ALTON
Town Council

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Town Clerk: Tom Horwood

Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

22nd August 2025

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the **FULL COUNCIL** on **Wednesday 3rd September 2025 at <u>7.00pm</u>** at the Assembly Rooms when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

There is a pre-meeting briefing for town councillors only at 6.00pm with Citizens Advice East Hampshire: Paul Susans (Chair), Helen Drake (Chief Executive).

Yours faithfully

Tom Horwood
Town Clerk

To: All Town Councillors

Councillor Matthew Bayliss
Councillor Mark Boyce-Churn
Councillor Annette Eyre
Councillor Don Hammond
Councillor Graham Hill
Councillor Matthew Kellermann
Councillor Roger Lamb
Councillor Richard Moore
Councillor Nick O'Brien
Councillor John Quincey
Councillor Barbara Tansey
Councillor Janice Treacher

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 2025
ASSEMBLY ROOMS, ALTON – AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence

2. Town Mayor's announcements

3. Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 9th July 2025 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 6th August 2025 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

6. Sports Strategy and proposed 3G pitch in Alton

7. Neighbourhood Plan – to agree to consult the public on the way forward

8. Statement of Accounts from 1st July – 31st August 2025

9. Internal Audit Report Quarter 1, 2025-26

10. Policies for approval:
    - Investment Strategy
    - Fixed Asset Capitalisation policy

11. Alton Arts Festival bollards

12. To exclude the press and members of the public in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and to be clear, 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.

Confidential

13. Food Bank lease renewal

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL – 3RD SEPTEMBER 2025

REPORTS PREPARED BY THE TOWN CLERK AND DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

ITEM 5: CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL

1. The following correspondence was received and circulated to Councillors on 4th August 2025:

Dear Mayor and Town Clerk

As I approach two years as a co-opted Councillor circumstances have sadly caught up with me and I am no longer able to provide the commitment I would like and therefore wish to give a new person an opportunity to take over. As such I offer my resignation from the ATC forthwith.

I am pleased to have played my small part in several areas, particularly in helping to set the ball rolling on the Kings Pond initiative groups which I leave in the hands of the members of the public who stepped up to form the focus groups, led by Councillor Hammond, all of whom I feel will succeed in bringing this much contested matter to a satisfactory solution.

Good luck to all for the remainder of this Council period.

Cllr Peter Wadman
Alton Ashdell Ward

2. A letter was received from Treloar's:

Dear Mr Horwood,

I would like to share with you a huge thank you from everyone at Treloar's for the generous grant of £9,100 which we have received from Alton Town Council Neighbourhood CIL towards our hoist replacement project.

Below is a thank you note penned by a student, explaining what Treloar's means to her:

"Treloar's is more than just a school—it's a place that gives young people with disabilities the support, education, and independence we need to live our best lives. I started Treloar's back in 2023 and honestly, it's been one of the best decisions in my life. Before coming to Treloar's, I had zero confidence and hardly left the house because I had awful anxiety and stress levels. But Treloar's have helped me immensely.

"From my own experience, I can say that Treloar's has helped me in so many ways. The teachers and staff truly care, and I'm the happiest that I have ever been. I love going to hydro every Thursday and every Mondays I do physiotherapy in the gym and I love seeing improvement in my muscles every time I do it."

We look forward to welcoming you to Treloar's so you can see first hand the positive impact of your generosity.

Thank you once again for your generous support. Treloar's would not be what it is today without generous supporters like Alton Town Council.

ITEM 6: SPORTS STRATEGY AND 3G PITCH IN ALTON — FOR DECISION

East Hampshire District Council's *Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy 2024-40* highlighted that investment is needed in at least 3.5 additional full-sized FA-registered 3G pitches to cater for current and future demand and the population growth of East Hampshire. There are already plans for a 3G at Bohunt School and at the Land East of Horndean development and assuming these can be delivered, an additional 1.5 pitches are needed.

Due to the current number of teams in the area and their accessibility, an additional full-sized pitch should be delivered in the Petersfield area, with a youth 11v11 3G in the North of the district to support the growth in population and demand from youth clubs.

Since the publishing of the strategy, the Football Foundation has completed further work as part of the update to the *Local Football Facility Plan 2025* to look at team numbers and expected growth; it has been identified that Alton is the most suitable location to meet the strategic need. The Football Foundation has committed to delivering 40% of their investment into multi-sport facilities. Working with the Rugby Football Union (RFU), it was agreed that The Petersfield School and Alton 3G pitch will provide multi-sport offers within East Hampshire District.

Several sites in the Alton parish have undergone an initial feasibility assessment and Alton Town Council needs to take a decision whether to take forward any of their sites as the preferred site. At a councillor workshop on 23rd July 2025, councillors identified the importance of engaging and informing the public, so that there is complete openness and transparency. It was suggested that some level of public engagement be undertaken prior to decision on whether to include any ATC sites and whether ATC would then lead the project, with the support of the Football Foundation.

It is proposed that a public meeting be held on Wednesday 17th September in the Assembly Rooms and to publicise the project and encourage public responses through other media and social media. The item would then be added to the agenda of 8th October Council meeting to resolve which site to take forward for full feasibility studies. It is anticipated that the feasibility work, which includes full public consultation, would take around 18 months.

RECOMMENDATION: To carry out public consultation on whether to take forward assessment of any ATC site as the potential/preferred site for the new facility.

ITEM 7: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN — FOR DECISION

The update of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan ("ANP3") stalled over the decision of whether to include site allocations and on 4th September 2024 ATC resolved to undertake an assessment of all sites in the Land Availability Assessment (LAA). AECOM has now completed this work and all town councillors have had sight of their report.

The original intention was to allocate sites in order to maintain the protection afforded by site allocations in an NP. Although the current Neighbourhood Plan (ANP2) is dated to 2028, the plan does not expire, although policies carry less weight as time moves on.

However, the expectation of future housing development in Alton and Holybourne has increased for several reasons, including the impact of the constraints on housebuilding within the neighbouring South Downs National Park and the significant under-achievement of the whole of East Hampshire in keeping up with demand. While there is no target for Alton and Holybourne as such, we have been informed that the parish's proportional share of the district target is around 3,500 over 18 years. This estimate is subject to recalculation periodically, and dependent on housebuilding across East Hampshire, and so may go up or down. With demand so much greater than the available sites, it becomes more challenging to include site allocations in a new plan. A new ANP3 would require an Examination in Public, which would include scrutiny of the town council's and district council's plans to meet housing demand. Without an allocations plan, this scrutiny becomes more acute and the proposed solutions to meeting housing demand are likely to be critical in passing an Examination. However, the draft ANP3 included proposed policies that might be helpful on many other matters. The draft Neighbourhood Plan will also require a successful public referendum before it can be adopted. It should be noted that East Hampshire District Council is revising its Local Plan and intends to have a new one in place in August 2027.

There is a question now as to the best way forward at this time. There are 3 options:

1. Continue using the current Neighbourhood Plan (ANP2) and pause its review until after the adoption of the district's new Local Plan.

2. Restart the process of ANP3 without site allocations.

3. Restart the process of ANP3 with site allocations.

Public engagement is important. At a workshop on 16th July, councillors felt they would like to take to the public the question of whether to progress the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:
1. **To take to public consultation the question of whether to review and update the current Neighbourhood Plan and, if so, whether to proceed with or without site allocations.**
2. **To publish the AECOM report on the Town Council website.**

ITEM 8: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS TO 31ST AUGUST 2025 — FOR DECISION

Members are requested to scrutinise the accounts and accompanying documents and reports to 31st August 2025. Reports will be circulated on Monday 1st September, following the month end.

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2025: The balance sheet will be presented for sign off by the Chairman of the Council and the RFO (Responsible Financial Officer, Tom Horwood – Town Clerk).

Income & Expenditure: The Statutory Income and Expenditure Report for the period 1st July - 31st August 2025 will be circulated to councillors on Monday 1st September.

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31st August 2025: The Bank Reconciliation Statements for July are attached and those for August will be circulated on Monday 1st September. This requires 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 which includes all payments over £500, issued between 1st July - 31st August 2025 in respect of invoices and grant cheques will be circulated on Monday 1st September.

RECOMMENDATION: To confirm approval of:

1. **The balance sheet dated 31st August 2025;**
2. **The Income and Expenditure account to 31st August 2025;**
3. **The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit & Property Fund Accounts;**
4. **The Payments over £500 covering 1st July - 31st August 2025.**

ITEM 9: INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT — FOR NOTING

The Internal Audit took place on 9th July 2025 and states the following:

"Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk.
It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.
It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Alton Town Council are a model of good practice."

RECOMMENDATION: To note the attached Internal Auditor report.

ITEM 10: POLICIES FOR APPROVAL FOR DECISION

The Internal Auditor noted that, "The council has an investment strategy in place; however, this is very much out of date now and needs to be updated." Officers have therefore updated the following two policies for approval by Council before the next Internal Audit which is on 3rd October.

1. Investment Strategy (update of 2018 policy).
2. Fixed Asset Capitalisation Policy (this is a new policy for approval).

RECOMMENDATION: To adopt both policies as tabled.

ITEM 11: ALTON ARTS FESTIVAL BOLLARDS FOR DECISION

Alton Arts Festival is an event which is run every other year on the town. The organising committee is thinking about the 2026 event. Ahead of the event they would like to engage the local community and create a lasting positive impact in the town through the "Alton Street Bollards Proposal 2025 - A competition and legacy project".

The full proposal is included in this pack. It may be that some of the bollards require approval from EHDC or HCC rather than ATC, and in this case the Council is asked to support the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve the Alton Street Bollards Proposal where ATC have the authority to do so and support it where permissions must be sought from elsewhere.

ITEM 12: TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FOR DECISION

The following item is of a confidential nature as with all leases because it contains information that is likely to be commercially sensitive for both the council and the lessee.

RECOMMENDATION: To exclude the press and members of the public in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and to be clear, 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.**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9TH JULY 2025 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL

Present:	**Councillor**	**Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)**
		Matthew Bayliss
		Mark Boyce-Churn
		Don Hammond
		Matthew Kellermann
		Barbara Tansey
		Janice Treacher
		Peter Wadman

In attendance:	**Tom Horwood**	**-**	**Town Clerk**
	Hayley Carter	**-**	**Deputy Clerk**
	13 Members of the public and press		

21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Nick O'Brien and Graham Hill

22 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor welcomed councillors and the public and thanked everyone for attending and directed them to the information about the upcoming events in the Public Gardens which had been placed on people's seats.

23 **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 4th June 2025 for Approval**

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

RESOLVED
to APPROVE the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 7th May 2025

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Hammond, Kellermann, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Abstained: Councillors Bayliss and Boyce-Churn

24 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**

No declarations of interest were received.

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

No correspondence had been received and no persons present wished to speak.

26 **District and County Councillor Updates**

District Councillor Suzie Burns provided the following report prior to the meeting which was circulated with the agenda:

EHDC Councillor Report for ATC, July 2025

Cllr Suzie Burns: Alton Ashdell Ward

The summaries provided within this short report are to the best of my knowledge correct and it should be noted that as an opposition councillor at EHDC many of the developments noted are the result of the administrations decisions and are being challenged by many of your local opposition councillors. Do feel free to come back to me with any points or questions that you wish to be clarified.

Local Government Reorganisation

This has dominated the agenda at EHDC for 2025 since the announcement of the government that Hampshire is to be in the first wave of county councils to become devolved to unitary authorities. With our unique location in East Hampshire with part of the region in The SDNP there is still much discussion as to where and with which other regions we may be amalgamated. The sentiment is very much that we need to do whatever is going to provide the best for our residents, however to date we have not been provided with any concrete milestones and pathway as to how or what this reorganisation might look like. HCC and associated district councils originally pursued a contract with the Consultants KPMG to explore the options, however the Leader of EHDC Cllr Millard, wrote to councillors to inform us that Cabinet have taken the decision alongside Hampshire County Council to part ways from KPMG and instead us PWC as the consultant. There is concern amongst opposition that this is an undemocratic and risky move given that all other 12 district councils are now working with a different consultant. The primary focus of PWC is the management of HCC's social care and mandatory requirement rather than how important services, wellbeing and maintenance of local identity could be delivered by the new unitary authorities when they are formed. This is very much an ongoing and moveable situation and a full and frank discussion is scheduled for an extra-ordinary Full Council meeting on 17th July. Hopefully progress and a clear timetable will be made available soon.

