



Polegate Town Council, Council Office, 49 High Street, Polegate BN26 6AL

Telephone: 01323 488114

Town Clerk – Jo Ognjanovic - e-mail admin@polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk

15th May 2023

NOTICE is hereby given of the ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL to be held on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

Jo Tricker

Town Clerk

The press and public have a right to and are welcome to attend but are reminded that they must remain silent when the meeting is in progress in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960. Comments or questions from members of the public on matters on the agenda will be received at the beginning of the meeting. The time allowed is a maximum of 2 minutes per speaker (this can be extended, if appropriate, and at the Chairman's discretion). The press and public are advised to wait until the resolution to exclude the press and public has been proposed and voted upon before withdrawing.

A G E N D A

A. Election of the Town Mayor

- 1. To receive the Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. To receive any declarations of interest in any items on the agenda**
- 4. Election of Deputy Town Mayor and acceptance of office**
- 5. Opportunity for Public Comment**
- 6. Standing Committees**
 - a. Appointment of Members to Committees & appointment of Chairpersons to Standing Committees/Working groups as per schedule**
 - i. Finance and Policy Committee (delegated)
 - ii. Personnel Committee (part delegated)
 - iii. Planning Committee (delegated)
 - iv. Appeals committee (delegated)
 - v. Flower Contract working group (delegated via clerk)
 - vi. Buildings & Land working group (part delegated via clerk)

Page 1 of 4

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that the meeting will be recorded. The purpose of this is that recordings act as an aide-memoire to assist the Clerk in the compilation of the minutes. The recordings are held in a secure location and deleted once it has been resolved that the minutes are a true and correct record.

- vii. Business Plan working group (part delegated via clerk)
- viii. Internal Audit Review and Internal Control working group
- ix. Communities and Tourism Working Group
- x. Website working group (delegated via clerk)
- xi. Principles of development/**Neighbourhood Plan** working group (delegated via clerk except financial)
- xii. Christmas Lights working group (delegated via clerk)
- xiii. Risk Management working group
- xiv. Libraries working group (delegated via clerk)
- xv. CIL working group
- xvi. Climate committee

b. Review Terms of References for committees/working groups

- i. Finance and Policy Committee (delegated)
- ii. Personnel Committee (part delegated)
- iii. Planning Committee (delegated)
- iv. Appeals committee (delegated)
- v. Flower Contract working group (delegated via clerk)
- vi. Buildings & Land working group (part delegated via clerk)
- vii. Business Plan working group (part delegated via clerk)
- viii. Internal Audit Review and Internal Control working group
- ix. Communities and Tourism Working Group
- x. Website working group (delegated via clerk)
- xi. Principles of development/Neighbourhood Plan working group (delegated via clerk except financial)
- xii. Christmas Lights working group (delegated)
- xiii. Risk Management working group
- xiv. Libraries working group (delegated via clerk)
- xv. CIL working group
- xvi. Climate committee

7. Adoption of Standing Orders

8. Adoption of Financial Regulations

9. Risk Assessment review

10. Adoption of Councillor's Code of Conduct

11. To receive statements of –

- a. Deeds etc held by Council Solicitors (if received before the meeting)
- b. Details of Asset Register (PDF available on request or available online)
[Asset Register 2022-23](#)
- c. Details of Insurance Cover (full policy PDF available on request)

12. To appoint representatives to outside organisations - as per schedule attached

13. Appointment of Tree Warden – Mr Tim Saunders

14. Appointment of Internal Auditor – Mulberry & Co

15. Adoption of Council Policies/Procedures - as per schedule attached

16. Financial matters

- a. Fees & Charges – review/approve (see attached schedule, may be reviewed during the year)

17. To note and approve bank signatories for bank mandate

- i. VACANT – new councillor required
- ii. Cllr S Shing
- iii. Cllr Mrs M Piper
- iv. Cllr D Watts
- v. Cllr D Dunbar

18. Adoption of General Power of Competence

Resolution required that Polegate Town Council meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk in order to be able to continue to exercise the General Power of Competence.

The criteria are:

i) Electoral Mandate

At least two thirds of the members of the council must hold office as a result of being declared elected. This means they should have stood for election, even if unopposed, rather than co-opted or appointed. If two thirds is not a whole number, then it must be rounded up.

ALL COUNCILLORS WERE DULY ELECTED

ii) Qualified Clerk

The clerk must hold the certificate in local Council Administration, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration or the first level of the founder degree in Community Engagement and Governance (or successor qualifications) awarded by the University of Gloucestershire. The clerk must also have completed training in the exercise of this power as part of one of these qualifications or as separate exercise

THE CLERK IS QUALIFIED IN CiLCA

The council meet the above criteria and are therefore able to use the General Power of Competence.

19. Motion for Council to consider a decision in principle to allow the CIC to carry out refurbishment works

- i) Plan A on the pavilion and office areas with funding to potentially come from CIL.
- ii) Plan B to consider allowing a modular outside toilet unit to be located next to the new changing places unit to allow the internal publicly accessible toilet (outside) to be removed if that complies with building regulations and to allow the CIC to apply for building regs and planning permission if required to carry out the works.

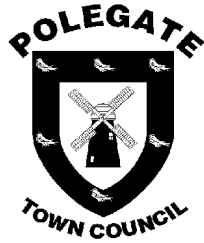
iii) Proposed dates of next cycle of meetings

26th June 2023 – full Council

31st July 2023 – Full council

25th September 2023 – Full Council

Polegate Town Council



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Committee structure

- 1.1 The committee will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The committee will meet at least once a year prior to the budget being set by council.
- 1.3 The committee will consist of a maximum of 10 councillors plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who hold ex-officio seats on all committees.
- 1.4 The committee will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 In accordance with the council's Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations 1.13 and 1.14, the committee has delegated authority agree recommendations to council on the following:

- Setting the budget and precept
- Reviews of policies

- 2.2 The committee has delegated authority to make decisions on the following:

- Banking
- Investments
- Grants
- Contracts
- Licences and leases
- Insurance policies
- Fees and charges
- Legal and professional services
- Land matters
- Commercial waste contract
- CCTV contract
- S106 funding (including use)
- CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding (including use)

3. Responsibilities and accordance with Financial Regulations

- 3.1 The Committee shall consider and recommend to council Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - the accounting records and systems of internal control
 - the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council
 - the work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor, which shall be required at least annually
 - the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments
 - Procurement policies (subject to Financial Regulation 11 including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £30,000.

- 3.2 Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in Financial Regulation 11.
- 3.3 Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
- a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up
 - tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time
 - tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council
 - tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of council or committee.
- 3.4 Neither the council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- 3.5 The full requirements of The Public Contracts (Amendments) Regulations 2012, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU.
- 3.6 All councillors, without exception, will go through the Chair of Finance & Policy when bringing up any financial matter, who will then contact the Clerk with those details if appropriate. (amended 17/1/2011)

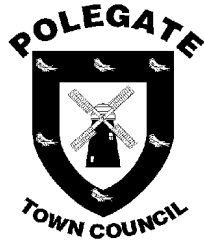
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



PERSONNEL COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Committee structure

- 1.1 The committee will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The committee will meet as often as required to make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The committee will consist of a maximum of 5 councillors plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who hold ex-officio seats on all committees.
- 1.4 The committee will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The committee have delegated authority to agree recommendations on the following:
 - To recommend major changes to the Personnel budget
 - To discuss requests from the Town Clerk on personnel matters (note – day-to-day staffing matters are delegated to the Town Clerk)
 - To consider the implications of reports from the Town Clerk in respect of changes in employment law and report to council accordingly
 - To make recommendations that require a council decision on any staffing matters or staff policies not already under delegated authority of the Town Clerk, including
 - Maintaining good relationships with council staff
 - Organisational and staff reviews
 - Service and salary levels
 - To consider and resolve all staff disciplinary /grievance matters
 - Other matters delegated to the committee

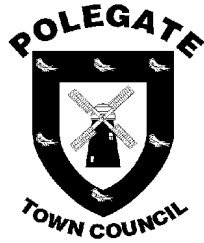
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PLANNING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Committee structure

- 1.1 The committee will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The committee will meet as often as required to observe consultee response timescales set by Wealden District Council, South Downs National Park Authority or East Sussex County Council.
- 1.3 The committee will consist of a maximum of 6 councillors plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who hold ex-officio seats on all committees.
- 1.4 The committee will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The committee will consider and make recommendations to Wealden District Council, South Downs National Park Authority or East Sussex County Council on all plans within the Polegate boundary and those outside the boundary which have an impact on the town.
- 2.2 A nominated member of the committee will represent the views of the committee at any Wealden District Council, South Downs National Park or East Sussex County Council Planning Committee meeting as shall be required.
- 2.3 When necessary, applications may be considered by the Chair, Vice-Chair and one other councillor, by way of the delegated process. If the Chair or Vice-Chair are unavailable or have an interest the Mayor or Deputy Mayor may consider the applications.
- 2.4 The committee have delegated authority to agree recommendations on the following:
 - Planning applications
 - Major planning applications
 - Enforcement notices
 - Appeal notices
 - Justice licences
 - Tree Preservation Orders
 - Conservation areas and listed buildings
 - Local Development Framework/ Local Plan
 - Polegate Master Plan and reviews
 - Street naming requests

3. Town Clerk responsibilities

- 3.1 The Town Clerk shall record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose.
- 3.2 The Town Clerk shall refer a planning application received by the council to the Chair of the Planning Committee or in their absence the Vice-Chair or in their absence the Chairman of the Council within 2 working days of receipt to facilitate a briefing meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning Committee.

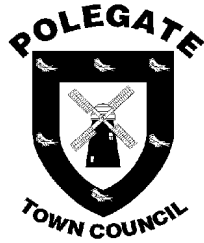
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APPEALS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Committee structure

- 1.1 The committee will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The committee will meet as often as required and has delegated authority to determine the outcome of an appeal.
- 1.3 The committee will consist of 3 councillors. These will be selected by the Town Clerk based on whether the councillors have had any prior dealing in the complaint. (Those who have will be excluded unless all are involved). If the matter relates to the Town Clerk, a different member of staff will select the three councillors based on the same criteria. They will also minute the meeting if the complaint relates to the Town Clerk
- 1.4 The committee will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 To consider and decide whether individual appeals have established grounds for appealing under the complaints procedure. Suitable training for all councillors on the Appeals Committee will be arranged wherever possible.
- 2.2 To gather evidence at an appeal committee hearing to decide on the basis of that information, whether an appeal should be upheld or rejected.
- 2.3 Liaising with other authorities on matters pertaining to the committee, including the police and outside bodies if required.
- 2.4 To consider, determine/resolve any appeal under the council's complaints procedure. (NB any councillor who has previously been involved in the procedure prior to the appeal may not sit on the appeal hearing.)
- 2.5 To consider and resolve all staff appeals concerning grievance or disciplinary matters.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE COMMITTEE CANNOT CONSIDER AN APPEAL ON A DECISION
TAKEN BY FULL COUNCIL

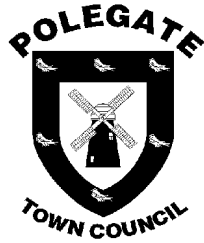
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FLOWER CONTRACT WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 4 councillors plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who hold ex-officio seats.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations to council on spending within the flower budget and on the flower contract.

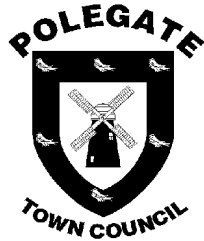
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BUILDING AND LAND WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 7 councillors plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who hold ex-officio seats.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations to council on all council land and assets including but not exclusive to the following:
 - **Brightling Road Leisure Ground including - BMX Track land, Meadow land, Mini Railway enclosure land, Land at William Daly Gates**
 - **Oakleaf Play Area (leased)**
 - **Polegate War Memorial Recreation Ground**
 - **High Street offices (49 & 51)**
 - **Gosford Way Allotments (leased)**
 - **Cophall Allotments**
 - **Street lighting**
 - **High Street Toilets (there is a separate working group for more detail)**

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

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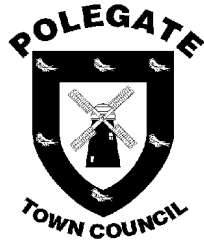
Town Clerk – Mrs Jo Tricker e-mail - admin@polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk

**BUSINESS PLAN WORKING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- Business Plan working group to be constituted at each Annual Statutory Meeting
- To meet as and when required
- To consist of 5 councillors, plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio members. To include at least one member of each group¹ if possible.
- Working group to discuss and make recommendations to full council on all matters related to the business plan

¹ Political/elected

Polegate Town Council



INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW AND INTERNAL CONTROL WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 2 councillors plus the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Finance and Policy Committee.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss, review and make recommendations for a full council review on the internal audit and internal systems of control and to carry out reviews as and when required.

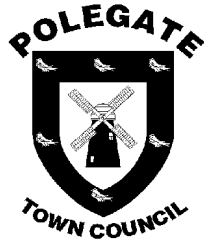
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COMMUNITIES AND TOURISM WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution, or to the Finance and Policy Committee if funding is required.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 8 councillors (and other invited parties with an interest in the town including shop keepers and residents if required)
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations to council on the following:

- High Street appearance
- Dropped Kerbs
- Finger posts
- Additional bins and report to Buildings and Land or full council as required
- General street scene including weeds and other issues
- Parking issues
- Accessibility (Via the Wealden District Council accessibility report)
- Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Tourism in the community
- Community development
- Links to the South Downs National park

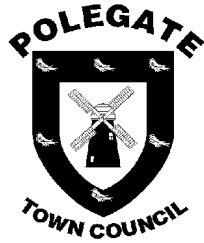
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Polegate Town Council



WEBSITE WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 3 councillors plus the Town Clerk.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations to council on all matters relating to the website.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

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Town Clerk – Jo Tricker - e-mail admin@polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk

Polegate Principles of Development Terms of Reference

Purpose

To consider what the Polegate of the future will look like and establish principles of development to support the town in achieving the vision.

Outcomes

- A clear documented statement of how Polegate will look and feel in 2035 - 2040
- A set of principles that establish the Town Council's policy in relation to future development

Terms of Reference

- Subject to budget, to arrange meetings or develop questionnaires to seek information from local residents, local businesses and other interested parties on what will define the Polegate of the future taking into account:
 - The town and surrounding area
 - Homes
 - Transport
 - Heritage Assets
 - Commercial Services
 - Employment
 - Education
 - Leisure and Culture
 - Security and Crime
 - Health and Wellbeing
- Prepare a strategic vision of Polegate in 20 years time that can be communicated to local residents, local businesses, Wealden District Council and any potential developers.
- Use the strategic vision to establish a set of development principles to guide the Town Council's assessment of proposed future development.
- To consider the necessary steps, costs and benefits of a Polegate Neighbourhood Plan.

