selection procedures.
- (c) The District Council's Monitoring Officer is required to deal swiftly and firmly with those who defraud or attempt to defraud the Council or who are corrupt.
- (d) High standards of conduct are promoted amongst Councillors and all Councillors and staff act with integrity and lead by example.
- (e) A register of interests is maintained for Councillors by East Hampshire District Council and any hospitality or gifts received are to be declared and recorded.
- (f) Legislation, including the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, is adhered to.
- (g) The Proper Officer is the focal point for promoting the anti-fraud message and the key point of contact to refer concerns of fraudulent and/or corrupt activity.
- (h) The Council will fully investigate any Councillor or Officer who appears to act outside these principles and will take appropriate action, which may involve criminal prosecution under legislation including (but not limited to) the Fraud Act 2006 and Bribery Act 2010.



Canopy / Frame to Clubhouse at Alton Football Club, Anstey Park Enclosure

Purpose and Need:

- The existing decking is a popular spot for visitors, offering a prime matchday view and social space adjacent to the Clubhouse.
- The drawback is exposure to inclement weather, limiting its usability and comfort for fans.
- This proposed weatherproofing solution is a way to enhance the fan experience, while preserving the open, sunny ambiance on fine days.

Proposed Solution:

- Galvanised steel uprights in the ground on each side of the decking would support a steel 'wireframe' overhead to facilitate retractable fabric coverings overhead and strong roll-down fabric side curtains.
- The materials offer durability and suitability for all-weather conditions.
- Mindful that the decking is a nice open space to enjoy the sun and football on a fine day, the structure is designed to be unobtrusive when top and sides are retracted, preserving sunlight and views, complementing the existing environment.

Design and Engineering:

- We have worked with a structural engineer to create a safe, functional, and visually appealing design, including CAD models and renders.
- The colours shown are for illustration only.

Community and Club Benefits:

- The structure would improve the matchday experience, providing a comfortable and sociable outdoor area for fans in bad weather.
- Potential additional uses, such as a dedicated hospitality area for visiting teams, sponsors, and club events, would enhance Alton FC's community and supporter engagement.

Compliance and Permissions:

- With Landlord's Consent from Alton Town Council we would like to seek permission (if required) from EHDC to manufacture and install – all at the cost of Alton Football Club.

Long-term Vision:

- This as an investment in community engagement and club facilities, supporting Alton FC's role in local sports and community life.