Local Plan

Little progress appears to have happened on this. There has been no councillor briefing since Autumn 2023 and as far as I am aware the original date for adoption remains 2027. Site allocations remain a key element, especially in the knowledge that in Alton our housing numbers have been increased so greatly. It is anticipated that the ongoing work of the ANP should feed in to the LP.

Climate

Again this seems to have been on a bit of a backburner currently in the wake of the LGR and the last briefing was in February

Councillor Grants

It should be noted by councillors that District councillors have had an increase in the individual grant pots that they can allocate. There has been a lot of interest and applications – so if you are aware of any local projects that may benefit from project funding do point them in the direction of their District Councillor. Individual Councillor Grant pots have increased to £7k and an additional £3k from every councillor has been put into a centralised pot totalling £129k exclusively for environmental projects. Disappointingly this will not be apportioned by area and will be distributed on a bid basis with the 'strongest projects' being awarded funding.

Planning

There has been a spate of medium to larger developments in the locality that have come forward for planning consideration. Whilst these are still a long way from being decided, with a less than 4year land supply the situation is becoming more and more critical as the Local Plan loses its precedence.

Events

Many Thanks to ATC for hosting the recent Jane Austen Sculpture event which received funding from the EHDC 'Grow Up' Fund. This has been widely promoted on various channels and will hopefully enhance the experience for visitors to the town.

Councillor Burns further updated the meeting on the publication of Hampshire County Council's preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation. This will be discussed by East Hampshire District Council in Full Council in Petersfield on Thursday 17th July.

27 **King's Pond – Update from Task & Finish Group and approval for spending**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote on all three parts of this agenda item.

(i) Councillor Hammond proposed that the Council note the report from the King's Pond T&F Group. This was seconded by Councillor Treacher. There being no questions on the report and with everyone voting in favour, it was

RESOLVED
To note the report from the King's Pond T&F Group

(ii) Councillor Hammond proposed that the Council accept the minutes of the King's Pond T&F Group. This was seconded by Councillor Treacher. There being no questions on the minutes, it was

RESOLVED
To accept the minutes of the King's Pond T&F Group

In favour: Councillors Eyre, O'Brien, Hammond, Hill, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

(iii) Councillor Hammond proposed that the Council approve spending of £6,000 for the employment of a consultant to assist in the tender process if necessary note the report from the King's Pond T&F Group. This was seconded by Councillor Treacher.

Councillor Hammond proposed an amendment that the council approve spending of up to £10,000 to include additional ecology reports as well as to help with the tender process. It was emphasised that this is a contingency rather than definite spending in order to allow the project to progress over the summer.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, O'Brien, Hammond, Hill, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Against: Councillor Kellermann

Therefore, this amendment was carried.

Councillor Kellermann then proposed a further amendment that no more money should be spent on King's Pond until a referendum could be held to establish whether residents wished this to progress. There being no seconder this amendment did not move to a vote.

There being no further debate, it was

RESOLVED
To approve spending of up to £10,000 for the employment of a consultant to assist in the tender process if necessary and further ecological reports / input as needed

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Against: Councillor Kellermann

28 **Co-option of three councillors to fill vacant seats in Ashdell, Eastbrooke and Whitedown wards**

Six candidates had applied for the three vacancies. The Town Clerk explained the co-option process and said he would guide everyone through it. In the vote an absolute majority must be reached in order for someone to be co-opted, so with eight councillors present at the meeting to be successful a candidate would require five votes. All six candidates had applied for all three wards.

Each candidate in attendance was allowed three minutes to speak, followed by three minutes for councillor questions. Mr Quincey and Mr Saunders had sent their apologies due to prior commitments that they had been unable to change.

Councillor Eyre proposed that all candidates be put forward for co-option and for voting to take place this evening. This was seconded by Councillor Hammond, with all voting in favour.

Councillors thanked the candidates and emphasised that as there were six candidates but only three vacancies they should not be disheartened if they are unsuccessful on this occasion and they should still consider standing for election in 2027 and volunteering to help the council in some other capacity in the meantime.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote. Voting then took place for each ward in turn as follows:

Ashdell Ward

Round 1

	Botten	Fairhead	Lamb	Moore	Quincey	Saunders		Abst
Cllr Bayliss	1							
Cllr Boyce-Churn					1			
Cllr Eyre			1					
Cllr Hammond					1			
Cllr Kellerman				1				
Cllr Tansey					1			
Cllr Treacher					1			
Cllr Wadman				1				
Sub-total	1	0	1	2	4	0		0
Mayor's casting		1						
Total	1	1	1	2	4	0		0

Mr Saunders was therefore eliminated from the next round.

Round 2

	Botten	Fairhead	Lamb	Moore	Quincey	Saunders		Abst
Cllr Bayliss					1			
Cllr Boyce-Churn					1			
Cllr Eyre					1			
Cllr Hammond					1			
Cllr Kellerman					1			
Cllr Tansey					1			
Cllr Treacher					1			
Cllr Wadman				1				
Sub-total	0	0	0	1	7			0
Mayor's casting								
Total								

With seven votes Mr John Quincey received the absolute majority for Ashdell Ward.

Eastbrooke Ward

Round 1

	Botten	Fairhead	Lamb	Moore	Quincey	Saunders		Abst
Cllr Bayliss				1				
Cllr Boyce-Churn				1				
Cllr Eyre				1				
Cllr Hammond				1				
Cllr Kellerman				1				
Cllr Tansey				1				
Cllr Treacher				1				
Cllr Wadman				1				
Sub-total	0	0	0	8		0		0
Mayor's casting								
Total	0	0	0	8		0		0

With eight votes Mr Richard Moore received the absolute majority for Eastbrooke Ward

Whitedown Ward

Round 1

	Botten	Fairhead	Lamb	Moore	Quincey	Saunders		Abst
Cllr Bayliss			1					
Cllr Boyce-Churn			1					
Cllr Eyre			1					
Cllr Hammond								1
Cllr Kellerman		1						
Cllr Tansey								1
Cllr Treacher								1
Cllr Wadman			1					
Sub-total	0	1	4			0		3
Mayor's casting	1							
Total	1	1	4			0		3

Mr Saunders was therefore eliminated from the next round.

Round 2

	Botten	Fairhead	Lamb	Moore	Quincey	Saunders		Abst
Cllr Bayliss			1					
Cllr Boyce-Churn			1					
Cllr Eyre			1					
Cllr Hammond			1					
Cllr Kellerman		1						
Cllr Tansey								1
Cllr Treacher								1

Cllr Wadman			1					
Sub-total	0	1	5					2
Mayor’s casting								
Total	0	1	5					2

With five votes Mr Roger Lamb received the absolute majority for Whitedown Ward

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED
To co-opt Mr John Quincey to Ashdell Ward, Mr Richard Moore to Eastbooke Ward and Mr Roger Lamb to Whitedown Ward

All in favour.

29 **<u>Planning Application for comment: EHDC-24-0027-FUL, Land NW of Ackender Wood Basingstoke Road, Pre-decision amendment</u>**

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

RESOLVED to submit a response as follows:
“Alton Town Council (ATC) feels the amendments have not addressed their first two comments previously submitted. ATC further feels strongly that there should be traffic lights on the junction between the site and Basingstoke Road. Some councillors are of the opinion that there should be no building on greenfield sites and that this principle should apply in this case.”

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Kellermann, Treacher, and Wadman.
Abstained: Councillor Tansey

30 **<u>Legal Agreements</u>**

30.1 On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED to retrospectively approve the signing of the document circulated on 30th May 2025 giving Landlord’s Consent to Cellnex to undertake the minor changes necessary to the installation on the site.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote for all parts of this agenda item.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Against: Councillor Kellermann

30.2 On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED
To approve the signing of the lease once the agreement has been finalised between Energique and Energise South Downs, at no cost to the Council.

All Councillors voted in favour.

30.3 On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Tansey, it was

RESOLVED
To approve the installation of six individual heat pumps at The Tannery (The King's Arms), subject to planning approval.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Kellermann, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Abstained: Councillor Hammond

31 **Statement of Accounts from 1st – 30th June 2025**

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

RESOLVED
To confirm approval of:

1. **The balance sheet dated 30th June 2025**
2. **The Income and Expenditure account to 30th June 2025**
3. **The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account**
4. **The Payments over £500 covering 1st- 30th June 2025**
5. **The updated Direct Debit List**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

32 **Valuations of ATC Properties for review and updates to insurance**

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

RESOLVED to:
(i) note the changes in valuations figures above
(ii) approve the changes to the insurance for the remainder of the term for the changes to the building valuations
(iii) approve the changes to the insurance for the remainder of the term for the addition of the Jane Austen sculpture and the Roller Mower

All Councillors voted in favour.

33 **To resolve whether to take ownership of the Brewing Heritage Trail sculptures along the Wey Walk**

Councillor Kellermann recused himself due to a previous familial connection to the project.

On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED
To agree to take ownership of the sculptures along the Brewing Heritage Trail, along with a commuted sum towards the inspections and maintenance and contribution to the insurance – sum to be agreed.

All Councillors voted in favour.

34 **Public Gardens Footpath repairs**

On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

RESOLVED
To appoint contractor B (Rocon) to undertake the repairs to the footpaths in the Public Gardens at a cost of £10,804.88 (ten thousand, eight hundred and four pounds and eighty-eight pence).

All Councillors voted in favour.

35 **Public Engagement Consultant proposal**

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

RESOLVED
To appoint Cratus to undertake Phase 1 of the work as follows at a cost of £7,800 taken from the £15,000 Neighbourhood CIL approved for this purpose on 5th February 2025 (minute reference 115.2.1):
Phase 1: Strategy Development and Consultation
This phase includes a detailed review of current communication practices, stakeholder mapping, and the creation of a bespoke communication strategy tailored to address the council's unique challenges.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Tansey, Treacher, and Wadman.
Against: Councillor Kellermann

36 **Co-option Policy update for approval**

Councillor Eyre proposed the updated policy be adopted as tabled. This was seconded by Councillor Kellermann, who then proposed an amendment that a vacancy for co-option be advertised for four weeks rather than three. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Hammond and all councillors voted in favour, therefore the amendment was carried.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

RESOLVED
To approve the updated Co-option Policy with vacancies for co-option being advertised for a period of four weeks.

All Councillors voted in favour.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6TH AUGUST 2025 AT 7.00PM AT THE ALTON ASSEMBLY ROOMS

Present: **Councillor** **Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)**
Matthew Bayliss
Mark Boyce-Churn
Don Hammond
Graham Hill
Matthew Kellermann
Richard Moore
Nick O'Brien
John Quincey
Barbara Tansey

In attendance: **Tom Horwood - Town Clerk**
Hayley Carter - Deputy Clerk
208 Members of the public and press

37 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Roger Lamb and Janice Treacher

38 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

1. The Mayor welcomed councillors and the public and thanked everyone for attending.

2. She then reminded all those attending that in accordance with the Council's published Recording of Meetings Policy, as displayed on the doors and the table at the back of the hall, anyone wishing to make any recording of a meeting must 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.

3. The Mayor reminded everyone that this is a council meeting, and that there is time provided for the public to speak during agenda item 4, but after this anyone wishing to remain to observe the proceedings should please remain quiet. During item 4 all those who have registered to speak will be allowed 3 minutes each.

4. Finally, she reminded everyone about Fun Fridays and Picnics in the Park, the ATC-organised events running in the Public Gardens throughout the Summer. The next Fun Friday is with Mini Explorers on 8th August and the band performing at Picnics in the Park on 10th August is the South Berks Concert Band.