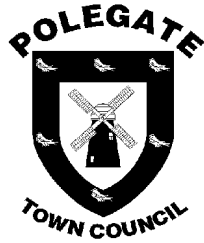
Delegated for all decisions except finance which will be brought back to full council.

Z:/Terms of Reference/neighbourhood working group

Adopted by full council May 2022

Polegate Principles of Development Term Of Reference

Polegate Town Council



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 4 councillors.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations on the Christmas lights, including amendments to the contract and related items.

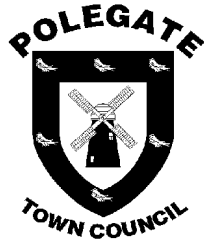
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RISK MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 4 councillors plus the Town Clerk.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations to council on all risk management matters.

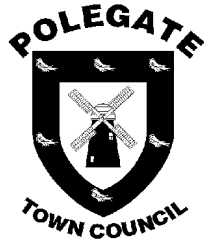
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LIBRARY WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

- 1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.
- 1.3 The working group will consist of 5 councillors. The County Councillors may be invited to attend meetings but will not be able to vote.
- 1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

- 2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations on all items relating to Polegate library.

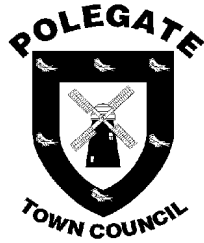
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COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Working group structure

1.1 The working group will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.

1.2 The working group will meet as often as required. The working group has no delegated decision-making powers and will make recommendations to council for resolution.

1.3 The working group will consist of 5 councillors.

1.4 The working group will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

2.1 The working group will discuss and make recommendations to council on suggestions for the use of Community Infrastructure Levy funding,

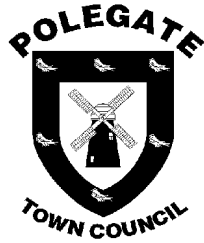
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CLIMATE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the council May 2023

1. Committee structure

- 1.1 The committee will be constituted at the Annual Council meeting in May each year.
- 1.2 The committee will meet at least once a year.
- 1.3 The committee will consist of a maximum of 5 councillors plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who hold ex-officio seats on all committees.
- 1.4 The committee will elect its own Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Specific responsibilities

2.1 The committee have delegated authority to agree recommendations on matters relating to climate change, including:

- Deciding whether the council should declare a climate emergency
- Creating, reviewing and updating the Town Council's current carbon strategy
- Pledging to do what is within our powers, to make Polegate Town Council carbon neutral by 2030, considering both production and consumption emissions
- Calling on the Government to provide any additional powers and resources necessary for Polegate Town Council to achieve the target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, and to implement best practice methods to limit global warming to 1.5°C
- Producing a report to council within 6 months with an Action Plan, outlining how the council will address this situation. The carbon neutral 2030 action plan will detail the leadership role Polegate Town Council will take in promoting community, public, business and other council partnerships to achieve this commitment throughout the town. The action plan will also outline adequate staff time and resources to undertake the actions to achieve the target
- Investigating all possible sources of external funding and match funding to support this commitment
- Identifying citizens across Polegate who act as climate change champions for their communities, and to working with them to inform on ideas to implement locally
- Investigating what Polegate Town Council can do to minimise the emission of gases which adversely affect climate change even more than CO²

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO



Polegate Town Council Standing Orders

Adopted May 2022

Based on the :

**MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2018 FOR ENGLAND
(REVISED 2020)**

Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1. Rules of debate at meetings	3
2. Disorderly conduct at meetings	5
3. Meetings generally	5
4. Committees and sub-committees	8
5. Ordinary council meetings	9
6. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committees and sub-committees	11
7. Previous resolutions	11
8. Voting on appointments.....	11
9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the proper officer	12
10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice	12
11. Management of information	13
12. Draft minutes	14
13. Code of conduct and dispensations.....	14
14. Code of conduct complaints	15
15. Proper officer.....	16
16. Responsible financial officer	17
17. Accounts and accounting statements	18
18. Financial controls and procurement.....	18
19. Handling staff matters.....	20
20. Responsibilities to provide information	21
21. Responsibilities under data protection legislation	21
22. Relations with the press/media	22
23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds	22
24. Communicating with district and county or unitary councillors	22
25. Restrictions on councillor activities	22
26. Standing orders generally.....	22

1. Rules of debate at meetings

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

in the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
- i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed (3) minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. Disorderly conduct at meetings

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

3. Meetings generally

Full Council meetings	●
Committee meetings	●
Sub-committee meetings	●

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed (20) minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than (2) minutes.

- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his**

- **casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

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

- s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of the meeting;
- ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.

- u **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a**
- **disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the**
- **Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**

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

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

- w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted**
and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of (3) hours.

4. Committees and sub-committees

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer (14) days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;

- x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5. Ordinary council meetings

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j **Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if**

there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:

- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
- ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
- iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
- iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
- v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
- vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
- vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
- viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
- ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
- x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
- xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
- xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;

- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

6. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committees and sub-committees

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within (7) days of having been requested to do so by (2) members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any (2) members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

7. Previous resolutions

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least (5) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. Voting on appointments

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

9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the proper officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least (14) clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least (14) clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;

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

11. Management of information

See also standing order 20.

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. Draft minutes

Full Council meetings	●
Committee meetings	●
Sub-committee meetings	●

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

“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

- e **If the Council’s gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is**
- **higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a**
- **website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than**
- one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. Code of conduct and dispensations

See also standing order 3(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

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

14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.

- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).
- c The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. Proper officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
 - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;
 - ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least (7) days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
 - iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
 - iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government**

electors;

- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(see also *standing order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the (Planning) Committee] within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the delegated committee;
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(see also *standing order 23*).

16. Responsible financial officer

- a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of

the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. Accounts and accounting statements

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported andwhich includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. Financial controls and procurement

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the

Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

- i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£60,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting

of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

- e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £189,330 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,733,252 for a public works contract; or £663,540 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**
- g. **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £378,660 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,733,252 for a works contract; or £663,540 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council OR the (personnel) committee] is subject to standing order 11.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of the (personnel) committee or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman (if there is one) of the (personnel) committee of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the (personnel) committee at its next meeting.
- c The chairman of the (personnel) committee] or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the town clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the (personnel) committee.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chairman of the (personnel) committee or in his absence, the vice-chairman of the (personnel) committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance

matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the (personnel) committee.

- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the town clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the (personnel) committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the (personnel) committee, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the (personnel) committee.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. Responsibilities to provide information

See also standing order 21.

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b *[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000]* **The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

21. Responsibilities under data protection legislation

Below is not an exclusive list. See also standing order 11.

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

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

22. Relations with the press/media

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

23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

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

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

B Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures

24. Communicating with district and county or unitary councillors

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

25. Restrictions on councillor activities

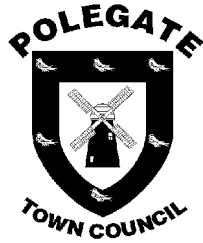
- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. Standing orders generally

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least () councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.

- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Polegate Town Council



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

NEW – to be adopted by the council May 2023

INDEX OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

NUMBER	FINANCIAL REGULATION	PAGE
1	<u>GENERAL</u>	3
2	<u>ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)</u>	5
3	<u>ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING</u>	6
4	<u>BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND</u>	7
5	<u>BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS</u>	8
6	<u>INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS</u>	9
7	<u>PAYMENT OF SALARIES</u>	12
8	<u>LOANS AND INVESTMENTS</u>	12
9	<u>INCOME</u>	13
10	<u>ORDERS FOR WORK, GOOD AND SERVICES</u>	14
11	<u>CONTRACTS</u>	14
12	<u>PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS</u>	16
13	<u>STORES AND EQUIPMENT</u>	16
14	<u>ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES</u>	16
15	<u>INSURANCE</u>	17
16	<u>CHARITIES</u>	17
17	<u>RISK MANAGEMENT</u>	18
18	<u>SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS</u>	18

1. General

1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:

- for the timely production of accounts
- that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money
- to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- identifying the duties of officers.

1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

1.7. Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.

1.9. The RFO:

- acts under the policy direction of the council.
- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices.
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems.
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed.

- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources.
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

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

1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall contain:

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

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

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

1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. Any decision regarding matters listed below shall be a matter for the full council only.:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;

- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors

1.14. In addition, the council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment exceeding £5,000; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or ‘the regulations’ shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

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

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper

practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.

2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall conduct the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.

2.6. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
- report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
- to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- not be involved in the financial decision making, management or control of the council

2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.9. The RFO shall arrange for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

3.1. Each committee (if any) shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.

3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than December/January, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the

following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Finance & Policy committee and the council.

3.3 The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.

3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.

3.3. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget unless specifically resolved otherwise. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £5,000 unless specifically resolved otherwise
- the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £5,000 or otherwise as resolved by council.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

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

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

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

4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances.

4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO, and approved by the council. banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.

5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.

5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council or Finance & Policy committee meeting.

5.5. The RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of council, where the RFO certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance & Policy committee;

- b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance & Policy committee; or
- c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £50,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

5.6. For each financial year the RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance & Policy committee.

5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.

5.8. In respect of grants, a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any revenue or capital grant exceeding £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.

5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

6. Instructions for the making of payments

6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

6.3. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council.

6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council shall be signed by two members of council in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council or Finance & Policy committee at the next convenient meeting.

6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.

6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored

securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.

6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify those councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will clearly state the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.

6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by the Clerk / RFO. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk / RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000 unless authorised by council or Finance & Policy committee in writing before any order is placed.

6.19. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. The council or Finance & Policy committee will set these limits. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council / relevant committee and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council / relevant committee.

6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk / RFO and the maintenance person and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used other than for petty cash items under £25.

6.21. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.

- a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of [£200] for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept substantiating the payment.
- b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.2 above.

7. Payment of salaries

7.1. As an employer, the council shall arrange to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.

7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council / Personnel committee except where otherwise delegated.

7.4. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
- b) by the internal auditor;
- c) by the external auditor; or
- d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.

7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have been paid.

7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.

7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.

7.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

8. Loans and investments

8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by council.

8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

8.3. The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk / RFO.

8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.

8.5. The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

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

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

9. Income

9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.

9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.

9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.

9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim

due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

10. Orders for work, goods and services

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

10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.

10.3. All members and officers are responsible for always obtaining value for money. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

11. Contracts

11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which

constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.

b) Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts (Amendments) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £60,000 (exclusive of VAT) or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations¹.

c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)².

d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.

e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.

f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.

g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18 (d) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £60,000 (exclusive of VAT) in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £100 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.

i) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

j) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated, and the council requires further

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

² Thresholds currently applicable are:

a) For public supply and public service contracts €215,000 Euros (£180,718)

b) For public works contracts €5,382,000 Euros (£4,523,840)

pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.

12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

13. Stores and equipment

13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.

13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

14. Assets, properties and estates

14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.

14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without

the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

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

14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

15. Insurance

15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO, in consultation with the Clerk, shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.

15.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.

15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

16. Charities

16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

17. Risk Management

17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk / RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. The council shall review risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements at least annually.

17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk / RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall arrange to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.

18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.

[BACK TO INDEX](#)

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

Notes

“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the council.”

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the Employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Town Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- Identify what the risk may be.
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.
- Review, assess and revise if required.

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	All files and recent records are kept at the Clerk's office. The Clerk makes back-ups of files to an external hard drive, which is backed up to a separate location. There is an automatic backup to an external drive held in the office. There is also an automated backup to a secure cloud facility compliant with GDPR. Recovery can be done remotely and onto new machines if there was a major disaster.	A new procedure being drafted, and will be reviewed periodically after created. Staff emails and files are backed up daily. These can be recovered using IT support.
Precept	Adequacy of precept Requirements not submitted to PTC Amount not received by PTC	L L L	The Council reviews the Precept requirement annually at the November Finance & Policy meeting and reviews the presented budget update information, including actual position and projected position to year end and estimated figures for the next financial year. With this information the Council then agrees the amounts set for the specific budget headings for the following year, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from Polegate Council. This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to WDC in Jan. The Clerk monitors and records when the monies are received.	Existing procedure adequate. Review periodically.
Financial records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations Annually.
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts once a month when the statements arrive, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction. The Clerk reviews the Council's banking arrangements regularly.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after Annual Statutory meeting of Council and an election. Monitor the bank statements monthly. The creation of new bank accounts with different group providers is currently in hand to protect against loss under the FSCS scheme

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. Cash received is banked within 3 banking days. Petty Cash is checked by one councillor annually and by the clerk monthly for accuracy. The Council's insurance policy has a fidelity Guarantee.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations annually Ensure Fidelity Insurance is adequate.
Reporting and auditing	Information communication Compliance	L M	A budget monitoring statement is produced for each Council/Committee meeting with the agenda and discussed and approved at the meeting. A full list of payment and receipts and payment to be signed/authorised is provided at the full council or finance meeting and the financial records including a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank statement are presented at full council meetings. Council should regularly audit internally to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee.	Existing communication procedures adequate. Financial records are reported at meetings and also held on the councillor downloads section of the website.
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts	Goods or Services not supplied but billed for. Incorrect invoicing Cheque payable incorrect Loss of stock Unpaid invoices	L L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. At each Finance or Full Council meeting the list of invoices awaiting approval is distributed to Councillors, and considered. Council approves the list of requests for payment. The Council has minimal stocks, these are monitored by the Clerk. Unpaid invoices to the Council are pursued.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulation when necessary.
Grants and support – payable	Power to pay. Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure. Many items are carried out under the General power of Competence.	Existing procedure adequate. Councillors request a copy of S137 rules if required. Eligibility for GPoC is reviewed annually.
Grants – receivable	Receipts of Grant	L	The Town Council receives a regular grant from WDC annually paid in two instalments with the precept. Receipt is reported to the Council at the next meeting of the Council. Any one-off grants awarded would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Existing procedures adequate. S106 and CIL receipts are separated in the account codes and interest applied individually. The agreements are adhered to in accordance with the agreement.
Charges – Rentals payable	Payments of leases/rentals	L	The Council pays an annual sum to East Sussex County Council in respect of Oakleaf play area. It also pays in arrears a sum to WDC for the rental of Gosford Way allotment. This is based on the exact amount of income received from rents from the previous financial year.	Existing procedures adequate.
Charges – Rentals receivable	Receipt of rental Insurance implication	L M	A lease has now been issued to the PWMRG CIC and the funds invoiced	Existing procedure adequate. Review and agree fees and charges annually. Ensure payment and copy of insurances received.
Best value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly Overspend of services	L M	As per Financial Regulations normal Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations regularly.