39 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**

No declarations of interest were received.

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

40.1 A message was received through the ATC website contact page regarding agenda item 4, which was circulated to councillors on Tuesday 5th August 2025 and which read as follows:

"I am unable to attend the extraordinary meeting tomorrow 6/8/25 regarding planning applications in Holybourne due to a prior commitment. I would, however, like to make ATC aware of my objection to the application for 160 houses on the London Road site, primarily on over development, traffic congestion, damage to the historic nature of the village, flooding and sewerage issues. I have made my comments to EHDC but I hope the village of Holybourne will be supported by ATC in opposing this unacceptable over development in the village."

40.2 Items 40.2 to 40.7 are several emails which were received from residents regarding agenda item 12, and which were circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting:

"Good evening,

I am writing to you regarding the traffic order proposal affecting 14-22 Spitalfields road.

To say how upset I am to have not even had any contact whatsoever from the council regarding this is extremely disappointing.

The new proposal is an accident waiting to happen, we have 80cm from our front door to the start of the curb, 90cm including it and a height of 6cm which makes it even easier for cars to mount the pavement.
The cars parked on the south side act as a buffer to the residents, their visitors and the general public including the vast amount of school children walking past twice a day.

I have seen cars approaching Spitalfields road from youngs road mounting the extremely narrow corner onto the pavement, if this proposal was to go ahead it's only a matter of time before someone is seriously hurt especially with the increasing amount of electric cars that you can barely hear coming.
I also have elderly parents, my father requires wheelchair assistance and with this proposal makes it terribly worrying as even at present it can be difficult to enter the property with the lack of width space but having the cars as they are now it acts as a safety net, my father is worrying about visiting in the future if this goes ahead as he says he won't feel safe which is very upsetting.
I myself have lived at this property for over 13 years and in that time not once has any of the residents had any problem with how it is.
I am strongly against this as I really do not see any benefits whatsoever, just more noise, fumes, and a much higher chance of an accident happening.

PLEASE do not let this absolutely insane proposition go ahead!"

40.3 *"Dear councillor Eyre,*

With reference to the proposed changes in parking regulations as above ref, I strongly object. In the interest of safety, the south pavement is 31 inches wide and in poor repair, children, pushchairs etc. Will be walking there with traffic rushing by, if parking is that side it provides a shield for pedestrians, close to several schools.

I live at X Youngs Road and have done for 33 years, I rented a garage in the now Marlow Court until we lost these despite objections. I am sure you know parking is at a premium, vehicles from Victoria Road spill into Youngs Road which forces us into Spitalfields Road and further. On a personal level, I am nearing 80 and although now fit and well wonder how long I will be able to walk a long distance to park. The situation at the moment works as well as anything can so we all wonder why it needs to change. I just hope common sense will prevail."

40.4 *"Hello Barbara and Annette*

Barbara may recall a conversation with me last year, in the graveyard, regarding the concerns of some Spitalfields Road residents after one resident wrote to me to say she had complained about cars parking outside our houses and was working with the County Councillor to have double yellow lines painted outside our homes.

This has now escalated to a proposed traffic order, which has instigated strong negative feeling from the other residents in the affected part of Spitalfields Road.

I know neither of you cover the Eastbrooke Ward but Richard Moore's email does not seem to be working. Please may I ask that you forward this email to the person who is covering the Eastbrooke Ward as I feel the town councillor needs to be aware of what is being proposed and see an example of an objection to this. I understand from the county councillor Andrew Joy that, as a statutory requirement, the town council will be consulted on this traffic order proposal.

Many thanks

Forwarded email:

Dear Sirs

My name is XXX and I live at X Spitalfields Road, Alton

I am writing to object to the Traffic Order Proposals for Spitalfields Road, Ref A2083/DL as follows:

No Waiting At Any Time:

Spitalfields Road – North Side. Between a point 40 metres west of its junction with Youngs Road and a point 16 metres south-west of that point.

Any additional no waiting zones on Spitalfields Road will reduce parking space.

Whilst I understand that there is no right to on road parking, any loss of spaces will have a negative impact on the residents of Spitalfields Road. This will have a knock-on effect on the residents of Chauntsingers Road, Youngs Road, Victoria Road, Victoria Road East, Eastbrooke Road, Nursery Road, Edward Road, St Lawrence Road as people seek parking spaces. The residents in and visitors to all these roads compete for parking spaces which often results in elderly people having to walk and carry shopping some distance to their homes from their cars.

When the schools are starting and finishing each day - Alton Infants School, Anstey Junior School, Bushy Lease Play Groups and Amery Hill, residents find it very difficult to park near the roads they actually live in. Spitalfields being one of the worst affected roads. To reduce parking spaces will make this even more chaotic and dangerous for the many pedestrians at this time.

No Waiting At Any Time:
Spitalfields Road - South Side. Between its junction with Youngs Road and a point 58 metres south-west thereof.

I object to this proposal for the following reasons:

A live lane of traffic would be located 90cm from the front doors and windows of nos 14 - 22 Spitalfields Road due to narrow footpath (90cm including curb) on the south side. This will bring increased traffic fumes, noise, and dirt to my house.

None of the houses directly affected by this proposal have front gardens. I rely on the parked cars as a 'buffer' between my house and moving traffic. The parked cars protect me when leaving my house on to a narrow footpath. The family dog, visiting children and visitors entering and leaving with pushchairs are also protected by having moving traffic located on the north side of the road.

Pedestrians walk daily along narrow footpath towards Anstey Junior school and Bushy Leaze Children and Family Centre with pushchairs, toddlers and young school children at a very busy time. The pavements are also busy with teenagers walking to and from Amery Hill. As the footpath is so narrow, pedestrians have to step into the road to get past each other. I walk to work during both school runs and this affects me directly. The recommended pavement width for two passing adults is 1.5m, the widest width of the pavement outside nos 14 to 22 is 90cm including curb. Pedestrians are currently protected by the parked cars and do not need to consider that they are stepping out into moving traffic. Parents often let their children run or scoot ahead, which means they would not always next to their parent when faced with the potential risk of a moving car or van so close to them.

Some residents on the south side have windows that open outwards, people, including myself, sometimes have to step close to or into the road to avoid walking into them.

The refuse trucks reverse down Spitalfields Road, stopping outside outside nos 20-21. They then idle whilst the refuse collectors work around Plevna Place and Spitalfields Road houses. Whilst currently not an issue, the refuse truck would be idling 90cm away from my front door and windows.

People, including myself, crossing over the junction of Spitalfields Road with Plevna Place, a very busy pedestrian walkway at school opening and closing, will have reduced visibility of oncoming traffic. Less time to react to oncoming traffic which can sometimes be fast moving (online shopping delivery vans in particular).

Residents of Marlow Court and Plevna Place who have parking behind their houses will have reduced visibility when pulling out of Marlow Court driveway if vehicles are parked on the north side.

Larger vehicles including delivery vans will have difficulty getting round the corner from Spitalfields Road to Youngs Road and from Youngs Road to Spitalfields Road. The only way to solve this would be to introduce more yellow lines on the north side of Spitalfields Road by Marlow Court and on the East side at the top of Youngs Road - reducing parking space. I am not aware of any other way to allow vehicles to swing left on Spitalfields Road to then allow them to successfully turn the corner. Currently, they are already positioned on the left hand side. When coming up front Youngs Road, they will need to swing to the north side of Spitalfields Road then angle across to the south side proposed live traffic lane. This concerns me hugely as, at this point, they will be driving towards my house.

Approaching vehicles will meet head-on on the same lane at the corner of Youngs Road and Spitalfields Road. If this does not result in a collision, vehicles need to reverse back along Spitalfields Road to give access as the traffic coming from Youngs Road cannot do this. This dangerous manoeuvre will be taking place unacceptably close to the houses due to the narrow 90cm footpath - and will result in even more risk if people are walking along the footpath.

Delivery vans, supermarket food delivery vans, taxis and takeaway delivery drivers often pull up on the pavement on the north side to make their deliveries or pick-ups. This will now transfer to them mounting the narrow pavement outside 14-22 Spitalfields Road, blocking access to the homes and emitting idling traffic fumes centimetres from doors and windows.

Some of the vulnerable residents on the north side, in the social housing, have sensitivity to noise and change.

It will be unsafe for the home owners of 14-22 Spitalfields Road to perform routine exterior cleaning and improvements eg window washing, exterior painting and repairs, gutter cleaning etc to the front of their homes. This will affect me directly. Although we have no right to perform these activities, they are normal needs of any homeowner and should be taken into consideration as currently there is no issue.

My Response to the Reasons given by the County Councillor for this Proposed Traffic Order

The reasons given for the changes to the no waiting at any time restrictions are to "address the concerns of vehicle exhaust fumes entering nearby properties and make improved access for pedestrians due to the narrowness of the pathway".

I have worked from home since I bought my home in 2004, twelve years of these as an Ofsted Registered Childminder. During this time, I cared for babies and small *children in my home aged 3 months +. The children slept in my downstairs front room. If there had been any issue regarding traffic fumes entering my home, noise from illegally idling vehicles or any issues regarding safety of the pavement outside the house, I would have spoken up many years ago. Not only for the protection of the children I cared for but to comply with the regulations I had to abide by under Ofsted. I continue to work from home in a different capacity and still do not suffer from traffic fumes or noise from idling vehicles. In addition, I do not understand how 'traffic fumes' from* ***parked*** *cars are solved by putting traffic fumes moving traffic in their place.*

I have never known access to the properties to have ever been an issue. Not even in medical emergencies. We have all managed to get sofas larger than ourselves into our houses. As a Registered Childminder, I would access my house with a double pushchair, two toddlers, a dog and several primary school children. I never experienced access issues and felt safely protected by the parked cars outside my home, separating me from moving traffic.

I rely on the parked cars and the fact that moving cars pass on the other side of the road for safety for myself and my home, particularly as I have no front gardens and the footpath is very narrow. Because of the narrowness of the pavement (the widest point is 90cm including curb) my house does occasionally gets knocked by a carelessly opened car door. However, my house is over 100 years old and bears no visible damage. I prefer the occasional knock of a car door to the prospect of a reversing vehicle, a vehicle mounting the pavement or a speeding delivery vehicle crashing into it, as they have regularly done into the wall outside 1 Plevna Place.

I wrote to the County Councillor over a year ago voicing my concerns after a Spitalfields Road resident informed me, in writing, they were "working with" him to change the current parking arrangements. I was assured, in writing, that no decision would be made until the following process had been followed:

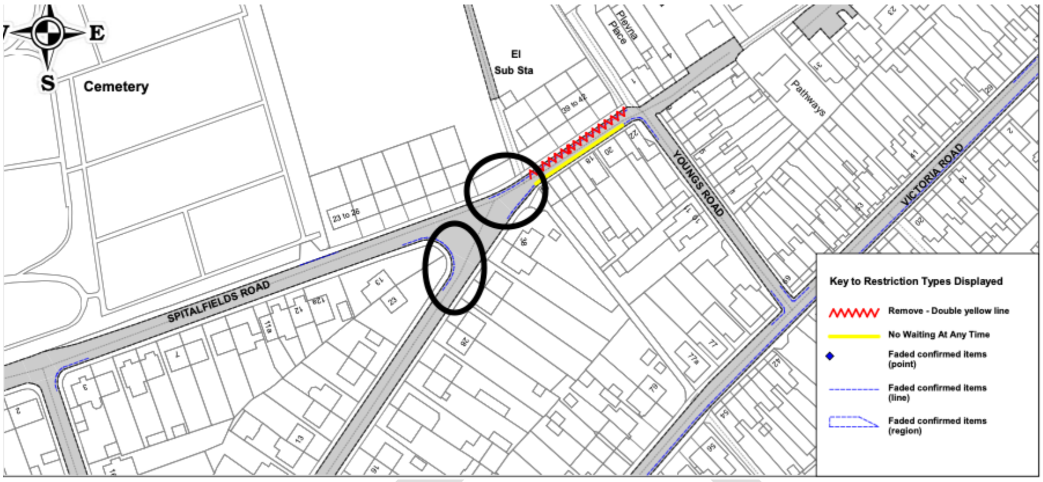
"Some thoughts/concerns regarding parking constraints on Spitalfields Rd, and elsewhere for that matter, have been brought to my attention but no conclusions or decisions have been reached. It will now be for the Traffic Management team to assess the situation objectively and decide whether or not and how to present any change for formal consultation. Statutory consultees include the Police and Emergency Services, the District and Town Councils and Ward Cllrs plus, of course, residents and the public. Safety and accessibility are always prime concerns. Contrary to the suspicion of some, decisions on matters of public safety and concern are made in accordance with professional assessment and the law."

In light of the above, I request that the reports issued by the traffic/road engineers, the Police and Emergency Services and the reports submitted by the District and Town councils and Ward Councillors are supplied to the residents of nos 14-22 and nos 39-42 Spitalfields Road and made available to the public.

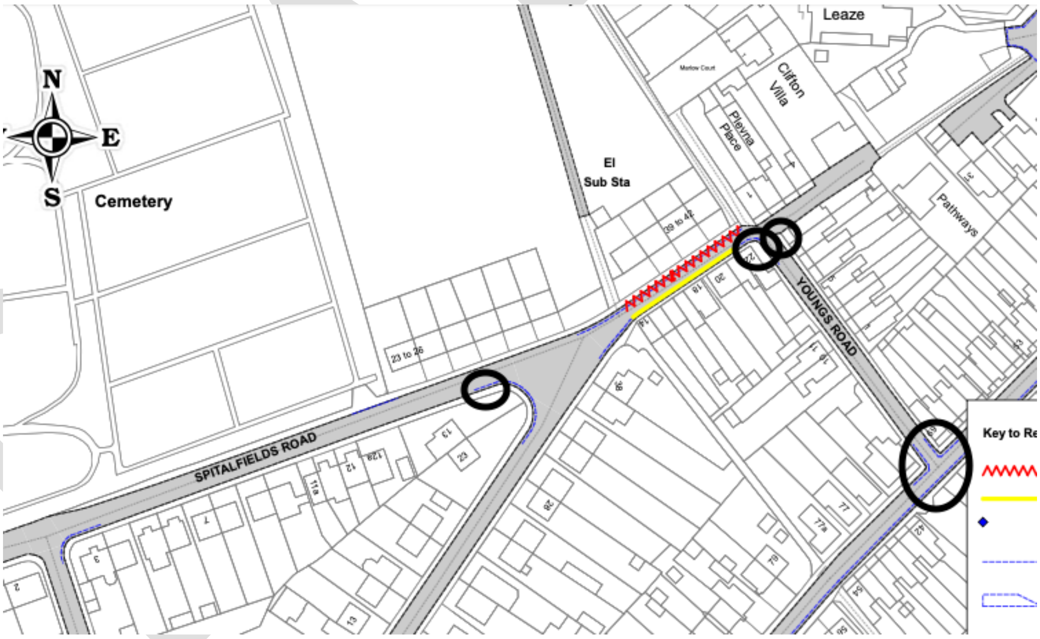
<u>Other Items Relevant to Spitalfields Road Traffic and Parking</u>

Whilst writing, I would also like to object to any reinstatement of double yellow lines in the following ringed areas below. The junction is very wide and offers excellent visibility and access, even when cars or vans are parked in these areas.

The yellow lines were covered in tarmac in 2018 and there have been no accidents, incidents or issues with vehicles parking in these areas:



I do however support no waiting at any time in the ringed areas below to improve traffic access and safety:



<u>My suggestion to improve the traffic in the Spitalfields Road Area between nos 14 and 22</u>

No waiting in the marked areas of my bottom map above, only.

Keep parking between nos 14 and 22 (39 to 42) as it is now.

Make Youngs Road and the section of Spitalfields Road between nos 14 and 22 (39 to 42) one way.

Two Final Comments to support my Objection

When I purchased my house at X Spitalfields Road, I was aware of the fact it was an older house, with a narrow pavement and vehicles parking right outside it. I made my decision to purchase my house with these factors in mind and remain happy with that decision. Anyone moving to this area will have carried out necessary due diligence and bought their property in acceptance of the same factors.

The yellow lines outside nos 39 to 42 Spitalfields Road (the north side) were tarmac'd over in 2018. Since that time, they have simply not existed. If traffic fumes and engine idling were a true issue, if the residents had felt that safety of themselves, their houses or the passing families/children could have been improved, if we felt that vehicle access around the corner to Youngs Road would be made safer or easier or if access into our homes needed improving… no matter how small that improvement was … ***we would have just started parking that side of the road anyway!***

XXX

Resident of:

X Spitalfields Road
Alton

Since 2004"

40.5 *"Good Afternoon,*

I have been asked to send in a copy of our objection letter to you.
I would also like to add 2 points following our conversation with Mr Joy,
1: no cars have crashed into Spitalfields houses as he seems to believe or has been led to believe.
2: we are not related to anyone in the Spitalfields houses but a resident of nearly 13 years in Youngs road.

Regards,

Attached letter:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Objection to Proposal A2083/DL – Spitalfields Road / Youngs Road
We are writing to formally object to the proposed amendment outlined in reference A2083/DL concerning Spitalfields Road and Youngs Road.
This proposal appears illogical and raises significant safety concerns, while offering no alternative provision for the loss of essential resident parking. We understand that this amendment may have been initiated by a single resident of Spitalfields Road on aesthetic grounds; however, it is important to note that the overwhelming majority of residents are strongly opposed to this proposal.

Safety Concerns
The proposed changes would render the corner of Spitalfields Road and Youngs Road extremely difficult to navigate. The turning radius required would be inadequate, particularly for larger vehicles such as emergency services (fire and ambulance) and refuse collection lorries. The corner is already problematic, and this proposal would worsen the situation, potentially increasing the risk of traffic incidents. Furthermore, during peak school drop-off and pick-up times, the narrowing of this junction would likely force drivers to mount the pavement in order to complete their turn, placing pedestrians – including schoolchildren – at significant risk.

Parking Impact
Parking availability in and around Spitalfields Road, Youngs Road, and Victoria Road is already severely limited, with residents frequently having to circle the area multiple times to find a space. This proposal is expected to result in the loss of approximately 14 parking spaces. There appears to be no provision within the plans to address this loss, which will only exacerbate an already challenging situation for residents.
From a personal perspective, we are both paramedics, one of us for the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Air Ambulance. Driving round looking for parking at unsocial finish times, after traumatic 12-hour shifts is already an added stress, not to mention the need for parking during the day post night shifts whilst asleep and an on-call duty manager component to the air ambulance role. These proposed restrictions would cause further harm to our wellbeing, far beyond an individual's aesthetic concerns for their property.

Conclusion
In light of the serious safety implications and the lack of consideration for affected residents, I respectfully urge you to reconsider this proposal. The current plans appear to be driven by the preference of a single individual and do not reflect the needs or concerns of the broader community.
I look forward to your response and to the opportunity for this matter to be reviewed with full consideration of resident input and safety data.

Yours faithfully,"

40.6 *"Hi,*

I am a resident of Youngs Road and have concerns about the proposed change to the double yellow lines in the Spitalfields road area.
As you may already know parking around here is very limited and I think the change is only going to make the matter worse from what I can see in the plans. Driving up our road on the left and then round a tight corner to drive along Spitalfields road on the left where the cars are currently parked will mean vehicles have to cut the corner up the pavement on the left not only getting close to the house on the corner (no.X) but putting the pedestrians at risk of getting hit (my daughter will be walking that way to Amery Hill and is obviously my primary concern). Having cars parked along the narrow pavement is also better for pedestrians than cars driving along it, I'm sure larger vehicles/delivery vans will mount the narrow pavement again putting pedestrians and the houses along there at risk.

What are the reasons for the change?
Can you let me know your thoughts on the concerns I have please.

Many thanks"

40.7 *"Dear Annette*

I am writing in response to the Traffic Order Proposals for Spitalfields Road, Reference: A2083/DL

My property is X Spitalfields Road, Alton, Hampshire GU34 2DU

Firstly, I do not understand what has necessitated this proposal as the present system has operated very well since I bought my property in 2012. I understand that living in a terraced property can involve parking issues but when I purchased the property I understood that there would be potential parking directly outside the house and in addition I was able to rent a garage in what has now become Marlow Court.

The proposals will impact parking which is already congested for residents and will be exasperated further if your plans come to fruition. Cars have become larger (reducing space) and many local residents have dropped the kerb which has reduced car parking spaces even further. One small illustration is when I teach an evening class in Farnborough and arrive home after 9.30 I often have to park several streets away from where I live. I am also concerned about the safety of my vehicle which has been "keyed" presumably for parking by the flats in Spitalfields Road. The suggested reinstatement of double yellow lines at the junction between Chautsingers and Spitalfields roads would also remove some additional parking spaces for local residents.

I am even more concerned to find that cars will now be driving past my front door which opens directly onto a narrow pavement and the road. This will increase the noise level and endangers residents and potential damage to property. A parent trying to negotiate a pram or pushchair would be pushing it into the road and potential traffic. A similar problem will occur for residents wishing to carry out repairs to their property such as painting and decorating as well as general maintenance. At the moment, the parked cars provide some protection for both residents and pedestrians.

I do feel very alarmed about the proposals and would therefore like my objections to be taken fully into account before introducing a scheme that will have a negative impact upon the quality of my life in Alton and many other local residents.

Yours sincerely,"

40.8 Re agenda item 5: Jerry Janes of the Holybourne Village Association (HVA) thanked the Council for meeting in August. He then thanked councillors, officers, and the hundreds of members of the public for coming out this evening and said it clearly demonstrates the level of concern in the village.

He went on to draw attention to the richness of variety in the UK that offers people different types of places in which to live; from hamlets and country villages to big cities and everything in between. The people in Holybourne choose to live in this small rural village, and do not want it to be overrun with houses and become just another part of the town. It is imperative that we hang on to this diversity and allow people the choice of where they live.

40.9 Re agenda item 5: John Bound had presented to the Council prior to the meeting as part of the HVA but summarised here that the key point is that this is a very constrained and special site. Despite the impression given in the media there is not a planning free-for-all and the HVA are asking the Town Council to object to this application. The application represents a disproportionate development of Holybourne.

40.10 Re agenda item 5: Tim Carmichael thanked everyone for their time this evening. He said they are not the kind to normally protest or 'say no'. "There is substance to what we are saying. We want the community's voice to be heard and respected". He went on to point out that the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANP) is the Town Council's policies, and they should not go against it. The playground is an open space in Holybourne and is identified as important in this plan. It also recognises Holybourne as a rural community. The ANP went through a referendum in order to be adopted, and it would be democratically irresponsible to go against it. He added "We are looking for something proportionate. You took issue with the Local Plan and challenged it in November and we would ask you to do this again and challenge this application. It's not about us saying no to growth, it's about us saying be fair, be proportionate".

40.11 Re agenda item 8: Maggie Thirlway said that she agreed with everything that had previously been said about Holybourne but was actually here to speak about King's Pond. She lives in Waterside Court and said she chose to live there because of the open space. As the Council is proposing to make changes to the pond, she says a flood risk assessment should have been done.

40.12 Re agenda item 8: Jill Jenkins is another resident of Waterside Court. She said that she is opposed to any major changes to the pond. She would like to see the silt dealt with and see all phase 1 work completed before moving onto phase 2. She would also like to see flood risk assessments.

40.13 Re agenda item 8: Jancine Potts spoke about the swans. Normally the swans lay 5-7 eggs and have a mortality rate of around 50%. This year they hatched 9 and 8 have survived. She added "I think this should be applauded. Any reduction in the size of King's Pond would get rid of the swans as they need a long stretch to take off from. That is very short-sighted and I'm sure if we petition the King as owner of the swans, he would not be happy".