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

			to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council, committee or working group as appropriate.	
Salaries and assoc. costs	Salary paid incorrectly Wrong hours paid Wrong rate paid False employee Wrong deductions of NI or Tax Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	L L L L L L	The Town Council has delegated the appointment of all employees to the Town Clerk, who liaises with the personnel committee regarding appointments. These are reported back to full council. Salary rates are assessed annually by the Council and applied on 1st April each year. Salaries are paid by online banking (or cheque in the event of a banking issue) each month which is pre-authorised and signed off manually by two councillors and reported to the Council. The Tax and NI contributions due are reported to the Council and signed off at full council or finance. The Tax and NI and pension contributions are worked out by the external payroll officer who supply the payment details to the town clerk for payment. This is also authorised by full council or finance and signed off by two councillors for payment. All Tax and NI payments are paid monthly and submitted to the Inland Revenue. The Clerk keeps contracts of employment and job descriptions.	Existing appointment and payment system is adequate. Will seek new payroll provider to ensure that payments are made on time and avoid the risk of non payment due to inaccessibility of bank signatories.
Clerk/Other workers (voluntary/casual)	Loss of Clerk Fraud Actions undertaken Health & Safety	L L L L	The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. The Clerk & staff are provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake their roles. The staff are also provided with adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake the role, i.e. protective clothing and training.	Existing procedure adequate. Purchase reference books where necessary. Membership of the SLCC and training through SSALC and outside bodies when required. Monitor working conditions, safety requirements and insurance regularly.
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	L	The Mayor has annual civic allowance which is budgeted for annually. Any expenses are claimed by presenting the relevant receipt to the Council for approval. Expenses are monitored to ensure the budget is not exceeded and expenditure reported monthly to the Council. All councillors are allocated an allowance in the budget. Payment of this is made via calculation by the payroll officer (external) and the appropriate TAX and Ni deductions are made. Approval of the rate is made periodically usually once per year.	Existing procedure adequate.
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L	The Town Council currently budgets in advance k of the expected full election costs as each election is at present contested. The Town Council has also set a sum aside for the provision of a poll which is approximately the same cost in case of the event of a poll being called at the Annual Town Assembly. .	Existing procedure adequate.
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online and to	Existing procedures adequate.

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

			the Inland Revenue within the prescribed time frame by the payroll officer (external). Annual Return is completed and signed by the Council, submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit.	
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings.	All activities and payments are within the powers of the council.
Council records – paper	Losses through; Theft Fire Damage	L M L	The Town Council records are stored at the council offices and other sites. Records include historical correspondence, minute books and copies, documents for ownership of property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. Recent materials are in a metal filing cabinet (not fire proof) and older more historical records offsite. Older minutes are archived at the Keep near Brighton. Some records are scanned and stored on the computer system.	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision adequate. Deeds/leases copied and deposited off-site. For security certain documentation is stored in lockable cabinets and in the safe.
Council records – electronic	Loss through; Theft, fire, damage Corruption of Computer	L M	The Town Council's electronic records are stored on an external hard drive and backup up both offsite and on a secure UK based cloud server which is GDPR compliant. The data is backed up daily.	Existing procedure adequate.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	M L L M	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place. Interim issues are dealt with by finance and policies increased accordingly. Employers and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place. Buildings are reassessed and the bank accounts are to be split as the town Council is within the threshold for FSCS protection.	Existing procedure sufficient, new accounts are in the process of being split to provide protection to the £85,000 level. Review insurance provision annually. Review of compliance.
Data Protection	Policy Provision	L/M	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioners Office and is GDPR compliant.	Ensure annual renewal of Registration via direct debit approved by full council. Monitor and report any impacts of request made under SAR/GDPR regulations.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy Provision	L M	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place. The Council is able to request a fee for any information requested to cover the cost of consumables and the clerk's time.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the FOI Act.
Meeting location	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Town Council Meetings are usually held in the Council chambers or local church/church hall nearby. In the event the Clerk is indisposed the Mayor has a key to access the building. The premises and the facilities are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety and comfort aspects. Meetings where larger numbers are expected are booked in the halls	Existing location adequate. Access via stairs and stair lift only. Some meetings are held in halls nearby with sloped access if required.

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

			nearby.	
Street Lighting	Risk/Injury to third party	L	Insurance is in place. Maintenance contract with ESCC which is being reviewed.	Existing procedure adequate but not wholly satisfactory. Review already in progress.

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

ASSETS				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Street Furniture, Play Area Equipment and Open Spaces	Loss or Damage Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L L	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Parks are checked weekly by qualified staff and most staff are qualified to carry out the checks in the event of sickness. Monthly checks are carried out by a member of staff usually the maintenance person and currently an outside organisation. Parks are checked visually daily for litter and major safety risks. These are dealt with immediately and the site secured or repaired accordingly. An annual inspection of the parks are carried out by a RoSPA approved contractor. Reports of defects and risks are reported back to the council and the appropriate action taken depending on the level of risk. Some items are then added to the maintenance schedule or a contractor sought to carry out the task. All items are addressed as soon as reasonably practicable. A risk audit on the trees on council land is on file and annual check are made and work scheduled in accordingly. Risk assessment of Play Area equipment made by LDC and annual inspection carried out by registered play inspection company. Reports are kept accordingly. Incidents are investigated for cause and added to the Health and Safety management/risk assessment list for review. Improvements are made on any areas where possible. These are usually assessed by either the risk management working group or the buildings and land working group and reported back to council where required.	Existing procedure adequate. Review insurance requirements annually. Review tree audit periodically, usually annually for changes.
Noticeboards	Risk/damage/injury to third parties Road side safety	L L	The Town Council has three notice boards sited around the Town. All locations have approval by relevant parties, insurance cover, inspected regularly by the staff periodically - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the maintenance man who has a contract to carry out works. Keys held in the office.	Existing procedure adequate.

LIABILITY				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council (not ultra vires) and to be resolved and clearly minuted.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Working Parties taking decisions	L	Ensure established with clear terms of reference.	Monitor and review when required.
Minutes/Agendas/ Notices/Statutory documents	Accuracy and legality Business conduct	L L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next available Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair.	Existing procedure adequate. Guidance/training to Chair should be given (if required). Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	L	Insurance is in place. Risk assessments regularly carried out to comply with requirements.	Ensure risk assessments are carried out. Existing procedures adequate.

Polegate Town Council Risk Assessment

Employer Liability	Non-compliance with employment law	L	Undertake adequate training and seek advice from the SSALC/SLCC as required.	Existing procedures adequate.
Legal Liability	Legality of activities Proper and timely reporting via Minutes Proper document control	M L L	Clerk to clarify legal position on proposals and to seek advice if necessary. Council always receives and approves Minutes at monthly meetings. Retention of document policy in place.	Existing procedures adequate.

C O U N C I L L O R S P R O P R I E T Y				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H / M / L	Management/Control Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Members interests	Conflict of interest Register of Members interests	M M	Councillors have a duty to declare any interests at the start of the meeting. Register of Members Interest forms to be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing procedure adequate. Members to take responsibility to update their Register.

Polegate Town Council

Code of Conduct for Members

As a member or co-opted member of Polegate Town Council I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this authority.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour. Members should show integrity by consistently treating other people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or position, for example as an officer or employee of the authority.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions in accordance with the law and on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

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

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Honesty

6. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty may be questioned, should not behave dishonestly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour. Members should declare any private interests relating to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

7. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

On their election or co-option to the Polegate Town Council, members are required to sign an undertaking to comply with the authority's Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct, adopted by the authority on 30th July 2012, is set out below. It is made under Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and includes, as standing orders made under Chapter 7 of that Act and Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, provisions which require members to leave meetings in appropriate circumstances, while matters in which they have a personal interest are being considered.

Part 1 – General provisions

Introduction and interpretation

Part 1 – General Provisions

1. Introduction and interpretation

- (1) This Code applies to you as a member of the Authority, when acting in that capacity.
- (2) This Code is based upon seven principles fundamental to public service, which are set out above. You should have regard to these principles as they will help you to comply with the Code.
- (3) If you need guidance on any matter under this Code you should seek it from the Wealden District Councils Monitoring Officer or your own legal adviser – but it is entirely your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- (4) It is a criminal offence to fail to notify the Wealden District Councils Monitoring Officer of a disclosable pecuniary interest, to take part in discussions or votes at meetings, or to take a decision where you have disclosable pecuniary interest, without reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to knowingly or recklessly to provide false or misleading information to the Wealden District Councils Monitoring Officer.
- (5) Any written allegation received by the Authority that you have failed to comply with this Code will be dealt with by the Authority under the arrangements which it has adopted for such purposes. If it is found that you have failed to comply with the Code, the Authority has the right to have regard to this failure in deciding -
 - (a) whether to take action in relation to you and
 - (b) what action to take.

- (6) Councillors are required to comply with any request regarding the provision of information in relation to a complaint alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct and must comply with any formal standards investigation.
- (7) Councillors should not seek to misuse the standards process, for example, by making trivial or malicious allegations against another councillor for the purposes of political gain.
- (8) In this Code—

“Authority” means Polegate Town Council

“Code” means this Code of Conduct

“co-opted member” means a person who is not a member of the Authority but who -

- (a) is a Member of any Committee or Sub-Committee of the Authority, or
- (b) is a Member of, and represents the Authority on, any Joint Committee or Joint Sub-Committee of the Authority,

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that Committee or Sub-Committee.

“meeting” means any meeting of the Authority:

- a) any of the Authority's, Sub-Committees, Joint Committees, Joint Sub-Committees,

“member” includes a co-opted member.

“register of members’ interests” means the Authority's register of members' pecuniary and other interests established and maintained by the District Council's Monitoring Officer under section 29 of the Localism Act 2011.

2. Scope

- (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), you must comply with this Code whenever you—
 - (a) conduct the business of your Authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or

- (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of your Authority,

and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.

- (2) This Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.
- (3) Where you act as a representative of your Authority—
 - (a) on another relevant Authority, you must when acting for that other Authority comply with its Code of Conduct; or
 - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your Authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

3. General obligations

- (1) You must treat others with respect.
- (2) You must not—
 - (a) do anything which may cause your Authority to breach any of its equality duties (in particular as set out in the Equality Act 2010);
 - (b) bully or harass any person; (Note: Bullying may be characterised as: offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Harassment may be characterised as unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating and individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for an individual.)

For examples of conduct that constitute bullying or harassment see Annex A.
 - (c) Intimidate, or improperly influence, or attempt to intimidate, or improperly influence any person who is likely to be -
 - a. a complainant,
 - b. a witness, or

- c. involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings,

in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her Authority's code of conduct; or
- (d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your Authority.

4. You must not—

(a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where—

- (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
- (ii) you are required by law to do so;
- (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
- (iv) the disclosure is—

(a) reasonable and in the public interest; and

(b) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority;

(b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

6. You—

(a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage;

(b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority—

- (i) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;

(ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and

(c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

7. —(1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by—

(a) the town clerk; or

(b) Wealden District Councils Monitoring officer,

where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.

(2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

Part 2 – Interests

Personal interests

8. – (1) The interests described in paragraphs 8(3) and 8(5) are your personal interests and the interests in paragraph 8(5) are your pecuniary interests which are disclosable pecuniary interests as defined by section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.

(2) If you fail to observe Parts 2 and 3 of the Code in relation to your personal interests-

(a) the authority may deal with the matter as mentioned in paragraph 1(5) and

(b) if the failure relates to a disclosable pecuniary interest, you may also become subject to criminal proceedings as mentioned in paragraph 1(4).

(3) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

(i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;

(ii) any body—

(a) exercising functions of a public nature;

(b) directed to charitable purposes; or

(c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;

(iii) any employment or business carried on by you;

(iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;

(v) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;

(vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of

securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);

(vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);

(viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50

(ix) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;

(x) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;

(xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or

(b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of (in the case of authorities with electoral divisions or wards) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;

(4) In sub-paragraph (3)(b), a relevant person is—

(a) a member of your family or a close associate; or

(b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;

(c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or

(d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (3)(a)(i) or (ii).

(5) Subject to sub-paragraphs (6) and (7), you have a personal interest which is also a disclosable pecuniary interest as defined by section 30 of the Localism Act 2011 in any business of your authority where (i) you or (ii) your partner- have any interest of a description specified as a disclosable pecuniary interest in Regulations made by the Secretary of State pursuant to section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.

[Note - the list of disclosable pecuniary interests will be added to the Code at the end of this paragraph as soon as the Regulations have been made.]”

(6) In sub-paragraph (5), your partner means—

- (a) your spouse or civil partner,
- (b) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife, or
- (c) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners,

(7) In sub-paragraph (5), any interest which your partner may have is only treated as your interest if you are aware that that your partner has the interest.

Disclosure of personal interests (See also Part 3)

9. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (6), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting of your authority at which any matter relating to the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

(2) If the personal interest is entered on the authority’s register there is no requirement for you to disclose the interest to that meeting, but you should do so if you wish a disclosure to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

(3) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.

(4) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest and, if also applicable, that it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

(5) Subject to paragraph 12(1)(b), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision on any matter in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.

(6) In this paragraph, "executive decision" is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Prejudicial interest generally

10. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where either-

(a) the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest as described in paragraph 8(5), or

(b) the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

(2) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b), you do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business—

(a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;

(b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or

(c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of—

- (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
- (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
- (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
- (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
- (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
- (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees

11. You also have a personal interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where—

(a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and

(b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation

12. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) and (3), where you have a prejudicial interest in any matter in relation to the business of your authority—

(a) you must not participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at any meeting, or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting and must withdraw from the room or chamber where the meeting considering the matter is being held—

- (i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;
- (ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting;

unless you have obtained a dispensation from your proper officer

(b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that matter; and

(c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter.

(2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority which is not a disclosable pecuniary interest as described in paragraph 8(5), you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

(3) Where you have a prejudicial interest which is not a disclosable pecuniary interest as described in paragraph 8(5), arising solely from membership of any body described

8(3)(a)(i) or 8(3)(a)(ii)(a) then you do not have to withdraw from the room or chamber and may make representations to the committee but may not participate in the vote.

Part 3 – Registration of Interests

Registration of members' interests

13. —(1) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of—

(a) this Code being adopted by the authority; or

(b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later),
register in the register of members' interests details of-

- (i) your personal interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(3)(a) and
- (ii) your personal interests which are also disclosable pecuniary interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(5)

by providing written notification to Wealden District Councils Monitoring officer.