40.14 Re agenda item 8: Pat Willder also lives at Waterside Court and wants to know if a flood risk assessment has been done before anything is considered for King's Pond.

40.15 Re agenda item 5: Charles Buckley from Redbrown then spoke. He reiterated the thanks from Jerry Janes to the Council for meeting in August. He said it would be silly of them not to recognise that there are a lot of objections to their proposals.

They have made a lot of investment in the estate and in the area. They are not wanting to do a conventional development but have done three pre-applications with the planning authority. Redbrown believe very strongly that it is incumbent upon them to work closely with neighbouring people to come up with a scheme that is suitable. They want to engage. They can continue to make changes and they believe they can deliver this scheme and do a really good job.

40.16 Re agenda item 8: Madison Allen read out a note from Anthony Furnival who could not be at the meeting. He said he had previously been critical of councillors for not listening to the local people and that tonight, given the controversial items on the agenda the Council will be hearing from lots of people who are concerned for their local town. He wanted to object again to any more money being spent on the plans for the pond as he felt there had been no meaningful mandate from residents. He said that the people have not been given a voice. The Council should hold a referendum and agree to be bound by the result. This should not be the decision of councillors but should be the voice of the people.

40.17 Re agenda item 8: Will Seabury said that there was significant public opinion about King's Pond, and it would seem sensible to listen to the people of Alton before appointing contractors.

40.18 Re agenda item 12: Dian Sellers spoke about the proposed Traffic Order for the area around 14-22 Spitalfields, highlighting that the houses there have no front gardens and open directly onto the narrow pavement. She reiterated her objection which had already been copied to the Council and was in the correspondence received, above. She added that they rely on the parked cars to keep them and the children safe, and while they occasionally experience a car that leaves their engine running at school pick-up time it is normally someone with a baby in the car trying to keep the car warm and does not happen every day. She emphasised that she was not speaking about the whole proposal, only that for Spitalfields / Youngs Road. She added that the road is going to be highlighted as a safe walking and cycling route, but it would not be so if these changes were to go ahead, meaning moving vehicles were within 90cm of these houses.

40.19 Re agenda item 12: Brian Rubin is also a resident of Spitalfields Road and said he was not sure where this proposal had come from. Those who live there are really surprised and upset by this proposal. He reiterated Dian's point about how narrow the pavement is there and said he is about to become a grandparent and the thought of his daughter pushing a child down this pavement without the barrier of parked cars is very frightening. The proposals also remove parking from an area where there is already insufficient space.

40.20 Re agenda item 12: Heidi Stoodley said that she lives on the corner of Spitalfields Road and Youngs Road. This is a very busy corner with lots of schools. It is also a blind corner. The current situation is that, due to the cars parking along one side of the road it improves visibility when you come round the corner in a car. This proposal will mean you are going round a blind corner without being able to see what is coming and that will make it extremely dangerous. Cars clip the curb constantly at a point where families congregate with prams and pushchairs. With these proposals you will not be able to get round that corner without mounting the curb. Vehicles such as the bin lorry will be unable to get round it at all.

40.21 Re agenda item 8: Chris Morley thanked the council for the opportunity to address them. He said that Holybourne have his full support and added that the proposals were ‘absolutely bonkers’. He then asked the Council to put King’s Pond to a public vote before they spend any more money on it. He said, “you are spending public money hand over fist with no mandate, and it is madness”.

40.22 Re agenda item 8: Nathan Cuff spoke to say he is opposed to the current council’s strategy to pursue two options for King’s Pond. The pond should have been dredged five years ago, and this is just kicking the can down the road. He said he is curious why a referendum is being opposed or ignored and added that this level of detail is not needed to glean public opinion. He felt that nothing is being done in the meantime to maintain the pond.

40.23 Re agenda item 8: Steven Gough said that King’s Pond is an important place for him and his family and the idea of a clear chalk stream running around a smaller pond is a fallacy. Reducing the pond in size will impact all kinds of wildlife. All it needs is dredging. If silt traps were put upstream, he felt that the need for dredging would be reduced. He said that the pond should be maintained by a specialist in the first instance and then by a sympathetic Town Council. He finished by saying that he was not aware of any specialists reports and that is why he is opposed to the council moving onto the next stage.

40.24 County Councillor Andrew Joy said he was really privileged to be able to speak in front of this huge audience. He said a number of issues had been raised and it would be helpful to express a view on some of them from a Hampshire County Council perspective. He said there was a mistaken impression that he had asked for this traffic work to be done but that is not the case. He had just asked that when a review was done of areas in the town they consult fully with the public. That is now being done. HCC are consulting people on how traffic affects their lives and their ability to get around the town. He emphasised that it is really important that everyone’s views are heard and that residents’ views are fed in to officers to allow the proper assessments to be done and fed into the system.

With regards the Redbrown application he said that he has been trying to make sure that as a statutory consultee, Hampshire County Council comments on the traffic and drainage impacts of this application.

He finished by saying that he hoped he had allayed some of the concerns and that he is available on the phone or by email to anyone who wants to contact him directly to discuss anything further.

The Mayor, with permission of the councillors, moved item 12 up the agenda in light of the number of people who had attended to speak on the matter and the amount of correspondence received. It would therefore be considered just before item 8, following the three planning applications.

41 **Planning Application: EHDC-25-0748-OUT, Land To The Rear Of 136-150 London Road, Holybourne, Alton, Hampshire**

Councillor Hill proposed that councillors go through the planning checklist used for large applications to decide the Council's response to be submitted; this was seconded by Councillor Eyre.

The following comments were then recorded from Councillors:

Material Consideration	Designation / Issue	Response
Flood Zone	Environment Agency Indicative Flood Mapping and SFRA Area at Risk of Flooding	"Whole category of flood problems in this area. This proposal does not go far enough to mitigate the flood risk for this site."
Environmental Designations	Special Protection Area RAMSAR Site Site of Special Scientific Interest National Nature Reserve Site of Nature Conservation Importance	"This is a site of environmental sensitivity which is highlighted in the Local Plan. We should object on these grounds."
National Park and Landscape	National Park or AONB	N/A
Contamination or Unstable Land Issues	Land contamination or unstable land issues	N/A to this site
Noise Issues	Noise issues relating to existing land uses or transport corridors	No comments from councillors on this.
Residential Amenity	Location of site in relation to existing dwellings	"This development would change the character of the village completely from being a rural village to a suburb of Alton."
Historic Environment	Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) Sites of Archaeological Importance Historic Park and Garden Conservation Area Listed building	"All five of these points apply to this site. There is a lot of history here and it is adjacent to the Conservation Area. 'Red' on all this!"
Highways	Traffic Impact Assessment Access to A and B roads Proximity to known points of traffic congestion	"Traffic counts need to be done over a period of time, with a reflection of a whole week, not just one day at certain times. Traffic impact assessments should be produced accordingly to give an accurate reflection of the impact on London Road. Access onto the site is extremely important and with only one way in this could be an issue, especially for emergency vehicles. There is an impact on safety along London Road as the pavements are very narrow."
Availability of community services such as Doctors Surgery, Dentist, Health Clinic	The scheme either provides for or has close access to community facilities	"The local NHS has declared that the two GP surgeries in the town have no spare capacity and there are no current plans to rectify that."

Infrastructure	The scheme either provides for or has close access to necessary infrastructure	"No infrastructure is being provided with this development. The playground is a replacement for a facility already in existence. The highways are not suitable for the increase in traffic."
Open Space	Provision of policy compliant Public Open Space (POS)	"The existing open space will be lost, and the replacement is simply a play space and not the public open space that the current one is with the views across the countryside. The current open space is identified in the Alton Neighbourhood Plan as being of particular importance and should not be lost."
Availability of utilities, Water, Gas, Electricity, Gas, Broadband, Telephone.	The scheme either provides for or has close access to a range of utilities	Unknown – no comments from councillors on this.
Availability of Educational facilities	The scheme either provides for or has close access to necessary education provision	"Andrews Endowed is an excellent school, but it is already at capacity. There do not appear to have been any comments yet from Hampshire County Council as statutory consultees about education provision or highways."
Foul and Surface water drainage	Adequate foul and surface water drainage must be in place	"Drainage is not sufficient in the village to cope with existing development and there is frequently flooding in Holybourne. The report from the drainage engineer shows that there are serious concerns over whether the system will cope."
Availability and conflict with other policies	Promoted sites, public land ownership, etc.	"The Public Open Space as highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan."

Councillor Eyre therefore proposed an amendment to allow the officers present to pull together the comments and add in the relevant policy references to enable the objections to be submitted by the deadline of 11th August. This was seconded by Councillor Hill with all councillors voting in favour.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED
To submit an objection to the application with officers pulling together the comments from councillors in the checklist above and relevant policy references, by the extended deadline of 11th August 2025.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All councillors voted in favour.

Many members of the public chose this moment to leave the meeting and the mayor announced this would a good time to take a comfort break. The meeting was adjourned for ten minutes.

42 **Planning Application: EHDC-25-0718-FUL, The Queens Head, 20 London Road, Holybourne, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 4EG**

On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

> **RESOLVED to**
> **Submit a response of NO OBJECTION to application EHDC-25-0718-FUL, The Queens Head, 20 London Road, Holybourne, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 4EG**
>
> Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.
>
> All councillors voted in favour.

43 **Planning Application: EHDC-25-0711-FUL, Anstey Road Garage Anstey Road, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 2RD**

Councillor Bayliss proposed submitting a response, which was seconded by Councillor Eyre.

Concerns were raised over the increase in traffic movements at this location and the safety of pedestrians. This junction is already extremely busy, and the nature of this business would mean a high number of vehicles entering and leaving the premises. Hampshire Highways really need to do a proper assessment of the area prior to submitting a response. The Deputy Clerk was asked to contact the police to ensure they have responded and to ensure they submit any evidence of accidents at this section of road. A proposal was therefore put forward by Councillor Kellermann and seconded by Councillor Hammond that the response be an objection due to these concerns. All councillors voted in favour of this amendment. Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Eyre, it was

> **RESOLVED**
> **To submit an OBJECTION due to concerns over traffic movements and pedestrian safety.**
>
> Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.
>
> All councillors voted in favour.

44 **Traffic Order Proposals – Prohibition Of Waiting, Various Roads, Alton, for consultation**

Councillor Moore proposed that a response be made from Alton Town Council, which was seconded by Councillor Hill.

As ward councillors, Councillors Moore and Tansey had received many emails from residents, objecting strongly to the proposals for Spitalfields Road and Youngs Road. Further emails had also been received by the Mayor. With several people also attending the meeting to speak during item 4, the strong feeling against these proposals was acknowledged by councillors. An amendment was proposed by Councillor Bayliss: "to allow councillors to respond individually on the proposals and ATC to respond regarding Spitalfields Road and Youngs Road". This was seconded by Councillor O'Brien. All councillors voted for the amendment and thus, on the proposal of Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED:
1. **To submit an OBJECTION from Alton Town Council to the proposals for Spitalfields Road and Youngs Road**
2. **For councillors to submit individual responses to any of the proposals as desired.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All Councillors voted in favour.

45 **<u>To authorise a panel for contractors to present to with regards the next stage of the King's Pond project</u>**

Councillor Hammond proposed that Council authorise the Task and Finish Group (T&FG), along with officers, to form a panel (including councillors, up to two other members of the T&FG and the Town Clerk) to receive presentations from, and ask questions of, candidates for completing Stage 1 of the King's Pond project, score the tenders, taking this information into account, and make a recommendation to the Full Council meeting on 3rd September. This was seconded by Councillor O'Brien.

In response to the public concerns raised earlier in the meeting, Councillor Hammond reiterated that, in accordance with a previous resolution by Council, ATC is investigating two options:
1. Dredging
2. Pond and River

Stage 1 is to do the designs and cost them in order to present both options to the people of Alton so they could make an informed decision. That includes a flood risk assessment.

This agenda item is only to form a panel to hear from the prospective candidates as part of the tender process and put a recommendation to Council in September.

He acknowledged that there are often people who speak passionately about the pond and the wildlife at the beginning of a meeting and it is good that they do come along and make their case. However, it was decided through democratic process to explore both options and allow the public every opportunity to contribute to any decision.

The recommendation and as such, this proposal, is to allow members of the T&FG who are not councillors to be involved in this process.

Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment that: "no further money be spent on King's Pond until the public has had their say". This was seconded by Councillor Moore.

Councillor Kellermann said that people can make a decision now about what they want to be done. It does not have to be an informed decision. People simply have a desire to keep the pond.

Councillor Hammond emphasised how important it was that people be properly informed and stressed that Alton Town Council is not putting forward either option but is investigating both options with an open mind, as promised. He reminded the meeting that when the public engagement was carried out in late 2024 the outcome was much more even than Councillor Kellermann was suggesting. All of the work done so far serves both options. Nothing has been done needlessly. The ecological and other surveys have to be done and permissions must be sought whichever option is taken forward after public consultation.

Councillor O'Brien added that lots of engagement has been carried out over the last few years and while most of the public who have spoken about King's Pond this evening want to keep the pond, there has been a great number throughout who want to see the pros and cons of both options and so it is important that councillors keep an open mind and do not make guesses about what the public will decide.

Councillor Bayliss stated that there is a great deal of support for looking at both options.

Prior to moving to a vote the Town Clerk pointed out that as the time was now 9.30pm, in order for the meeting to proceed further Council would need to suspend Standing Order 3x. Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

> **RESOLVED**
> **To suspend Standing Order 3x to allow the meeting to proceed.**
>
> Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.
>
> All councillors voted in favour.

The amendment was then voted on and with two votes in favour (Councillors Kellermann and Moore) and seven votes against it was not carried. Councillor Quincey abstained.

Councillor Moore then proposed a further amendment: "to postpone any further spending until October in order to allow Stage 1 to be completed". This was seconded by Councillor Kellermann.

Councillor Hammond emphasised that this spending was to allow Stage 1 to be completed and the amendment was therefore impossible as Stage 1 could not be delivered without spending more money.

Councillor Bayliss said he was struggling to distinguish between the two amendments and councillors were now repeating the same arguments. In light of the fact that the meeting had already been extended past the two and a half hour point he asked that they just move to a vote.

With two votes in favour (Councillors Kellermann and Moore) and seven votes against, the amendment was not carried. Councillor Quincey abstained.

Thus, a vote was taken on the original motion, and it was

RESOLVED
That Council authorise the Task and Finish Group (T&FG), along with officers, to form a panel (including councillors, up to two other members of the T&FG and the Town Clerk) to receive presentations from, and ask questions of, candidates for completing Stage 1 of the King's Pond project, score the tenders, taking this information into account, and make a recommendation to the Full Council meeting on 3rd September.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Boyce-Churn, Hammond, Hill, O'Brien, Quincey and Tansey
Against: Councillors Kellermann and Moore

46 **To approve the signing of the S106 Deed of Variation to enable the money to be used to refurbish the two pavilions at Jubilee Fields**

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

RESOLVED
To approve the signing of the Deed of Variation to allow the S106 monies from the development on Land to the east of Will Hall Farm, Basingstoke Road, Alton, to be spent on the refurbishment of the two pavilions at Jubilee Playing Fields.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All councillors voted in favour.

47 **Christmas Lights Improvements Proposal**

Councillor Eyre proposed the four recommendations on the agenda. This was seconded by Councillor Kellermann.

Councillor Kellermann then proposed an amendment: "that any newly acquired decorations reflect the Christian nature of the festival". There being no seconder, this amendment was not carried.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Tansey, it was

RESOLVED to:
1. **add lighting to some of the trees between Boots and M&S**
2. **add icicle lighting, where we can get permission, from Timeless to Clarks**
3. **relocate the large Christmas tree from the Assembly Rooms to Market Square**

4. **allow officers to negotiate the sale or exchange of the current Market Square tree or relocate it to the Public Gardens, and implement.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All councillors voted in favour.

48 **Consultations on Local Government Reorganisation**

Councillor Kellermann proposed that Councillors individually may respond to the two parallel consultations. This was seconded by Councillor Hill.

Councillor Bayliss proposed an amendment in addition as follows: “That the Town Clerk be authorised to formulate a response to the two Local Government Reorganisation consultations on behalf of Alton Town Council”. This would focus on the role of the most local tier of local government, urging that any new arrangements put in place respect the local democratic mandate of town councils and are not competitive or inefficient.

This was seconded by Councillor Eyre and all councillors voted in favour, thus, on the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Eyre, it was

RESOLVED that:

1. **Councillors submit individual responses to the two Local Government Reorganisation consultations**
   and
2. **The Town Clerk be authorised to formulate a response to the two Local Government Reorganisation consultations on behalf of Alton Town Council.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All Councillors voted in favour.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/07/2025
for Cashbook 2 - CCLA Deposit Fund

Bank Statement Account Name (s)	Statement Date	Page No	Balances
CCLA Deposit Fund	31/07/2025		1,908,754.04
			1,908,754.04
Unpresented Payments (Minus)		**Amount**	
		0.00	
			0.00
			1,908,754.04
Unpresented Receipts (Plus)			
		0.00	
			0.00
			1,908,754.04
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	**1,908,754.04**
		Difference is :-	**0.00**

Signatory 1:

Name .... Signed .... Date ....

Signatory 2:

Name .... Signed .... Date ....

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/07/2025
for Cashbook 4 - Petty Cash

Bank Statement Account Name (s)	Statement Date	Page No	Balances
Petty Cash	31/07/2025		472.81
			472.81

Unpresented Payments (Minus)	Amount	
	0.00	
		0.00
		472.81

Unpresented Receipts (Plus)		
	0.00	
		0.00
		472.81
	Balance per Cash Book is :-	472.81
	Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

Name .... Signed .... Date ....

Signatory 2:

Name .... Signed .... Date ....

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/07/2025
for Cashbook 1 - Unity Trust Bank : Current A/c

Bank Statement Account Name (s)	Statement Date	Page No	Balances
Unity Trust Bank: Current A/C	31/07/2025		247,271.00
			247,271.00

Unpresented Payments (Minus)	Amount	
	0.00	
		0.00
		247,271.00

Unpresented Receipts (Plus)		
	0.00	
		0.00
		247,271.00
	Balance per Cash Book is :-	247,271.00
	Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

Name .... Signed .... Date ....

Signatory 2:

Name .... Signed .... Date ....

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Our Ref: MARK/ALT001

The Clerk to the Council
Alton Town Council
Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

9th July 2025

Dear Tom,

<u>Re: Alton Town Council</u>
<u>Internal Audit Year Ended 31 March 2026 – Interim Audit report</u>

Executive summary
Following completion of our interim internal audit on 9th July 2025 we enclose our report for your kind attention and presentation to the council. The audit was conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines and testing was risk based. Whilst we have not tested all transactions, our samples have where appropriate covered the entire year to date.

Our report is presented in the same order as the assertions on the internal auditor report within the published Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The start of each section details the nature of the assertion to be verified. Testing requirements follow those detailed in the audit plan previously sent to the council, a copy of which is available on request. The report concludes with an opinion as to whether each assertion has been met or not at this point in the year. Some assertions are tested only at the final internal audit, and this is reflected where appropriate in the report. **Recommendations for action are shown in bold text and are summarised in the table at the end of the report.**

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

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

It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Alton Town Council are a model of good practice.

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

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance activity designed to improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the authority on whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

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

Independence and competence

Your audit was conducted by Mark Mulberry of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd, who has over 30 years' experience in the financial sector with the last 14 years specialising in local government.

Your auditor is independent from the management of the financial controls and procedures of the council and has no conflicts of interest with the audit client, nor do they provide any management or financial assistance to the client.

Engagement Letter

An engagement letter was previously issued to the council covering the 2025/26 internal audit assignment. Copies of this document are available on request.

Planning and inherent risk assessment

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

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

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A. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

Internal audit requirement

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

The audit was conducted on site with the Clerk and the Assistant to the Clerk. The requested information as advised in advance of the visit was in many respected pre-prepared and overall I have the impression that accounting records are neatly maintained and easily accessible.

The council uses the Rialtas Business Solutions (RBS) accounting package for recording the council's finances. This is an industry specific accounting package, and I make no recommendation to change. The system encompasses a cashbook, purchase ledger, sales ledger and fixed asset register and it provides for reconciliation of key control accounts and regular reporting against budget.

A review of the nominal ledger shows there to be no netting off of income and expenditure and items are posted to the heading to which they relate. There is no evidence of excess journal corrections to the accounts.

The system is used to produce management information reports for review at council meetings and is updated regularly with financial information. A review of the cashbook shows that the system is being populated with relevant data, such that a casual reader can understand the nature and scope of the transactions. A simple walk through of a receipt and payment chosen at random, proved the underlying documentation could be easily located.

The council has segregation off duties within the finance team, with clear evidence of hierarchical review.

The bank is reconciled monthly by the assistant to the clerk. The bank reconciliations, income and expenditure reports, payment summaries and other financial reports are produced for council to review and are documented in the minutes.

I tested opening balances as at 1/4/25 showing £167,820.65 for cashbook 1 on the financial reporting package, this was agreed back to the published 2024/25 AGAR.

The council is VAT registered. The June 2025 quarter was completed and submitted on the 1st July. This indicates the council is sufficiently up to date with its financial postings. **It was noted that no VAT was charged on a water reimbursement recharge. The assistant to the clerk will review and correct re-charges as necessary. Any corrections are likely to be below £10k and as such can filter through to the next VAT quarter.**

Overall, I have the impression that the accounting systems are well ordered and routinely maintained and as such I make no recommendation to change. I am of the opinion that the council keeps appropriate records and uses the systems for the purpose for which they are intended.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

B. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

Confirm by sample testing that councillors sign statutory office forms

I confirmed by sample testing that councillors sign "Acceptance of Office", "declarations of interest" and "notices to receive information by electronic means" forms.

Confirm that the council is compliant with GDPR & FOI

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

The council will be able to sign off the new assertion 10 in 2026 regarding this matter as they are already compliant. (See appendix for SAPPP briefing note in this regard)

Confirm that the council meets regularly throughout the year

In addition to full council, the council has a committee structure in place. Terms of reference for each committee are in place and were last reviewed and adopted on the 7th May 2025.

A diary of future meeting dates is also published on the council website, along with historic agendas and minutes for council and committee meetings.

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

I was able to confirm that at least 3 clear days' notice is given on agendas. Whilst we have not tested every single committee and council meeting there was no evidence of non-compliance in giving three clear days' notice of the meeting.

I note that the non-confidential supporting papers are published alongside the agendas in accordance with the requirements of the Information Commissioner's Office.

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

Draft minutes are uploaded to the council website and clearly marked as draft. The council will alter this practice in the current council year to remove the watermark after the minutes are signed off.

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

The Standing Orders are based on the current NALC model and were most recently reviewed and adopted by council at the July 2024 council meeting. **I recommend these are reviewed and readopted prior to March 2026.**

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

The Financial Regulations published on the council website are based on the previous NALC model. The regulations contain provisions for the approval of spending, setting of budgets, reconciliation of the bank and reporting to council. These were last reviewed and adopted in June 2024. **I recommend these are reviewed and readopted prior to March 2026; council may want to consider adopting/tailoring the new 2025 regulations.**

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

Council day to day practice (summary).

- The council has clear documented thresholds for the approval of orders. The assistant to the clerk will check the financial reporting package for budget availability.

- A purchase order is created, depending a financial threshold. The supplier invoice will be matched to the PO and signed off by the deputy clerk. The assistant to the clerk will code and annotate the invoice when it is posted to the financial reporting package.

- Twice monthly, using the unpaid invoice folder and supplier invoice due date, the payments are set up on the on-line bank system, by the assistant to the clerk. The corresponding supplier invoices are scanned and emailed to the signatories to review.