(2) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest falling within sub-paragraphs (1)(b)(i) or (1)(b)(ii) or any change to any personal interest registered under sub-paragraphs (1)(b)(i) or (1)(b)(ii), register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to Wealden District Councils Monitoring officer.

Sensitive information

14. —(1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and Wealden District Councils Monitoring officer agrees, the monitoring officer shall not include details of the interest on any copies of the register of members' interests which are made available for inspection or any published version of the register, but may include a statement that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld under this paragraph.

(2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under paragraph (1) is no longer sensitive information, notify Wealden District Councils Monitoring officer asking that the information be included in the register of members' interests.

(3) In this Code, "sensitive information" means information, the details of which, if disclosed, could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to violence or intimidation.

Dispensations

15 - (1) The standards committee, any sub-committee of the standards committee, the monitoring officer **or Town Clerk** may, on a written request made by a member, grant a dispensation relieving the member from either or both of the restrictions in paragraph 12(1)(a) (restrictions on participating in discussions and in voting), in cases described in the dispensation.

(2) A dispensation may be granted only if, after having had regard to all relevant circumstances, the standards committee, its sub-committee, the monitoring officer or **the Town Clerk** —

(a) considers that without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited by paragraph 12 from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business,

(b) considers that without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business,

(c) considers that granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area,

(d) if it is an authority to which Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 applies and is operating executive arrangements, considers that without the dispensation each member of the authority's executive would be prohibited by paragraph 12 from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the authority's executive; or

(e) considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

(2) A dispensation must specify the period for which it has effect, and the period specified may not exceed four years.

(3) Paragraph 12 does not apply in relation to anything done for the purpose of deciding whether to grant a dispensation under this paragraph.

Annex A

Non-exhaustive Examples of Bullying and Harassment

With reference to paragraph 3(2)(b) of this Code –

(1) Examples of bullying behaviour include, without limitation:

- spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour
- ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail
- exclusion or victimisation
- unfair treatment
- overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position
- unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close,
- display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decision on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected.
- making threats or comments about job security without foundation
- deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading or constant criticism
- preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities
- invading someone's personal space
- speaking to someone in an overbearing manner
- using aggressive body language
- undermining or belittling someone

(2) Examples of harassment include, without limitation:

- making abusive, derogatory, patronising, suggestive or sexualised comments or sounds
- making offensive jokes or insulting gestures or facial expressions
- ridicule
- offensive e-mails, tweets or comments on social networking sites
- trolling via social networking sites
- threats of aggression or intimidation
- making false and malicious assertions
- intrusive questioning about private matters
- display of offensive material
- unwanted comments on dress or appearance

Definition of 'improperly influence'

- To induce another person through the use of, for example, threats or bribery to give consideration to or to act on any basis other than the merits of the matter.

- To bring undue pressure upon a person to try to get them to do something that they wouldn't normally do.

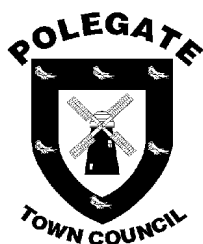
Representation on Outside Bodies

Polegate Town Council is represented on the following outside bodies:

- AiRS (Action in Rural Sussex)
- Allotments
- Bus Group
- CCTV Liaison
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Civil Protection
- Community Association
- Cuckmere Community Bus
- Crime Prevention/Neighbourhood Watch/Police Liaison/LAT meeting
- Eastbourne Area Transport Forum
- East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC)
- Elderly
- Fields in Trust
- National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
- Polegate Library
- Polegate Twinning Association
- Polegate Windmill
- Press Liaison and newsletter
- South Downs National Park (SDNP)
- Wealden Association of Local Councils (WDALC)
- Sports – Cricket/Football/Stoolball
- Tree Warden
- Wealden Planning Panel
- Wealden Cluster Groups
- Youth

Representatives are decided annually at the May full council meeting.

Polegate Town Council



STATEMENT OF INTENT TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Number 01		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	12.12.11	
2	18.05.15	Amended
3	23.05.16	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
4	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	20.05.19	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Aims and objectives

Polegate Town Council aims to: -

- Represent and promote the interests of Polegate and all its people in all forums
- Pay particular attention to the needs of our children and young people
- Pay particular attention to the needs of our elderly
- Provide the best possible amenities and services by the efficient use of available resources
- Actively involve local people in decisions affecting activities in the area
- Be open and accountable in all it does
- Support development, which is environmentally, socially and economically sound and sustainable
- Enhance quality of life by protecting and enhancing Polegate's ecological and environmental assets

To achieve these aims, the Council will: -

- Work closely with residents, businesses and community groups
- Engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision making, monitoring services and planning for the future
- Ensure, that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public involvement and community engagement, we actively encourage the involvement of residents, to capture their views and learn their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process
- Ensure that residents have opportunities to be heard at every stage, and the capacity to be effective citizens

The outcomes the Council hopes to achieve are: -

- Improved communication with the local community
- A better understanding within the community of the role of the Town Council and of its Councillors
- Local people feeling that they are involved in decision making
- Improved satisfaction with local public services

2. Defining the community

The Council considers the community of Polegate to consist of:

- All residents of the town
- All users of the Town Council's services
- All those who work within the town
- All those who own businesses within the town
- All young people who live and/or go to school within and close to the town
- All local and some national voluntary organisations, clubs and societies
- Any group or organisation that represents some or any of the members of the above sections of the community
- Additionally, the Council recognises that there are certain bodies that are crucial to the quality of life in Polegate and aims to maintain excellent working relationships with these bodies, including the Police, the other tiers of local government and neighbouring town and parish councils.

3. Provision of information to the community and opportunities for community involvement

Information is provided by the Town Council to the community in several ways, including: -

- The Town Council offices at 49 High Street are open Monday to Friday 9-1pm and can provide a wide range of information both on Council services and other Polegate activities and issues
- The Town Council's website www.polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk provides comprehensive information both on the work of the Town Council and on other services, the history of the town, local events, local groups and organisations
- The public can contact the Town Council through the website and public consultations are sometimes carried out through the website and newsletters
- The Town Council provides four notice boards around the town which are used to display agendas for Council meetings and minutes as well as other information of interest to the local community
- The Town Council's newsletter is published approximately quarterly and is available from the Town Council offices, on the website and from the local library
- The Annual Report is produced in May each year and is available from the Town Council offices, on the website and from the local library
- All meetings of the Town Council and its committees and sub-committees are open to the public and a period is set aside at the beginning of each meeting for public questions
- Public meetings are called to gauge public opinion about important issues affecting the town such as major planning applications
- Questionnaires are sometimes used to ask local people's opinions about specific matters, and these are distributed to local residents, for example through organisations at public meetings, or downloadable from the Council website
- The Town Council submit frequent press releases/articles to the local papers
- The Town Council has initiated and updated a Town Master Plan where local residents have been invited to make comment
- On major matters of public concern, the Town Council has liaised with local residents by means of public meetings and active feedback is sought at all times. These events help to "spread the word" on the role of the Council and encourage people to participate in local affairs with specific local issues being explored from time to time using the full range of communication techniques available

4. Opportunities for formal representations to the Council

- Formal representations to the Council may be made at any time in writing to the Town Clerk
- A period for the receipt of petitions is set aside at the beginning of each Council meeting

5. Involvement in partnerships

The Town Council often works in partnership with other organisations such as the District Council, Neighbourhood Watch and the Police.

It has representatives on the following local organisations:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Cuckmere Community Bus
- District Association of Local & Parish Councils
- Polegate Twinning Association
- Polegate Windmill
- Polegate Community Association
- Local Churches and Church groups
- Polegate School
- Willingdon Community School

6. Role of Council Members and Officers

Council Members (Councillors) are the elected decision makers of the Town Council. Their contact details are available from the Town Council offices, on Town Council notice boards and on the Town Council website. Members of the public are welcome to contact Councillors to raise any issues.

The Council's officers are staff who are employed to carry out the day-to-day functions of the Council and make sure that its services are provided for the local community.

The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer for the Council which means she has overall responsibility for the provision of Council services.

The Council employ a maintenance person, litter picker, cleaner/caretaker and office staff. They frequently have direct contact with members of the public and naturally deal with questions and enquiries.

The ability to do this effectively and courteously is as important as any other element of the Council's work in the community and can give good feedback on the views of the people on the services offered by the Council.

The Council is always considering practical ways of engaging with people and the community

The Council is committed to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community, based on trust, openness and constructive challenge.

Outcomes of the strategy will include:

- Improved communication through the establishment of new channels of engagement
- More residents understanding the role of Councillors and getting the best effect
- Improved engagement with local communities, with more people feeling that they are involved in decision-making and a higher percentage of people involved in volunteering
- Improved satisfaction with local public services

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



TRAINING POLICY

Policy Number 02		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	21.04.23	21.04.23 adopted by finance & policy

1 TRAINING POLICY

1.1 Aims

The organisation recognises that training and development for employees is a major investment in its ability to deliver effective products and services and will seek to create a culture of continuous development. It will seek to:

- a) Provide sufficient funding in the training budget to meet identified training needs and to aim for 3% of salary costs in line with the standard for the industry.
- b) Encourage and support the development of knowledge, skills and abilities and recognise there is shared benefit.
- c) Provide the necessary opportunities, resources and support to enable employees to attain and maintain the required knowledge, skills and abilities.
- d) Include all forms of learning designed to improve the performance, abilities and potential of employees. this includes coaching, on the job training, job shadowing, mentoring, secondments, project work, job swaps, guided reading, e- learning and formal training courses.
- e) Where appropriate, be involved in Government initiatives.
- f) Ensure that the training and development activities will be based on a system of needs assessment, priority will be given to those activities necessary to meet the organisation's objectives.
- g) Ensure that training opportunities and resources will be provided to employees in an equitable and fair way and related to identified needs. Clear reference to training will be included in the equal opportunities policy.

1.2 Arrangements

To achieve its policy objectives:-

- a) The aim will be to provide each employee with at least 1 days training and development each year, to be by a variety of means.
- b) Each employee will have an individual rolling training plan.
- c) There will be an annual appraisal which will address training, development needs and set annual targets.
- d) A training strategy will be maintained and developed.
- e) All activity will be evaluated to measure its effectiveness and return on investment.

1.3 Competence Inventories

Standard knowledge/skills will be established for all jobs. These will provide the foundation against which

training needs will be measured. Completion/accreditation of the skills/knowledge will be a requirement upon employees and training programmes.

1.4 Employees

All employees have a responsibility to apply positive attitudes and actions in their development and to assist the organisation in the achievement of its objectives. Undertaking all reasonable training and development activities will be a requirement of the employee's contract of employment.

1.5 Organisation

- a) The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring implementation of the policy and the provision of training and will secure the integration of training policies and plans within the wider Council business plan.
- b) The Town Clerk will be responsible for appraising, coaching and developing their staff.
- c) The Council will ensure the consideration and inclusion of plans and budgets within the Council's Business plan.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy Number 03		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	21.04.23	21.04.23 adopted by finance & policy

1 RECRUITMENT POLICY

1.1 Introduction

The council will use the employment guidance provided in the National Joint Council for Local Government Services 'Green Book'.

The council has made clear its commitment to equal opportunities for all by the adoption of an Equal Opportunities Statement. All selection processes must take place within the framework laid down by this policy.

1.2 Aims

The key aims of the councils recruitment policy are:

- To maximise the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process
- To ensure the recruitment and selection processes are consistent, fair and transparent, and in accordance with legislation
- To ensure the recruitment and selection processes are in accordance with the councils Equal Opportunities Statement

1.3 Applications

- a) The council will provide a job description and person specification for each vacancy, and these documents will form the basis for the selection process. The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring these are reviewed and reflect the current responsibilities of the role.
- b) The person specification will include a list of skills, experience and qualifications which are essential and/or desirable for the role. Candidates will be assessed and selected for interview against the person specification criteria.
- c) The job description and person specification will be included in the recruitment pack, which will also provide details of working hours, pay scales and type and length of contract.
- d) Vacancies will be advertised internally and externally, except where the council are amending a temporary or fixed-term contract to a permanent position, where the existing post-holder (assuming their performance is satisfactory) may be offered the position prior to any other advertising.
- e) The council will consider the viability of part-time and/or job share candidates for each role and will make clear in its advertisement if this will be considered.
- f) The council uses application forms for recruitment in respect of all employees and will not accept CVs alone. All potential applicants should be directed to apply formally through the official contact named in the advertisement.

1.4 Shortlisting

- a) The council will agree a shortlist panel to assess the applications. The composition of the panel will vary according to the type of post being filled.
- b) Any councillor with a personal connection to any of the candidates will be excluded from the entire selection process.

- c) As soon as possible after the closing date for applications, the shortlisting panel will select candidates for interview by assessing the information in their application form against the job description and person specification.

1.5 Interviews

- a) The council will agree the composition of the interview panel for all positions except the Clerk when it will be the Council. The interview panel will normally comprise the members of the shortlisting panel.
- b) To ensure a consistent and fair approach, all candidates will be asked similar questions, with supplementary questions structured around each candidate to enable individuals to demonstrate their relevant skills and abilities. The questions will vary depending on the vacancy.
- c) The interview panel must take extreme care to ensure they do not imply discrimination by asking questions about personal circumstances which are unrelated to the job. Such questions are contrary to the council's Equal Opportunities Statement.
- d) Each member of the interview panel will take notes to support their assessment of the candidates' suitability for the role, and the panel may agree a scoring system to help objectively assess the candidates.
- e) Once all the candidates have been interviewed the panel members should compare their notes and agree the most suitable candidate, ensuring their decision is based on the criteria in the job description and person specification. If it has been agreed that none of the candidates are satisfactory, none will be appointed and the position will be re-advertised.

1.6 Notification and appointment

- a) Post interview arrangements are the responsibility of the Town Clerk, or where the vacancy is for the Town Clerk role, the Chairman of Personnel Committee.
- b) Candidates should be notified as soon as possible of the outcome. A verbal offer of appointment may be made to the successful candidate but must be formally confirmed in writing. The offer is conditional on obtaining satisfactory references and, where applicable, proof of eligibility to work in the UK and any copies of qualification certificates.
- c) If unsatisfactory responses to references are received, the council may reconsider the offer of appointment. If the offer is subsequently withdrawn, the council may make an offer to one of the original unsuccessful candidates or decide to begin the recruitment process again.