- The signatories will log into the bank and authorise the release of the payment. Two authorisations are required. The bank system does not allow the originator of a transaction to authorise the same transaction.

- When the bank reconciliation is prepared the supplier invoice is further annotated to show the date of payment and then filed in the paid folder.

- The council will receive a list of payments over £500 together with income and expenditure each month.

The above day to day procedure matches financial regulation 5.2.

The direct debit list will be approved at council tonight in accordance with financial regulations.

A review of council minutes shows that council authorises payments in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations, and the payment list is approved at each council meeting.

There is also evidence within the minutes of council meetings of reviews of cashbooks, budget analysis and earmarked reserves, demonstrating that councillors are provided with sufficient information to make informed financial decisions.

Confirm all section 137 expenditure meets the guidelines and does not exceed the annual per elector limit of £11.10 (2024/25 £10.81) per elector.
The council does not have the GPC. Section 137 expenditure is within thresholds.

Check receipt of VAT refund matches last submitted VAT return
The council submits its VAT return monthly. I reviewed the submission for June 2025 and was able to confirm the amount being reclaimed matches the accounting information totalling the individual VAT reclaim amounts. The council is up to date with its VAT submissions.

Confirm that checks of the accounts are made by a councillor
Councillors undertake periodic reviews of the systems of that of the council; however, this is not formally documented in all cases. **I recommend that given the work is completed that this is minuted and shown as such.**

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

C. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

Internal audit requirement

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

To be tested at a later visit

D. BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES

Internal audit requirement

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

To be tested at a later visit

E. INCOME

Internal audit requirement

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

To be tested at a later visit

F. PETTY CASH

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council maintains a minimal petty cash float and records the entries in a separate cashbook. A review of the entries shows that the petty cash is used appropriately for incidental expenditure, and the amounts are inconsequential to the overall finances of the council.

I tested the petty cash and agreed it back to the cashbook and the cash analysis VAT was appropriately reclaimed.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

G. PAYROLL

Internal audit requirement

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

To be tested at a later visit

H. ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS

Internal audit requirement

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

To be tested at a later interim visit

I. BANK AND CASH

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

Financial regulation 2.2 states 'At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Council Chairman or a cheque signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the full council.

Bank reconciliations are completed monthly and presented to council at every meeting for review. I reviewed the reconciliations presented for the interim audit and was able to confirm the balances to the bank statements and found no errors.

I noted that the reconciliations have been signed in accordance with the Financial Regulations; however, I remind council to ensure the face of the bank statement is also signed as it was clear some signatures were missing.

The council has an investment strategy in place; however, this is very much out of date now and needs to be updated.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

J. YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council, at its meeting to sign off the year-end accounts, must discuss Section 1 of the AGAR (Annual Governance Statement) and record this activity in the minutes of the meeting.

COUNCIL IS REMINDED THAT THIS MUST BE A SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF SECTION 2 OF THE AGAR (ACCOUNTING STATEMENT).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement

Based on the internal audit findings, I recommend using the table below as the basis for that discussion.

	Annual Governance Statement	*'Yes', means that this authority*	Suggested response based on evidence
1	We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	*prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*	**YES** – accounts follow latest Accounts and Audit Regulations and practitioners guide recommendations.
2	We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	*made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.*	**YES** – there is regular reporting of financial transactions and accounting summaries, offering the opportunity for scrutiny.
3	We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	*has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.*	**YES** – the Clerk advises the council in respect of its legal powers.
4	We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	*during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.*	**YES** – the requirements and timescales for 2024/25 year-end were followed.
5	We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	*considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.*	**YES** – the council has a risk management scheme and appropriate external insurance.
6	We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	*arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.*	**YES** – the council has appointed an independent and competent internal auditor.
7	We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	*responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.*	**YES** – matters raised in internal and external audit reports have been addressed.
8	We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after	*disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the*	**YES** – no matters were raised during the internal audit visits.

	the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and. Where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	*year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.*	
9	Trust funds including charitable – In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/asset(s), including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	*has met all its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*	**N/A** – the council has no trusts

Section 2 – Accounting Statements

AGAR box number		2023/24	2024/25	Internal Auditor notes
1	Balances brought forward	1,049,931	1,587,852	Agrees to 2023/24 carry forward (box 7)
2	Precept or rates and levies	826,979	851,976	Figure confirmed to central precept record
3	Total other receipts	1,099,126	726,160	Agrees to underlying accounting records
4	Staff costs	505,927	513,500	Agrees to underlying accounting records. Includes only expenditure allowed as staff costs (see section G)
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	9,411	9,411	Council has no borrowing
6	All other payments	872,846	849,213	Agrees to underlying accounting records
7	Balances carried forward	1,587,852	1,793,864	Casts correctly and agrees to balance sheet

8	Total value of cash and short-term investments	1,588,383	1,906,735	Agrees to bank reconciliation for all accounts
9	Total fixed assets plus long-term investments and assets	3,092,603	3,088,953	Matches asset register total and changes from previous year have been traced
10	Total borrowings	182,280	176,904	Council has no borrowing

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

Audit findings

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

The AGAR correctly casts and cross casts and last year's comparatives match the figures submitted for 2023/24 and published on the council website.

The variance analysis has been completed and, in my opinion, provides sufficient financial and narrative information to explain the variances to the External Auditor.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

K. LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW

Internal audit requirement

IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")

Audit findings

The council did not class itself as exempt – this test does not apply.

L: PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

For councils with a turnover below £25,000, it is a statutory requirement to follow the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. I was able to locate the required information on the council's website.

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

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

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

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

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

I was able to confirm that pages 4 (Annual Governance Statement) and 5 (Accounting Statements) of the AGARs are available for review on the council website for financial years 2019/20 to 2024/25 inclusive. As the council has declared itself exempt from a limited assurance review during this period, it has no pages 6 (External Auditor's Report and Certificate) to publish.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

M: EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS - INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS

Internal audit requirement

The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2025 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Audit findings

Inspection – key dates	2024/25
Date AGAR signed by council	7th May
Date inspection notice issued	30th May
Inspection period begins	3rd June
Inspection period ends	14th July
Correct length (30 working days)	Yes
Common period included (first 10 working days of July)	Yes

I am satisfied the requirements of this control objective were met for 2024/25, and assertion 4 on the Annual Governance Statement can therefore be signed yes by the council.

N: PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Internal audit requirement

The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25. Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website / webpage.

Before 1 July 2025 authorities must publish:
- *Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited*
- *Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, approved and signed, page 4*
- *Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25, approved and signed, page 5*

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities must publish:
- *Notice of conclusion of audit*
- *Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate*
- *Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.*

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

Audit findings

I was able to confirm that the Notice of the Period of Public Rights and Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) and Section 2 (Accounting Statement) were published on the council's website before 1 July 2025.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

O. TRUSTEESHIP

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council has no trusts, and testing for this internal control objective is not applicable.

Achievement of control assertions at interim audit date

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

	INTERNAL CONTROL OBJECTIVE	YES	NO	NOT COVERED
A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year	☑		
B	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for	☑		
C	This authority assesses the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these			
D	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.			
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for			
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for	☑		
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.			
H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			
I	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.			
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	☑		
K	If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")*			☑ N/A
L	The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation	☑		
M	The authority, during the previous year (2022-23) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*	☑		
N	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR.	☑		
O	Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			☑ N/A

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

Yours sincerely

M Mulberry

<u>**Mark Mulberry**</u>
Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd

Interim Audit 2025/26 - Points Carried Forward

Audit Point	Audit Findings	Council comments
Fixed Assets	Please ensure a fixed asset capitalisation policy is drawn up as soon as possible – see earlier reports for comments on this matter.	
VAT	It was noted that no VAT was charged on a water reimbursement recharge. The assistant to the clerk will review and correct re-charges as necessary. Any corrections are likely to be below £10k and as such can filter through to the next VAT quarter.	
Financial regulations and standing orders	I recommend these are reviewed and readopted prior to March 2026. Council may want to consider adopting/tailoring the new 2025 financial regulations.	
Governance	I recommend that the work carried out by councillors reviewing the internal controls is minuted and shown as such.	
Bank & Cash	I noted that the reconciliations have been signed in accordance with the Financial Regulations; however, I remind council to ensure the face of the bank statement is also signed as it was clear some signatures were missing. The council has an investment strategy in place; however, this is very much out of date now and needs to be updated.	
Minutes	The clerk is going to implement new practice to remove the draft watermark from the website minutes once they are signed.	

Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Briefing on Assertion 10

In response to queries relating to the new Assertion 10, SAPPP have published the following briefing.

GDPR and Data Protection

The key to compliance with GDPR and DPA is that data is held and managed by the authority. To support this, an authority should have ownership and administrative rights over email accounts.

Setting up an email account on servers such as Gmail, outlook and yahoo requires the inputting of personal information such as full name and date of birth, therefore arguably this is a personal account. Whilst the address may be seemingly generic, clerk.abcparishcounil@gmail.com, does the authority have full access in the event of a change in personal? Is personal information required to recover an account?

There is an inherent risk in data being stored outside the UK. Any personal data being transferred outside of the UK, for example to non-UK servers, must be to countries covered by a UK adequacy decision (GDPR). When using a non-authority owned domain, does the authority know where data is being stored and has the authority considered and accepted the risks and any possible breach of GDPR requirements?

By owning a UK based domain, for example gov.uk; org.uk, or one provided by another authority, it can be confident that data storage and transfer is compliant with GDPR. Additionally, in the event of a delay in renewal or payment by the authority, a gov.uk domain cannot be transferred to another organisation or individual.

Transparency (Local Authorities)

1.5 of the Nolan Principles states,

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 so doing.

The use of personal email addresses may result in an unintentional breach of GDPR and FOI. Additionally, for the purposes of transparency, authority business should be conducted on authority channels so that in the event of a FOI request or SAR it can be accessed and searched as necessary.

The Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities does allow an authority to publish information on a third-party website. Assertion 10 does not require an authority, subject to the code, to have a dedicated website. However, authorities must ensure that any website used to publish information required by the code or FOI Act is compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2AA and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Assertion 10

The requirements of Assertion 10 in the Practitioners' Guide 2025 aim to assist smaller authorities in meeting their obligations for data and digital compliance. Whilst legislation does not mandate the use of a particular domain, SAPPP's intention is to make compliance as easy as possible; by using a gov.uk (or org.uk) domain for example, authorities are able to meet the requirements without the need to consider the questions raised above.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide (March 2024) contains updated guidance on the matter as below:

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION
Alton Town Council (the Council) acknowledges the importance of prudently investing the temporary surplus funds held on behalf of the community as part of its fiduciary duty. This Strategy complies with the revised requirements set out in the Department of Communities and Local Government *Guidance on Local Government Investments* and takes into account Section 15 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Local Government Act 2003 states that a local authority may invest:
- for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment
- for the purpose of prudent management of its financial affairs

The Council defines its treasury management activities as *"the management of the Council's cash flows, its banking and money market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, and the pursuit of best value performance consistent with those risks."*

2. POLICY
2.1 This strategy establishes formal objectives, policies and practices and reporting arrangements for the effective management and control of the Council's treasury management activities and the associated risks

3. INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES
3.1 The Council's investment priorities are:
- the security of its reserves, and
- the adequate liquidity of its investments, and
- the return on investment - the Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity

3.2 All investments will be made in sterling.

3.3 The Department for Communities and Local Government maintains the borrowing of money purely to invest or to lend and make a return is unlawful and the Council will not engage in such activity.

3.3 The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by review of credit ratings on a regular basis. The Council will only invest in institutions of high credit quality – based on information from credit rating agencies (as defined).

3.4 Investments will be spread over different providers where appropriate to minimise risk.

4. SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS
4.1 Specified investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and with a maturity of no more than a year. Such short-term investments made with the UK Government or a Local Authority (as defined) or a Town/Parish Council will automatically be Specified Investments.

4.2 The Council, for prudent management of its treasury balances may use
- Treasury Deposits with UK clearing banks
- Local Authorities or other Public Authorities
- Other approved public sector investment funds

4.3 The choice of institution and length of deposit will be at the approval of the Full Council.

4.4 The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.

5. NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS
5.1 These investments have greater potential risk – examples include investment in the money market, stocks and shares. Given the unpredictability and uncertainty surrounding such investments the Council will not use this type of investment.

6. LIQUIDITY OF INVESTMENTS
6.1 The Council in consultation with the Responsible Finance Officer will determine the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed so as not to compromise liquidity.

6.2 Investments will be regarded as commencing on the date the commitment to invest is entered into rather than the date on which the funds are paid over to the counterparty.

7. LONG TERM INVESTMENTS
7.1 Long Term Investments are defined in the Guidance is greater than 36 months.

7.2 The Council does not currently hold any funds in long term investments. The Council has held funds in the CCLA Property Fund since 2016, earmarked for the replacement of the 3G football pitch at Anstey Park, which requires six months' notice for withdrawal.

8. INVESTMENT STRATEGY
8.1 The Council will invest as much of its balance as possible in a low risk product in order to achieve its investment objectives. The Public Sector Deposit Fund has been identified as a low risk, high liquidity option to be used in the first year of investment. It is therefore recommended placing all cash deposits into the Public Sector Deposit Fund less £100,000 which will remain in the Unity Bank account. The Responsible Finance Officer shall have delegated authority to undertake transfers to the Unity Account as required from the PSDF to ensure this balance is maintained at the beginning of each month.

9. END OF YEAR INVESTMENT REPORT
9.1 Investment forecasts for the coming year are accounted for when the budget was prepared. At the end of the financial year the Responsible Finance Officer will report on investment activity to the Full Council.

10. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF REGULATIONS
10.1 The Annual Investment Strategy must be reviewed annually and revised if considered necessary.

10.2 The Council reserves the right to make variations to the Investment Strategy at any time subject to the approval of Council. Any variations will be made available to the public.

11. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
11.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this document will be posted on the Council's website: www.alton.gov.uk.

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
FIXED ASSET CAPITALISATION POLICY

1. General

1.1. Town and Parish Councils must maintain an asset register to ensure fixed assets are appropriately safeguarded.

1.2. A Fixed Asset Register (the Register) has four main purposes:

- It forms a basis for completion of box 9 in the 'Annual Return';
- It forms a basis for decisions on risk and insurance issues;
- It provides information on the age and potential lifespan of certain items;
- It provides assurance of the continued existence of Council's property.

1.3. The Register is a working document which is updated and amended by the Responsible Finance Officer as necessary, in response to the sale and purchase, or end of life of any fixed asset.

1.4. The definition of a fixed asset is one which is land, property, plant or equipment with a useful life of more than 5 years and used by the Council to deliver its services.

2. Scope of the Asset Register

2.1. In order to ensure transparency and reasonableness, the following items are included in the Register, whether purchased, gifted or otherwise acquired:

- land and buildings held freehold or on long-term lease in the name of the Council;
- vehicles, plant and equipment;
- community assets;
- investment properties;
- non-operational assets considered portable, attractive or of community significance; and
- inventory assets, including grounds, office, IT, catering and events equipment.

2.2. The values indicated in the asset register inform the 'total fixed assets' section of the Annual Return.

2.3. Items which fall outside the definition for inclusion in the Register are:

- land and buildings held on short term lease or rented;
- land and buildings maintained or serviced but not owned by the Council;
- assets rented by or loaned to the Council;
- stock items intended for resale;
- stationery and other consumable items;
- boundaries of land owned (e.g. fences, hedges and gates);
- plants and trees;
- assets with a purchase or resale value of less than £5,000 (or aggregate value for grouped assets);
- cash, short term investments and other current assets; and
- intangible assets such as internet domain names.

3. Valuation of Assets

3.1. Once recorded on the asset register at acquisition cost, the asset value does not change from year to year until disposal. Concepts of depreciation and impairment adjustments are not appropriate for town or parish councils as provided by *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioner's Guide* (England) 2021 para. 5.148.

3.2. Assets must be valued by applying the purchase price. This will be net of VAT if VAT has been reclaimed. Otherwise, this will be gross of VAT if VAT has not been reclaimed or where the VAT status of the purchase is unclear.

3.3. Where it is not possible to trace the purchase price of the asset, the insurance valuation will be applied. Where no such valuation is available, a nominal value of one pound will be applied.

3.4. Any assets gifted to the Council will be recorded at the nominal value of one pound as provided by *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioner's Guide (England) 2021* para. 5.61.

4. Disposal or End of Life Assets

4.1. Proceeds from the disposal of fixed assets are known as capital receipts and can only be used for capital purposes - that is the purchase of fixed assets, the making of capital grants, or the repayment of long-term loans. Where the total proceeds from the sale of a fixed asset are below £10,000, however, they can be applied to revenue purposes.

4.2. Assets are removed from the Register as a result of either disposal or decapitalisation. Decapitalisation is the removal of an asset from the Register once its useful economic life has expired. Typical lifetimes, and those used to identify assets for decapitalisation are:

Asset Type	**Lifetime (years)**
Land	Perpetual
Buildings	100
Plant and Machinery	15
Vehicles	10
Equipment	10
Non-Operational	5 to 100 **
Inventory	5

** Dependent on type of asset eg. VC medals = 100 years; robes = 5 years

Annex

Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioner's Guide (England) 2021 – Extracts

5.139

Proceeds from the disposal of fixed assets are known as capital receipts and are subject to statutory controls. Such proceeds cannot be used for revenue purposes and can only be used for capital purposes - that is the purchase of fixed assets, the making of capital grants, or the repayment of long-term loans. Authorities should keep separate records so that they can demonstrate compliance with this requirement. Where the total proceeds from the sale of a fixed asset is below a specified amount, currently £10,000, it is deemed to be de minimis and these requirements do not apply.

5.148

For authorities covered by this Guide, an appropriate and commonly used method of fixed asset valuation for first registration on the asset register is at acquisition cost. This means that in most circumstances once recorded in the asset register, the recorded value of the asset will not change from year to year, unless the asset is materially enhanced. Commercial concepts of depreciation, impairment adjustments, and revaluation are not required or appropriate for this method of asset valuation. For reporting purposes therefore, the original value of fixed assets will usually stay constant throughout their life until disposal.

5.61

In the special case where an authority receives an asset as a gift at zero cost, for example by transfer from a principal authority under a community asset transfer scheme, the asset should be included in the asset register with a nominal one-pound (£1) value as a proxy for the zero cost. The use of the £1 proxy is particularly important in cases where an authority operates an asset registration system that requires a positive value for every asset. Any costs of bringing gifted assets into productive use should be expensed as revenue items.

Alton Street Bollards Proposal 2025 - A competition and legacy project.

I am proposing to run a competition ahead of the Alton Arts Festival 2026 to engage the local community and create a lasting positive impact in our town.

During 2005 I was festival assistant for Winchester Hat Fair. The director had commissioned a group of artists working at The Colour Factory in Winchester to paint bollards in the city as part of the festival.

https://www.winchester.gov.uk/community/arts/public-visual-arts/bollards

"Winchester City Council funded the painting of a total of 16 bollards as part of its wider contribution to the refurbishment of The Square,in partnership with Hampshire County Council. The bollard project, first conceived in 2005 as part of the Hat Fair celebrations, is thought to have been a first for the UK, following in the footsteps of similar schemes in Australia, the USA and Europe. Three further bollards have been decorated".

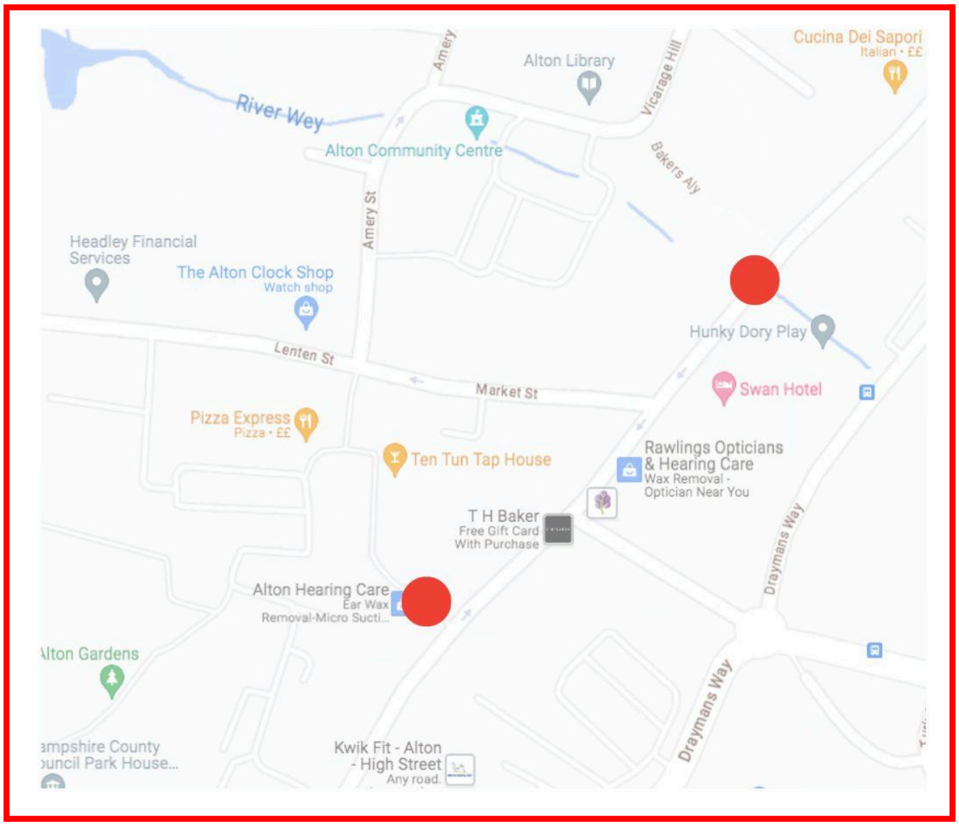


They have been well maintained and added to over the last 20 years and I would like to create our own bollard art here in Alton. Having witnessed the inception and creation of this project in Winchester, it is incredibly positive to see them still flourishing in 2025.
I would like to propose the use of 5 metal bollards at points I have identified in town.

I am proposing we create a competition which engages 5 different age groups with one winner in each age group getting to paint their design (with help) on one of the bollards. I am also engaging with local artists who would be interested in working with the prize winners on bringing their vision to life on each Bollard. Each artist will be paid and the whole project documented through photography + video.

Sponsorship is being sort to cover the costs of the paint, protective materials for the highways, HiVis jackets and overalls for each participant, volunteers to steward the pathways and the artist's time, therefore no cost to the local council. I have also created a risk assessment which is being submitted to Hampshire Highways.

Alton High Street, Alton Hampshire



The Locations are as follows -

Two bollards opposite Iceland Food Store, on corner or Cross & Pillory Lane leading up to the Market Square

4 bollards on the High Street outside Costa Coffee and Papa Johns pizza on the crossing

1 bollard near the Wheatsheaf pub in the Market Square, near steps leading from Lady Place car park.

We would like the art work to be in place ahead of the festival next July to build momentum from the previous festival and engage the local community and their curiosity for not only ‘what’s to come’ but to add to the feeling of pride in their town from the feedback we received in 2024. We are proposing to launch the competition at

Easter 2026 and run for approx a month to six weeks to give us time to choose the winners and set up painting the bollards during June ready for the Festival in July. This will also act as a pre festival teaser event and remain a permanent feature in town.

Theme - open theme. I propose a template of a bollard, (to scale, sides, top and laid out) be available to download from the AAF website and as a template in the local paper for consistent entries. We will also create video content and engage the local + region press to launch the competition and describe the brief and criteria.

Judges - tbd once permission granted.

Jackie King, Head of Visual Arts Programming, Alton Arts Festival,
August 2025