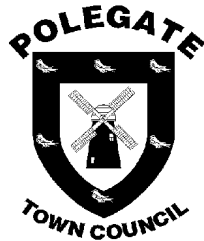
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Policy Number 04		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	21.04.23	21.04.23 adopted by finance & policy

1. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

1.1 Introduction

Polegate Town Council recognises that the day-to-day operations of the council can impact both directly and indirectly on the environment.

The council aims to protect and improve the environment through good management and by adopting best practice wherever possible.

The council will work to integrate environmental considerations into our business decisions and adopt more environmentally friendly alternatives wherever possible, throughout our operations.

1.2 Objectives

To discharge its responsibilities, the management will:

- Bring this policy to the attention of all stakeholders.
- Carry out regular audits of the environmental management system.
- Comply fully with all relevant legal requirements, codes of practice and regulations at international, national and local levels.
- Eliminate risks to the environment, where possible, through selection and design of materials, buildings, facilities, equipment and processes.
- Ensure that emergency procedures are in place at all locations for dealing with environmental issues.
- Identify and manage environmental risks and hazards.
- Improve the environmental efficiency of the council's transport and travel.
- Minimise waste and increase recycling within the framework of the council's waste management procedures.
- Only engage contractors who can demonstrate due regard to environmental matters.
- Prevent pollution to land, air and water.
- Promote environmentally responsible purchasing where possible.
- Provide adequate resources to control environmental risks arising from work activities.
- Provide suitable training to enable employees to deal with their specific areas of environmental control as defined within the job description
- Reduce the use of water, energy and other natural resources.
- Source materials from sustainable supply, whenever practical.
- Consider the impact of noise and light pollution.

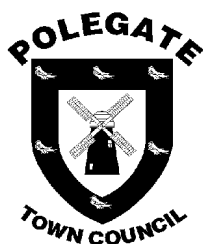
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



IT POLICY

Policy Number 05		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	04.06.13	Changes on website
2	23.05.16	Adoption at Annual Stat Meeting
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	20.05.19	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting

1. General statement

The Town Council recognises that the spread of electronic communications and access to multiple sources of information and access through the internet is an increasing and necessary part of work for everyone. This accessibility confers many advantages but also brings risks which need to be considered.

Recent events in several employment sectors has shown that it is in both the employer's and the employee's interest to have an appropriate policy in place relating to the use of information technology.

2. Policy

2.1 All members of staff are required to read and to comply with the conditions of the policy in respect of the way in which information technology is used. The policy includes all computers and mobile devices.

2.2 The Council recognises that reasonable use of e-mail facilities to communicate brief personal non-offensive messages is acceptable and is a privilege that the Council is prepared to allow, but the amount of time spent must not be abused or it will be stopped.

2.3 The Council recognises that access to professional information by e-mail or through web sites is a necessary requirement of the job of the Clerk to the Council and other staff and is permitted.

2.4 Staff are expected to use technology in a courteous, reasonable and responsible manner. The following activities are not acceptable and anyone found to be involved in them may face disciplinary action. In certain instances the matter will be considered to be gross misconduct:

- Receiving, sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Improper use of e-mail
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Using others' passwords and identities (unless authorised)
- Trespassing in others' folders, works, or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the Council's systems for commercial purposes
- Employing the Council's systems for illegal activities
- Downloading any commercial software

2.5 The Council encourages electronic communications with local, national and international organisations.

2.6 The Council cannot control and is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information gathered over the internet. Security is maintained by appropriate software, internal computer security settings and passwords.

2.7 It is a requirement of the Council and the duty of all staff to avoid deliberate use of the Council's internet connections and technology for inappropriate personal use. Staff should immediately alert the Town Clerk, or Town Mayor, as appropriate, of any suspect material found stored on a computer or elsewhere on the premises. The Council is prepared to allow staff the use of the Council's internet connections for personal access to the internet if this is carried out in their own time and whilst there is no cost to the Council.

2.8 The computer equipment and software must be used as installed and staff may not install, uninstall, delete or change anything on a Council computer without the express authority of the Town Clerk or the Town Council, as appropriate.

2.9 The Council uses a virus checker on its computers and staff are forbidden to load data disks which have not been virus checked by the system. Access to chat rooms and gaming is not permitted on Council computers or mobile devices.

Any concerns on the policy must be raised with the Town Clerk or the Town Mayor (as appropriate) in the first instance and will be resolved, if necessary, by the Personnel Committee or the Town Council.

This policy is subject to the normal grievance and disciplinary rules.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

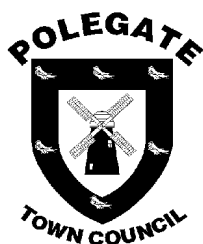
Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

I have read the policy and agree to abide by it.

Signed..... Print name.....

Date/...../.....

Polegate Town Council



BEEKEEPING ON ALLOTMENTS POLICY

Policy Number 06		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	20.05.13	
2	23.05.16	Annual Stat Meeting
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	20.5.19	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Consent

- 1.1 Bees shall not be kept on any allotment plot unless the plot holder has submitted a written request to, and has received consent from, the Council. Plot holders do not have a statutory right to keep bees on allotments.
- 1.2 A maximum of two hives may be permitted per full (10 rod) allotment plot and one hive per half (5 rod) allotment plot.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 A notice must be prominently displayed on the plot, notifying other plot holders that a request to keep bees has been made. Such notice should be displayed for a minimum period of 28 days in the growing season and 56 days outside the growing season, indicating that consideration of the request is being given by the Council.
- 2.2 Once consent has been granted, permanent notices must be displayed on the plot to advise other plot holders of beekeeping activity.

3. Competency and insurance

- 3.1 The beekeeper must be a member of the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) and must be covered by the Association's £5 million public liability insurance cover. Membership and insurance cover must be maintained whilst keeping bees on the allotment.
- 3.2 Beekeepers must ensure that they provide competent care and management and have the knowledge and skills to ensure the well-being of the bees. Management and manipulations must, as far as possible, be carried out at appropriate times to minimise disturbance to other plot holders. The BBKA operates a well-established national system of assessments and examinations for beekeeping skills at several levels and it is expected that a beekeeper should, as a minimum, have passed the BBKA's Basic Assessment in Beekeeping.

4. Duty of care

- 4.1 The beekeeper has a duty of care to other allotment gardeners working nearby, and to all members of the public, including those who have no lawful reason to be on the allotment. To this end, s/he must ensure that only gentle strains of bee are kept. If the bees become aggressive or exhibit excessive 'following' tendency, the beekeeper shall arrange to re-queen the colony, or remove the colony altogether until its undesirable traits have been resolved.

5. Location of hives

- 5.1 Hives should be located towards the centre of the plot with the entrance facing away from nearby paths, and the entrance and sides must be suitably screened to a height of 2 metres. If a beekeeper wishes to place a hive other than at the centre of the plot, a written request must be made, and the Council's consent obtained, before a hive is so placed.
- 5.2 The beekeeper shall inspect the hives weekly from April to July in accordance with BBKA guidelines.

6. Stand-by arrangements

5.1 The beekeeper must provide the Council with contact details (name, address and telephone numbers) of a person of sufficient competence to deal with emergencies such as swarming during any such period that the beekeeper is absent or unavailable. These details must also be prominently displayed by the beekeeper at or near the entrance to the allotment at all times.

7. Complaints and withdrawal of consent

- 7.1 The Council may issue a notice requiring the removal of the hives within 14 days if:
- the beekeeper contravenes any of the conditions stated in this policy;
 - a complaint that the bees have caused nuisance or danger to other plot holders or members of the public is upheld; or
 - substantive information is received that requires a review of the arrangements.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

To: The Town Clerk, Polegate Town Council

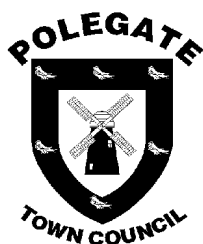
I hereby accept and agree to abide by the additional conditions of tenancy laid down by Polegate Town Council in their policy for beekeeping on allotment plots

Signed.....

Date/...../.....

Allotment and plot number:

Polegate Town Council



CCTV POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE

Policy Number 07		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	20.05.13	
2	23.05.16	Adoption at Annual Stat meeting
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
5	20.07.18	New policy adopted at Finance & Policy meeting
6	20.05.19	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

Closed circuit television (CCTV) is installed at the Council premises for the purpose of staff and premises security. Cameras are located at various places on the premises, and images from the cameras are recorded.

The use of CCTV falls within the scope of the Data Protection Act 1998, the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. To comply with the requirements of the law, data must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in accordance with individuals' rights
- Secure

2. Data Protection statement

2.1 Polegate Town Council are the Data Controllers under the Act.

2.2 CCTV is installed for the purpose of staff, and premises security.

2.3 Access to stored images will be controlled on a restricted basis within the Council.

2.4 Use of images, including the provision of images to a third party, will be in accordance with the Council's Data Protection registration.

2.5 CCTV may be used to monitor the movements and activities of staff and visitors whilst on the premises.

2.6 CCTV images may be used where appropriate as part of staff counselling or disciplinary procedures.

2.7 External and internal signage are displayed *on the premises* stating the presence of CCTV and indicating the names of the Data Controllers and a contact number during office hours for enquiries.

3. Retention of images

Images from cameras are recorded a secure hard drive ("the recordings"). Where recordings are retained for the purposes of security of staff and premises, these will be held in secure storage, and access controlled. Recordings which are not required for the purposes of security of staff, and premises, will not be retained for longer than is necessary (30-day *retention period*).

The system has no automatic power backup facility which may operate in the event of a main supply power failure.

4. Access to images

It is important that access to, and disclosure of, images recorded by CCTV and similar surveillance equipment is restricted and carefully controlled, not only to ensure that the rights of individuals are preserved, but also to ensure that the chain of evidence remains intact should the images be required for evidential purposes.

5. Access to images by Council staff

Access to recorded images is restricted to *the Data Controllers*, who will decide whether to allow requests for access by data subjects and/or third parties (see below).

Viewing of images must be documented as follows:

- The name of the person removing from secure storage, or otherwise accessing, the recordings
- The date and time of removal of the recordings
- The name(s) of the person(s) viewing the images (including the names and organisations of any third parties)
- The reason for the viewing
- The outcome, if any, of the viewing
- The date and time of replacement of the recordings

6. Removal of images for use in legal proceedings

In cases where recordings are removed from secure storage for use in legal proceedings, the following must be documented:

- The name of the person removing from secure storage, or otherwise accessing, the recordings
- The date and time of removal of the recordings
- The reason for removal
- Specific authorisation of removal and provision to a third party
- Any crime incident number to which the images may be relevant
- The place to which the recordings will be taken
- The signature of the collecting police officer, where appropriate
- The date and time of replacement into secure storage of the recordings

7. Access to images by third parties

Requests for access to images will be made using the 'Application to access to CCTV images' form (which is at **Appendix 1**).

The data controller will assess applications and decide whether the requested access will be permitted. Release will be specifically authorised. Disclosure of recorded images to third parties will only be made in limited and prescribed circumstances.

For example, in cases of the prevention and detection of crime, disclosure to third parties will be limited to the following:

- Law enforcement agencies where the images recorded would assist in a specific criminal enquiry
- Prosecution agencies
- Relevant legal representatives

- The press/media, where it is decided that the public's assistance is needed in order to assist in the identification of victim, witness or perpetrator in relation to a criminal incident. As part of that decision, the wishes of the victim of an incident should be taken into account
- People whose images have been recorded and retained (unless disclosure to the individual would prejudice criminal enquiries or criminal proceedings)

All requests for access or for disclosure should be recorded. If access or disclosure is denied, the reason should be documented as above.

8. Disclosure of images to the media

If it is decided that images will be disclosed to the media (other than in the circumstances outlined above), the images of other individuals must be disguised or blurred so that they are not readily identifiable.

If the CCTV system does not have the facilities to carry out that type of editing, an editing company may need to be used to carry it out. If an editing company is used, then the data controller must ensure that there is a contractual relationship between them and the editing company, and:

- That the editing company has given appropriate guarantees regarding the security measures they take in relation to the images
- The written contract makes it explicit that the editing company can only use the images in accordance with the instructions of the data controllers
- The written contract makes the security guarantees provided by the editing company explicit

9. Access by data subjects

This is a right of access under the 1998 Act, the GDPR and the DPA 2018. Requests for access to images will be made using the 'Application to access to CCTV images' form (which is at **Appendix 1**). The requestor needs to provide enough information so that they can be identified in the footage, such as a specific date and time, proof of their identity and a description of themselves. Any footage provided may be edited to protect the identities of any other people.

10. Procedures for dealing with an access request

All requests for access by Data Subjects will be dealt with by the Clerk/DPO. The data controller will locate the images requested. The data controller will determine whether disclosure to the data subject would entail disclosing images of third parties.

The data controller will need to determine whether the images of third parties are held under a duty of confidence. In all circumstances the Council's indemnity insurers will be asked to advise on the desirability of releasing any information.

If third party images are not to be disclosed, the data controllers will arrange for the third-party images to be disguised or blurred. If the CCTV system does not have the facilities to carry out that type of editing, an editing company may need to be used to carry it out. If an editing company is used, then the data controller must ensure that there is a contractual relationship between them and the editing company, and:

- That the editing company has given appropriate guarantees regarding the security measures they take in relation to the images
- The written contract makes it explicit that the editing company can only use the images in accordance with the instructions of the data controllers
- The written contract makes the security guarantees provided by the editing company explicit

The Data Controller will provide a written response to the data subject within **30** days of receiving the request setting out the data controllers' decision on the request.

A copy of the request and response should be retained.

10. Complaints

Complaints must be in writing and addressed to the Clerk. Where the complainant is a third party, and the complaint or enquiry relates to someone else, the written consent of the data subject is required. All complaints will be acknowledged within seven days, and a written response issued within 21 days.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Appendix 1
Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulation - Application for CCTV Data Access

ALL Sections must be fully completed. Attach a separate sheet if needed.

Name and address of Applicant	
Name and address of "Data Subject" – i.e., the person whose image is recorded	
If the data subject is not the person making the application, please obtain a signed consent from the data subject opposite	Data Subject signature.....
If it is not possible to obtain the signature of the data subject, please state your reasons	
Please state your reasons for requesting the image	
Date on which the requested image was taken	
Time at which the requested image was taken	
Location of the data subject at time image was taken (i.e., which camera or cameras)	
Full description of the individual, or alternatively, attach to this application a range of photographs to enable the data subject to be identified by the operator	
Please indicate whether you (the applicant) will be satisfied by viewing the image only	

On receipt of a fully completed application, a response will be provided as soon as possible and in any event within **30** days.

COUNCIL USE ONLY	COUNCIL USE ONLY
Access granted (tick)	
Access not granted (tick)	Reason for not granting access:
Data Controller's name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Polegate Town Council



STAFF ENTRANCE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME POLICY

Policy Number 8		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	May 2014	
2	May 2015	Annual Stat Meeting Adopted
3	May 2016	Annual Stat Meeting Adopted
4	22.05.17	Annual Stat Meeting Adopted
5	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	20.05.19	For review and adoption at annual stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy has been developed to inform all new employees commencing employment about Council's policy regarding entrance to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

2. Policy

2.1 All employees of Polegate Town Council will be ***ineligible*** to enter the Local Government Pension scheme until further notice.

- Polegate Town Council has opted to exclude employees from joining the Local Government Scheme
- Polegate Town Council are eligible to re-enter the Scheme at a later date should it wish to. Should Polegate Town Council enter the Local Government Pension scheme at a later date Council must be aware there may be a liability for past employees which the council may have to incur.
- Polegate Town Council must be aware that if they leave the LGPS in full there may also be a financial liability incurred at that time.

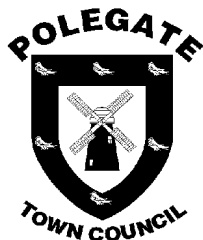
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS POLICY

Policy Number 09		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	17.02.16	Final draft to Town Clerk
2	29.02.16	Minor emendations made by Town Clerk
3	11.03.16	Amendments suggested by Finance Committee
4	23.05.16	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
5	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	11.01.23	Amendments to payee details from 'cheque payee' to bank details
10	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. General principles and conditions

Polegate Town Council is funded by the residents of Polegate who pay Council Tax, and has, therefore, only limited funds available for the assistance of organisations that work to the benefit of Polegate residents.

Subject to Grant Aid being available, Council will consider assisting or supporting local voluntary or community groups and charities which are there to enhance or benefit the lives of Polegate residents. A decision to grant funding to any such organisation is dependent both on need and on the fulfilment of the following general conditions:

- The Organisation must be a 'not for profit' organisation and have clearly stated aims and objectives.
- The Organisation must be based in Polegate, and/or benefit, a significant proportion of Polegate residents, or a particular group of Polegate residents.
- Grant Aid will only be awarded for specific projects, and not merely to increase an organisation's reserves.
- The activities of the organisation, and in particular the project being considered for Grant Aid, must be readily available to the community of Polegate in general.
- The need for Grant Aid must be shown by reference to the published accounts and/or business projections certified by an Accountant or Banker. All applications must be accompanied by a copy of the last available certified accounts and a projection of income and expenditure for the current period.
- Applications should state why the support is sought and how the Grant Aid will be used. They must also identify the group of residents who will benefit from the Grant Aid, and how many benefit.
- The organisation is required to send a report to the council (after the money has been spent) on how the money has been spent and a copy of the final accounts for year of expenditure. If the funding has not been spent the organisation will be required to repay the grant to the Council on demand.
- The organisation must acknowledge Polegate Town Council's contribution in all marketing material, the phrasing of the acknowledgement to be notified by the Council on award of the Grant Aid.

2. Eligibility

The following projects will be considered for Grant Aid from Polegate Town Council:

- Youth clubs and other facilities or projects for young people
- Cultural and artistic schemes
- Heritage projects
- Leisure, sports and play facilities
- Community buildings
- Community transport
- Elderly and disabled
- Sustainable community environmental projects

(This list is a guide but is not exhaustive)

The following are **not** eligible for Grant Aid:

- National or international charities
- Individuals
- Political parties or organisations with political affiliations
- Companies aiming to make a profit
- Statutory bodies
- Religious groups

Polegate Town Council can only provide Grant Aid to organisations within its own financial constraints. Grant Aid will, therefore, not be able to be given to every applicant, however worthy the need, and no appeal will be allowed against refusal. The decision of the Council is final.

3. How to apply for Grant Aid

Application should be made by printing off and completing the application form at the end of this policy document.

The applicant must also attach the following to the completed application form:

- The organisation's aims and objectives
- The organisation's constitution or set of rules and annual report if applicable.
- The most recent copy of the organisation's approved accounts.
- A copy of the organisation's current public liability cover.
- An explanation of any reserves held by the organisation and whether these are earmarked for specific expenditure.
- Accurate costings for the project for which funding is being sought.

The completed application should be submitted to:

**Polegate Town Council
Council Offices
49 High Street
Polegate BN26 6AL**

4. Council's action on receipt of a completed application

The Town Clerk will check the application form and the attached documents to ensure that it has been properly completed. If it is not complete the Town Clerk will approach the applicant to obtain the additional information.

Once the Town Clerk is satisfied that the applicant has supplied all necessary information in support of the Grant Aid request, they will pass the application to Council to assess using the following:

- The correct completion of the application form
- Whether the organisation has previously received a grant
- How the organisation is set up and managed
- Whether the organisation has a financial need for funding
- What need or demand there is for the project for which funding is sought
- How the funding will support the Polegate community
- Whether the project represents value for money for the Polegate community
- Whether the organisation has made applications for funding elsewhere

All applications that meet the criteria will be considered.

If the Council is satisfied that Grant Aid is appropriate, it will resolve that a grant be given to the organisation, and how much. An accompanying letter will specify the terms and conditions under which the grant is offered, and the organisation will be required to sign and return the letter accepting the Council's terms and conditions. These will include:

- A reminder that the grant must only be used for the purpose applied for
- The requirement for the organisation to keep the Council updated on the progress of the project
- A reminder that the organisation should in its literature acknowledge the Council's grant.
- A warning that failure to comply with any condition attached to a grant might result in the organisation being required to repay the grant, and/or affect future Grant Aid.

Acceptance of the grant funds (by cashing the payment) will be taken as acceptance of the conditions.

The money must be spent within the time period specified by the Council at the time of awarding the Grant Aid.

After the Grant Aid has been spent, the recipient is required to send a report to the Council, detailing the expenditure and the subsequent annual report and accounts.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO



Polegate Town Council - Grant Aid Application

About the applicant	
Name and address of organisation	
Daytime telephone number	
Email address	
Total membership of organisation	
Estimated percentage of Polegate residents within membership	
Purpose of organisation	
Are you a registered charity?	Yes/No Charity Number (if applicable) _____
Individual authorised to make this application	
Name of individual	
Address	
Daytime telephone number	
Email address	
Position held in organisation	

Details of application	
Amount applied for	£
Description of project for which Grant Aid is sought (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
Estimated cost breakdown (e.g., labour, materials, etc.) (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
Describe the anticipated benefits to the organisation and to the Polegate Community if this project is to go ahead (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
Have applications been made to any other funding bodies in respect of this project?	Yes/No
If yes, please detail	
Details of any previous assistance received in the last five years from funding bodies, including Polegate Town Council	

If your application is successful, the Council will make payment by BACS transfer. Please supply the following bank account details

Account Name	
Sort Code	
Account Number	

Checklist for applicants (please tick those that apply)

Organisation's budget for the current year	
Annual accounts for last complete year	
Constitution/set of rules	
Project estimates	
Other supporting information	

Declaration

I have read and accept the terms and conditions under which any grant award will be made.

Signed: Position Date

Signed: Position Date

Please return your completed application form to:

**Polegate Town Council
Council offices
49 High Street
Polegate
East Sussex
BN26 6AL**

Polegate Town Council



STRESS POLICY

Policy Number 14		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	24.09.08	
2	28.08.13	Amendment to wording ADOPTED 25 th NOV 2013
3	23.05.16	Adopted Annual Stat meeting 2016
4	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
5	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	20.5.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees and recognises that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
- 1.2 This policy will apply to all staff.
- 1.3 The Town Clerk is responsible for implementation and the Council is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

2. Definition of stress

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define stress as *'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.'*
- 2.2 This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

3. Policy

- 3.1 The Town Clerk will identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- 3.2 The Council will provide any required training for the Town Clerk in good management practices.
- 3.3 The Council will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- 3.4 The Council will provide adequate resources to enable the Town Clerk to implement the stress management strategy.

4. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the **Council** are as follows:

- Ensure good communication with staff particularly where there are organisational or procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful development opportunities.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within the Council environment.
- Offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work, e.g., bereavement or separation.
- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Provide training and support for implementation of stress risk assessments.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them on a planned return to work.
- Refer individuals to specialist agencies, as required.

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measure to reduce stress.
- Conduct meaningful consultation with employees on any changes to work practices that could precipitate stress.

The responsibilities of the **Town Clerk** are as follows:

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments.
- Ensure good communication between both staff and Council members particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful development opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Attend training, as appropriate, in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work, e.g., bereavement or separation.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them on a planned return to work.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Inform the Council of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work

The responsibilities of **all staff** are as follows:

- Attend all training courses as required.
- Ensure that all health and safety procedures are complied with.
- Raise any issues of concern with the Town Clerk.
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended

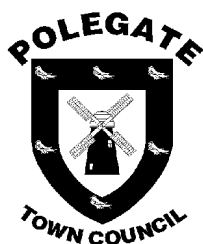
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



SMOKE FREE POLICY

Policy Number 11		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	May 2011	
2	May 2012	adopted
3	May 2013	adopted
4	May 2014	adopted
5	May 2015	adopted
6	23.05.16	Header added, adopted Annual Stat meeting
7	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
10	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
11	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
12	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Purpose

This policy has been developed to protect all employees, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006.

Exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not completely stop potentially dangerous exposure.

2. Policy

It is the policy of Polegate Town Council that all of its workplaces are smoke free, and all employees have a right to work in a smoke free environment. The policy shall come into effect on 1 July 2007 and is subject to review as required by the Town Clerk.

Smoking is prohibited throughout the entire workplace with no exceptions. This includes company vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, consultants, contractors, customers or members and visitors.

3. Implementation

Overall responsibility for policy implementation and review rests with the Town Clerk. All staff are obliged to adhere to and facilitate the implementation of the policy. The Town Clerk shall inform all existing employees, consultants and contractors of the policy and their role in the implementation and monitoring of the policy.

Appropriate 'No Smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at the entrances to and within the premises.

4. Non-compliance

Those who do not comply with the smoking law may be liable to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

5. Help to stop smoking

The NHS offers free services to help smokers give up. You are four times more likely to give up smoking with the support of your local NHS Stop Smoking Service. To find your local service, visit the website www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking or call the NHS Smokefree National Helpline on 0300 123 1044, where specialist advice and support is available.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Annual Town Assembly

A Town Assembly is convened each spring, to which all Polegate residents are invited.



**Brightling Road
Skate Park**



**Brightling Road
Meadow**

Members of the public may also raise items of concern or interest by letter.

Correspondence should be sent to the Council Office marked for the attention of the Town Clerk.

POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL

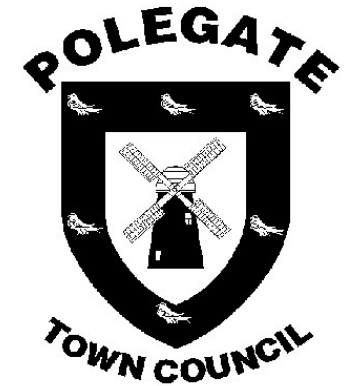
Council Office
49 High Street
Polegate
East Sussex
BN26 6AL

TELEPHONE: 01323 488114

WEBSITE: www.polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk

E-MAIL: admin@polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk

TOWN CLERK : J Tricker



Your
**'RIGHT TO
SPEAK'**
at
meetings of
the Council

PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS

Most meetings start at 7.30pm and take place at the venue stated on the agenda. Meetings of the Full Council usually take place on Mondays at approximately monthly intervals. Meetings of other Committees (for example, Planning) take place as and when required, but again are normally on a Monday.

Members of the public have the right to address meetings of Polegate Town Council and its Planning Committee on issues listed on Council agendas. Meetings of the Personnel Committee are always held in confidential session. Procedures for the Annual Town Assembly are given overleaf.

Agendas are normally published about a week before the meeting and may be inspected at the Council Office, on Council notice boards or on the Council's website:
www.polegatetowncouncil.gov.uk

Public copies of the agenda are available at the meeting. Please contact the Council Office if you require information before the meeting or a copy of the agenda.

The following information sets out the procedures for speaking at meetings.

SPEAKING AT MEETINGS

Please arrive at the Council Chamber at least 5 minutes before the meeting is due to start and the public will be asked if they wish to speak at the appropriate time.

If possible, items on which members of the public have asked to speak are dealt with early in the meeting.

The Chairperson will make a brief summary of the item/planning application and advise members of any relevant additional information. The Chairperson will then suspend Standing Orders and call on members of the public to address the Council/Committee.

Each speaker will be allocated 2 minutes (to be extended at the Chairperson's discretion)



Begin by giving your name and address and whether you are speaking as an individual or as a representative of a group and on what item on the agenda.

It is useful to prepare some notes in advance to ensure that all the important points are covered. Try to be brief and to the point. For planning applications, comments include access, impact on neighbours or the character of the area.

Bring an extra copy of any prepared statement for the Town Clerk.

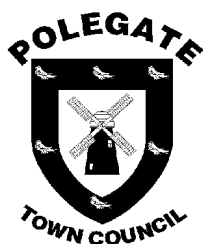
It is important that defamatory statements are avoided. There is no legal protection for comments made at meetings.

Invited speakers can only be heard once on any item, unless it is in response to a question from the Committee. Standing Orders will then be re-instated. Members of the public are not able to take further part in the debate and must remain quiet and not interrupt the meeting.

The Council/Committee will then debate the item and, following discussion, a vote will be taken. In the event that an item is deferred, speakers will be offered the opportunity to speak prior to its consideration at a subsequent meeting.

Further information, or details of Councillors and Committees, are available from the Town Clerk and on our website.

Polegate Town Council



DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Policy Number 13		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	May 2014	Updated
2	23.05.16	Adoption at Annual Stat meeting
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
5	11.01.19	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

A system of records management which incorporates arrangements for disposal of records is required and the system or policies relating to record management should include a review of council documentation at least annually. Documents of historical importance, if not retained by the council, should be offered first to the county record office. The county archivist there will always be willing to advise on which records should be permanently preserved.

2. Retention of documents for legal purposes

2.1 Most legal proceedings are governed by 'the Limitation Acts'. The Acts (notably the Limitation Act 1980) state that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. The specified period varies, depending on the type of claim in question. The table below sets out the limitation periods for the different categories of claim. The reference to 'category' in the table refers to claims brought in respect of that category.

Category	Limitation Period
Negligence (and other 'torts')	6 years
Defamation	1 year
Contract	6 years
Leases	12 years
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years
Personal Injury	3 years
To Recover Land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	None

2.2 Where the limitation periods above are longer than other periods specified in this policy, the documentation should be kept for the longer period specified. Some types of legal proceedings may fall within two or more categories. Rent arrears, for example, could fall within the following three categories (depending on the circumstances):

- contract (6 years) – because all tenancies and leases are contracts
- leases (12 years) – if the arrears are due under a lease
- rent (6 years) – if the arrears are due under a tenancy (and not a lease).

2.3 In these circumstances, the relevant documentation should be kept for the longer of the three limitation periods.

2.4 The same principles apply in the case of debts. If the debt arises under a simple contract the limitation period will be 6 years but if the debt arises under a lease the limitation period will be 12 years (unless it relates to rent in which case the limitation period will be 6 years). For sums due under leases which are 'reserved as rent' for example, service charges expressed to be payable as 'additional rent', the limitation period for service charges in those circumstances will be 6 years – even though the sums are due under a lease.

2.5 There is no limitation period in respect of trusts, therefore trust deeds and schemes and other similar documentation should never be destroyed.

2.6 Some limitation periods can be extended. For example:

- where individuals first become aware of damage caused at a later date (e.g., in the case of personal injury)
- where damage is latent (e.g., to a building)
- where a person is under a disability
- where there has been a mistake or where one party has defrauded another or concealed facts.

In these circumstances council will need to weigh (i) the costs of storing relevant documents and (ii) the risks of:

- claims being made
- the value of the claims
- the inability to defend any claims made should relevant documentation be destroyed.

2.7 The higher the value of a contract or the higher the risk or value of a claim being made, the more likely it is that the greater expense/ inconvenience of storing documents for longer periods can be justified. Council should confirm the precise wording of any insurance policies to ensure that they comply with any terms they contain in respect of the retention of documents and information.

3. Other considerations

In agreeing a document retention scheme, the council has addressed the need to retain documentation for audit purposes, staff management, tax liabilities and the eventuality of legal disputes and proceedings. The council has taken into account its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972, the Audit Commission Act 1988, the Public Records Act 1958, the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2018 (including the General Data Protection Regulations), the Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998, the Limitation Act 1980, the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Local Government (Records) Act 1962, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records 2002.

4. Specific records

4.1 Planning papers

- (a) Where planning permission is granted, the decision letter should normally be retained until the development has been completed so that, if required, the council can check that the development proceeds in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permission. Where planning permission is granted on appeal, a copy of the appeal decision should also be retained. It may sometimes be sensible to retain an appeal decision indefinitely because of wider implications (e.g., the decision may set a precedent for other developments in the locality).
- (b) Where planning permission is refused, the papers should be retained until the period within which an appeal can be made has expired. If an appeal is made, and dismissed, the decision letter may be worth retaining against further applications relating to the same site.
- (c) Correspondence should be retained for one year or longer if relevant and useful.

- (d) Copies of Structure Plans, Local Plans and similar documents should be retained for the period they are in force.

4.2 Insurance policies

Insurance policies and significant correspondence should be kept for as long as it is possible for a claim to be made under the policy. Irrespective of how long policies and correspondence are retained, a permanent record of insurance company names and policy numbers for all insured risks should be kept.

4.3 Information from other bodies

This includes items such as circulars from County Associations, NALC and other bodies (e.g., principal authorities). Such information should be retained for as long as it is useful and relevant.

4.4 Magazines and journals

The Local Council Review and other regular publications received should be kept for as long as they are useful.

4.5 Correspondence

If related to audit matters, correspondence should be kept for the appropriate period specified in the attached annex.

4.6 Personnel matters

Documentation relating to staff should be kept securely and kept for as long as it would be possible for a claim to be made against the council.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

ANNEX

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE COUNCIL AUDIT

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Receipt and payment account(s)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	12 years/indefinite	Limitations Act 1980
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitations Act 1980
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitations Act 1980
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management.
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Statute of Limitations
Correspondence	1 year, or longer if relevant and useful	Limitation Act 1980, Management
Emails	1 year, or longer if relevant and useful	Limitation Act 1980, Management
Annual accounts and asset registers	Indefinite	Archive
Pension contributions records	6 years	Pensions Act 2014
Personnel records, including SSP and maternity records	6 years	Limitations Act 1980
Asbestos and hazardous materials records	Indefinite	Asbestos regulations
Job Applications	6 years for successful applicants, 6 months for unsuccessful applicants	Limitation Act 1980, management
Accident book	3 years, or if a child/young adult until that person reaches the age of 21	Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Act 2013
Allotment register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management

Polegate Town Council



STRESS POLICY

Policy Number 14		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	24.09.08	
2	28.08.13	Amendment to wording ADOPTED 25 th NOV 2013
3	23.05.16	Adopted Annual Stat meeting 2016
4	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees and recognises that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
- 1.2 This policy will apply to all staff.
- 1.3 The Town Clerk is responsible for implementation and the Council is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

2. Definition of stress

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define stress as *'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.'*
- 2.2 This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

3. Policy

- 3.1 The Town Clerk will identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- 3.2 The Council will provide any required training for the Town Clerk in good management practices.
- 3.3 The Council will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- 3.4 The Council will provide adequate resources to enable the Town Clerk to implement the stress management strategy.

4. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the **Council** are as follows:

- Ensure good communication with staff particularly where there are organisational or procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful development opportunities.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within the Council environment.
- Offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work, e.g., bereavement or separation.
- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Provide training and support for implementation of stress risk assessments.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them on a planned return to work.
- Refer individuals to specialist agencies, as required.

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measure to reduce stress.
- Conduct meaningful consultation with employees on any changes to work practices that could precipitate stress.

The responsibilities of the **Town Clerk** are as follows:

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments.
- Ensure good communication between both staff and Council members particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful development opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Attend training, as appropriate, in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work, e.g., bereavement or separation.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them on a planned return to work.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Inform the Council of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work

The responsibilities of **all staff** are as follows:

- Attend all training courses as required.
- Ensure that all health and safety procedures are complied with.
- Raise any issues of concern with the Town Clerk.
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



ALCOHOL AND DRUGS MISUSE POLICY

Policy Number 15		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	21.04.23	21.04.23 adopted by finance & policy

1 ALCOHOL AND DRUGS MISUSE POLICY

1.1 Purpose

Polegate Town Council has adopted a policy on Alcohol and Drug Misuse in the workplace in order to provide a safe and productive working environment, to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all its employees and to comply with relevant legislation, for example, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

This policy covers the use and misuse of intoxicating substances, in work or outside of work that could adversely affect work performance and/or health and safety. The definition of intoxicating substances includes:

- alcohol
- solvents
- legal and illegal drugs
- prescription drugs
- over the counter medicines, and,
- other substances.

1.2 POLICY AIMS

The aims of the policy are:

- To achieve a balance between supporting the employee to come forward with a problem and the need to preserve the health, safety and welfare of employees and others, the organisation's reputation and the delivery of high quality, effective services;
- To create a climate of openness which removes the tendency to conceal or deny alcohol or drug related problems;
- To encourage employees who are experiencing alcohol and drug related problems to seek appropriate assistance voluntarily at the earliest opportunity and to ensure the availability of appropriate professional advice, such as the Employee Assistance Programme;
- To promote awareness and provide a procedure on identifying and managing alcohol and drug misuse which includes treatment as well as disciplinary action as required.

1.3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees.

The organisation also expects agency and casual workers, contractors and others working on its behalf to comply with this policy. Failure to do so is likely to result in the working arrangement being terminated.

1.4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees responsibilities:

- to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their action at work;
- ensure that their performance or ability to carry out their activities at work safely and competently is not impaired in any way;
- to adopt a responsible attitude towards drinking and taking prescribed and over the counter drugs and to arrive at work free from the effects of alcohol and drugs and to remain so during the working day;

- when representing Polegate Town Council outside normal working hours, including at staff social events, employees are expected to take a responsible attitude to alcohol and taking prescribed and over the counter drugs as they are representing the Council and must not jeopardise its reputation;
- To inform their line manager of prescribed and over the counter medications that may cause side effects that have potential safety implications for their duties at work;
- When seeking treatment or medicines to be aware of the conditions and side effects notified and where possible seek out alternatives that do not impair performance through drowsiness or other symptoms;
- Not possess, store, trade or sell controlled drugs on organisation premises or bring the organisation into disrepute by engaging in such activities outside of work;
- To seek help if they have concerns regarding their alcohol or drug consumption. It is recommended that the individual approaches their line manager or a member of the Management Team in the first instance to allow the organisation to arrange for the provision of appropriate support, for example, access to the Employee Assistance Programme, referral to the Occupational Health Advisor or other medical professionals;
- To co-operate with any support and assistance provided to address alcohol or drug misuse;
- Encourage colleagues with an alcohol or drug misuse problem to seek help;
- To raise concerns with an individual's line manager if they genuinely suspect that an employee may be misusing drugs or alcohol and that the individual concerned does not wish to come forward to seek help.

Managers responsibilities:

- Provide support and assistance, where appropriate and for a reasonable period, to staff who are dependent on drugs and alcohol to help their recovery. e.g. consider what reasonable adjustments can be made when an employee engaged on safety critical tasks, such as driving a van, is undertaking a period of medical treatment. This may necessitate taking advice from an Occupational Health Adviser;
- assess the risks to the health and safety of their employees under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Knowingly allowing an employee to continue working if affected by alcohol or drugs, whilst their behaviour places the employee or others at risk could make the employer liable to prosecution. Employees under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be escorted home safely by 2 members of the team and arrangements made for an initial interview at the earliest opportunity;
- Notify the Town Clerk and police if an employee is found to be in possession of drugs or to be supplying illegal substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971;
- To inform the Town Clerk and police of any behaviour or activity which may not be legal e.g. having a drink driving accident in a work vehicle;
- to take an objective and non-judgemental approach when counselling or interviewing employees;
- to refer employees for assistance when appropriate;
- to intervene early when there are changes in performance, behaviour, sickness levels and attendance patterns to establish whether alcohol or drug misuse is an underlying cause;
- to be alert to and to monitor changes in work performance, attendance, sickness and accident patterns;
- to refer to the disciplinary/capability procedures where appropriate; and
- to act promptly on information from staff.

1.5 THE PROCEDURE

Support for Employees

Polegate Town Council is committed to providing appropriate professional help and support to employees who have an alcohol or drug related problem and who seek help via the Employee Assistance Programme, their GP, or another recognised external agency. Management reserve the right, with the individual's consent, to refer the employee to the company's Occupational Health Adviser.

Help and support will not be provided for any employee who has been involved in an accident or other situation where screening in accordance with this policy has been undertaken, nor where the employee discloses an alcohol or drug dependency problem during disciplinary proceedings. Employees are therefore strongly encouraged to disclose any alcohol or

drug dependency voluntarily to their line manager (or another member of the management team if preferred) and at the earliest opportunity.

During a period of treatment consideration will be given to any adjustments to the job role that may be required. This could include time off to attend appointments/treatment.

It is the responsibility of the employee's manager, in conjunction with advice from the Occupational Health Adviser, to determine a time frame for an employee to achieve a sustained improvement – a period of 6 months is often appropriate. Employees will be required to comply with an agreed programme of support during this time.

However, if performance, attendance or behaviour is unacceptable, despite any support and assistance that can be offered, ultimately dismissal may be unavoidable.

Confidentiality will be maintained but may not apply if the employee is deemed, under Health and Safety legislation, to be putting themselves or others at risk.

Performance relating to Alcohol and Drugs

Where an employee's health, attendance or work performance is affected by an alcohol or drug related problem, he or she will be dealt with under the absence or capability procedures at 12 and 13 in the Staff Handbook.

Where the employee's unsatisfactory attendance or work performance is related to an alcohol or drug related problem the Town Council may wish to refer the employee to the Occupational Health Adviser for guidance and a medical report.

Where an employee refuses to attend an Occupational Health appointment, or to give consent for a medical report, management may have to take action based on the information available to them.

After returning to work following a period of absence associated with drugs or alcohol, the employee may be requested to undergo a return to work medical with the Occupational Health Adviser, which may include follow up screening.

Should an employee's health, attendance or work performance continue to be affected and unsatisfactory, further stages of the absence and capability procedures will be followed and could ultimately lead to dismissal.

Misconduct relating to Alcohol and Drugs

Misconduct related to the consumption of alcohol or drugs will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure at 14 in this Handbook as an act of gross misconduct which may result in summary dismissal.

In these circumstances, if the employee is thought to be unfit for work, he or she may be suspended from their duties whilst any investigation takes place, to minimise danger to him or herself, other employees and customers.

Where an employee's alcohol or drug related problem comes to light in the course of disciplinary proceedings, the admission of dependency may be a mitigating factor but will not necessarily result in the suspension of disciplinary action.

Examples of issues that will be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of dismissal are:

- deliberate disregard for personal safety and that of others associated with the use of intoxicating substances;
- unacceptable behaviour in the workplace associated with the use of intoxicating substances;
- being found incapable of performing normal duties satisfactorily and safely as a result of consuming alcohol or taking drugs;
- consuming intoxicating substances during the working day;

- possession, consumption, dealing/trafficking, selling, storage of controlled drugs either on work premises or outside of work;
- being disqualified from driving as a result of alcohol or drug related offences (when employees are required to drive a vehicle in their contract of employment);
- making vexatious or malicious allegations that a colleague is misusing intoxicating substances.

This list is not exhaustive.

1.6 POST INCIDENT TESTING

To assist in the implementation of this Policy an established screening procedure to test for the presence of drugs or alcohol may be used when there is good cause.

Post incident testing may be used when there are reasonable grounds to believe that alcohol or drugs could have, or potentially could have had, an adverse effect on the health and safety of an individual and/or a manager considers there is evidence that alcohol consumption or drug use has occurred.

Possible examples of incidents that may result in post incident testing could include a workplace incident/accident; signs of current intoxication whilst at work; possession of a controlled substance; discovery of an alcoholic container with a broken seal and abnormal behaviour whilst at work. (This list is not exhaustive.)

The Town Clerk is responsible for making the decision to screen an employee and for informing the employee. The Administrative Assistant will contact the screening organisation.

Post incident screening leading to a positive result will result in an investigatory interview and the breach of the Alcohol and Drugs Policy may be treated as a disciplinary matter. If following action under the Disciplinary Procedure, no disciplinary action is taken or that action is short of dismissal then the individual (with informed consent) will be referred to Occupational Health. An assessment will be made regarding any degree of dependency and, if necessary, a programme of appropriate support will be outlined which may include

counselling. A formal report will be provided by Occupational Health to the Town Clerk and employee will have sight of such reports. Employees will be expected to attend appointments and comply with any programme of support or counselling. Failure to do so may result in the individual being subject to the Disciplinary Procedure.

At the end of a programme of support an employee will be subject to a follow up screening. A positive result at this stage may also lead to action under the Disciplinary Procedure which may result in dismissal.

1.7 LEVELS

The blood-alcohol level at which staff may be disciplined when being tested for alcohol is in line with the Government's legal drink/drive limit, as amended from time to time.

In the case of drugs, the threshold levels are determined in accordance with established legal and medical practice.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Number 16		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
2	May 2016	Header added, adopted Annual Stat Meeting 2016
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	20.05.19	For review and adoption at annual stat meeting
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

Policy Statement

Polegate Town Council is aware that some risk will always exist and can never be wholly eliminated.

The Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage various risks and associated hazards and support a structured and focused approach to managing them by means of an approved risk management strategy. Through this process, the Council will be able to achieve its overall aims and objectives of delivering a beneficial, effective and efficient service to the community.

The Council's risk management strategy objectives are as follows:

- Integrate risk management into the culture of the council
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice, insuring against liability where it is prudent and cost effective to do so
- Anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental, financial and legislative requirements
- Prevent injury, damage and other losses and reduce the cost of risk
- Raise awareness of the need for risk management by all those connected with the delivery of the Council's services

These objectives will be achieved by:

- Establishing clear roles and responsibilities for the delivery of risk management
- Ensuring that all involved receive proper training in the understanding and delivery of risk management
- Identifying where necessary and providing resources to identified priority risk areas
- Reinforcing as appropriate the importance of effective risk management in the everyday culture and delivery of the Council's services
- Establishing and continuing appropriate and effective monitoring arrangements on an on-going basis
- Effecting a suitable insurance policy with a Company specialising in risks associated with Town and Parish Council Services

In addition, the Town Council will authorise the attendance of the Town Clerk at the annual Local Council's Advisory Service seminar and will examine and evaluate any new initiative designed to assist Town Councils to manage risk associated with the carrying out of their duties and adopted powers.

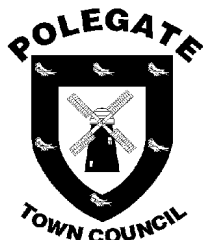
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Policy Number 17		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	25.11.13	Adopted at Full Council Meeting
2	23.05.16	Header added, adopted Annual Stat Meeting 2016
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
4	25.2.19	Adopted at Full Council Meeting
5	20.5.19	For re-adoption at annual stat meeting already reviewed within 6 months.
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Polegate Town Council aims to provide the best possible service to the residents of Polegate. However, we recognise that from time to time, users of our services may feel that the quality or level of service is less than they could reasonably expect.
- 1.2 It remains the position that the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over Town, Parish and Community Councils. Therefore, this Complaints Procedure has been adopted by the Council in order to allow members of the public the opportunity to submit a complaint regarding the administration of the Council or its procedures, and have the complaint dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

2. Definition of a complaint

- 2.1 In the context of this document the definition of complain is as follows (*as per NALC Legal Topic Note 9*):

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken, or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.

3. How complaints are handled

- 3.1 When a complaint is made against a local council, member(s) of the council or staff are likely to be mentioned or complained about. However, a complaint against the council should be treated as a complaint about the body corporate of the council, not as a complaint against individual employees or member(s) of the council.
- 3.2 A complaint against a local council may arise for the reasons given above. It may also be triggered by an allegation of administrative fault such as not following procedures or standing orders, inadequate service, no service, delay or making a mistake.
- 3.3 This procedure is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by a Council officer or member of the Council. This procedure applies to all services provided by the Town Council.
- 3.4 Please note however that complaints about an individual employee of the Council would be dealt with as an employment matter. The complainant can however be assured that the complaint will be investigated and dealt with internally with appropriate actions taken as deemed necessary.
- 3.5 Complaints regarding a Councillor are subject to the jurisdiction of the Code of Conduct. Complaints of this nature will be forwarded to the District Monitoring Officer at Wealden District Council to review.

We greatly value your continued support and good will and, therefore, if you have a complaint, we would like to hear about it.

4. Formal complaints

- 4.1 All formal complaints must be made in writing (by post or through email) and addressed to the Town Clerk and must clearly state that it is a formal complaint.
- 4.2 On receiving the complaint, the Town Clerk shall acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and try to resolve the complaint directly. If the Town Clerk is absent for this initial 5 working day period, this will be dealt with by another member of staff.
- 4.3 The Town Clerk will endeavour to respond to the complaint with a resolution within 21 working days of the date of the letter or email. Dependant on the complexity of the complaint the Town Clerk may send a holding letter to the complainant to allow further time to address the issues.
- 4.4 The Town Clerk will provide an update at Full Council meetings of any formal complaints received and outcomes as part of the Clerk's Report. All personal details will be excluded when reporting the complaint to Full Council to ensure confidentiality is maintained.
- 4.5 If a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they have 21 days from receipt of the outcome letter to notify the Town Clerk of this.
- 4.6 The Town Clerk will then arrange for the complaint to be considered and dealt with as an appeal and referred to the Council's Appeals Committee.
- 4.7 In both investigations, the complainant may be offered the opportunity to explain the nature of the complaint further in writing, should it be required.
- 4.8 In the case of the Appeals Committee hearing an appeal, the Clerk will recommend prior to the meeting if the complaint warrants exclusion of the press and public at the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.
- 4.9 The decision on the complaint shall be announced at the Appeals Committee meeting, where relevant, and confirmed in writing to the complainant as soon as practicably possible. The decision of the appeals committee will be final.

All formal complaints must be dealt with in writing (either by post or via email) to ensure a complete paper trail is recorded.

5. Complaints against an employee of the Council

- 5.1 Any formal complaints regarding the actions of an employee should be submitted in writing (by post or through email) to the Town Clerk. If the formal complaint relates to the Town Clerk, it should be submitted in writing (by post or through email) to the Mayor.
- 5.2 The formal complaint will be acknowledged in writing.
- 5.3 Where the complaint is regarding the actions of an employee, the Town Clerk will deal with this as an employment matter. The Town Clerk will investigate the complaint and if felt necessary, present it to the Personnel Committee if it is deemed to be a potential disciplinary offence. The Town Clerk will however endeavour to resolve the complaint directly if possible.

- 5.4 If deemed necessary, a meeting of the Personnel Committee will be convened to discuss the complaint and whether there is a need to invoke the disciplinary process.
- 5.5 The complainant may be contacted as part of an investigation, to explain the nature of the complaint if it is felt that more information/clarification is required. The complainant will receive a written reply to their complaint detailing the outcome of their complaint but ensuring that the employee in question confidentiality is not breached.
- 5.6 If the complaint is regarding the Town Clerk, the above stages will be taken by the Mayor. The Town Clerk must be excluded from having any dealings with the investigation. The Council may employ external expert support/advice to assist in dealing with the complaint.
- 5.7 If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they have 21 days from receipt of the outcome letter to notify the Town Clerk/Mayor of this. The Town Clerk/Mayor will then arrange for the complaint to be considered and dealt with by the Appeals Committee. The complainant may be offered the opportunity to explain the nature of the complaint further.
- 5.8 The decision on the complaint shall be notified to the complainant in writing and not announced publicly during the meeting. The decision of the appeals committee will be final.
- 5.9 Complaints will be handled as efficiently and swiftly as possible. At all times, every individual will be treated fairly, and the process will remain reasonable, accessible and transparent.

6. Complaints against a Councillor

- 6.1 Polegate Town Councillors sign up to a Code of Conduct upon taking office. Any member of public wishing to submit a complaint for breach of a specific part of the Code should do so to the District Monitoring Officer at Wealden District Council.

For more information on the process, please visit Wealden District Council's District Council's website at: www.wealden.gov.uk or telephone 01323 443322

7. Monitoring of formal complaints

- 7.1 The Town Clerk will include in the Clerk's Update Report to each Council meeting a summary of formal complaints dealt with in the period since the last report. Formal complaints about staff will be reported to the Personnel Committee.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Policy Number 18		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	19.05.14	Adopted
2	May 2016	Header added, adopted Annual Stat meeting 2016
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
5	20.5.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') received Royal Assent on 30 September 2000 but its implementation was phased in with the duty on public authorities to adopt publication schemes being introduced first, followed by the individual right to access provisions which came into force 1 January 2005.

2. Basics of the Act

- 2.1 Section 1 of the Act gives a general right of access to information held by public authorities. Public authorities include all local authorities, including Parish Councils. The right applies to all information, obtained from any source. The right of access includes both the right to be told whether the information exists, as well as the right to receive it.
- 2.2 Since the right of access applies to all information which is "held" by the authority, the Act is effectively retrospective. There is no exemption for old records. However, the Act does not require authorities to hold onto information for longer than is necessary, or is otherwise required by law, simply because it might be the subject of a request sometime in the future.
- 2.3 A request for information (unless for environmental information – see below) needs to be in writing, although an e-mail request is sufficient. The request must give enough details about the information to enable the authority to identify it and basic contact details must be provided so that a reply can be sent. The Information Commissioner takes the view that this need not be a postal address and that an e-mail address is sufficient. There is a duty on authorities to advise and assist applicants, which would normally require the authority to give some help to an applicant to better identify the information they request.
- 2.4 The right of access to information is subject to a range of exemptions and these are listed in Appendix 1 (page 80). Some of the exemptions are "absolute". Once an authority decides that an absolute exemption applies to information requested it does not have to release it under the Act, although discretionary release is still possible. In the case of all other exemptions, once it is decided that one or more of them applies, the authority must still release the information unless it judges that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the interest in disclosure (the "public interest test").
- 2.5 Two statutory Codes of Practice, one covering aspects of compliance, and the other covering the management of records, have been produced and authorities must comply with these Codes. Both documents can be downloaded from the Information Commissioner's web site www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk
- 2.6 The Act includes provisions for enforcement and appeal. The Information Commissioner has a substantial role to promote the Act to the public, to set standards of good practice which authorities must follow, and the power to over-rule an authority's judgment that the balance of the public interest lies in favour of refusing to disclose information, and to impose his own view. There is also an appeal process for a dissatisfied applicant to the Information Commissioner, and from the Commissioner to a new Information Tribunal.
- 2.7 Generally, requests must be dealt with within 20 working days from the receipt of the request, but if it is necessary to apply a public interest test, this time limit does not apply, and the authority should respond within a reasonable period.

2.8 If a request is refused, the refusal notice should give the reasons for refusing the request and advise the applicant as to their rights of appeal – both internally by way of a complaint and, following that, by way of an appeal to the Information Commissioner.

3. Relationship with other legislation

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

The Act does not amend the provision in the 1960 Act which allows local councils to exclude the press and public by resolution if publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or for some other reason stated in the resolution.

However, the effect of the Act is that any information held by the council which relates to matters discussed, either in open or private session (e.g., in a report or minutes), may have to be disclosed unless one of the exemptions under the Act applies.

Local Government Act 1972

The provisions of the Act effectively supersede the old exemptions in the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of the access to information rights and for this reason the categories of “exempt information” (Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) were amended in 2006 to mirror relevant exemptions in the Act.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY

Policy Number 19		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	June 2006	Header added, adopted Annual Stat meeting
2	May 2007	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
3	May 2008	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
4	May 2009	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
5	May 2010	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
6	May 2011	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
7	May 2012	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
8	May 2013	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
9	May 2014	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
10	May 2015	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
11	23.05.16	Adoption at Annual Stat meeting
12	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
13	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

14	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
15	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
16	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
17	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is designed to ensure that Polegate Town Council treats applicants who have a criminal record fairly and does not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- 1.2 As an organisation using the DBS service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Polegate Town Council complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applications for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure because of a conviction or other information revealed.

2. Key points

- Polegate Town Council complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice
- All applicants for positions are treated fairly
- The Council selects candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- The Council only requests a DBS Disclosure where it is sufficiently relevant to the position concerned
- The Council keeps all information private and confidential, in accordance with the Data Protection Act
- The Council takes into careful consideration the relevance and circumstances of offences

3. Principles

- 3.1 Polegate Town Council is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- 3.2 The Council actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talents, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates. The Council selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

4. Disclosures

- 4.1 A DBS Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS Disclosure is required, all application forms and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- 4.2 Where a DBS Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, the Council encourages all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. This information can either be stated in the relevant section of the application form or can be sent with the application in a sealed envelope marked 'strictly confidential', where it will be processed with appropriate discretion by the Town Clerk.

5. Previous offences

- 5.1 The Council requires all applicants to disclose criminal convictions. Some posts require information relating to both 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions whereas other posts require 'unspent' information only. The information provided will be treated strictly confidentially. Applicants who have been shortlisted for posts involving regular contact with children or vulnerable adults will be required to apply for either a standard or enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- 5.2 The Council ensures that all those in Polegate Town Council who are involved in the recruitment process are suitably advised to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.
- 5.3 At interview or in a separate discussion, the Council ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

6. Withdrawal of an offer of employment

- 6.1 Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- 6.2 Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with Polegate Town Council. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

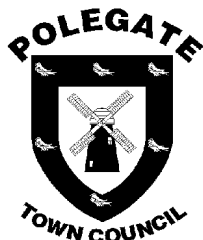
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



STORAGE OF DBS DISCLOSURES POLICY

Policy Number 20		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	June 2006	Header added, adopted Annual Stat meeting
2	May 2007	Annual Stat meeting adopted
3	May 2008	Annual Stat meeting adopted
4	May 2009	Annual Stat meeting adopted
5	May 2010	Annual Stat meeting adopted
6	May 2011	Annual Stat meeting adopted
7	May 2012	Annual Stat meeting adopted
8	May 2013	Annual Stat meeting adopted
9	May 2014	Annual Stat meeting adopted
10	May 2015	Annual Stat meeting adopted
11	23.05.16	Adoption at Annual Stat meeting
12	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
13	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

14	20.05.19	For re-adoption at Annual Stat meeting – will be fully reviewed by finance in the next 8 months. CRB now DBS and different rules apply. Revision in progress
15	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
16	05.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
17	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is designed to ensure that Polegate Town Council has a system in place for the safe storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (formally known as CRB) disclosures and disclosure information.

2. Key points

- Polegate Town Council complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS disclosures and disclosure information
- DBS disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties
- The Council maintains a record of those to whom disclosures or disclosure information has been revealed
- The Council does not keep disclosure information for any longer than is necessary, generally up to six months
- Disclosure information is destroyed by shredding once the retention period has elapsed
- The Council will keep a record of the date of issue of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type requested, the position for which it was requested, the unique reference number and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

3. Principles

- 3.1 As an organisation using the DBS disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Polegate Town Council complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS disclosures and disclosure information.
- 3.2 The Council complies fully with obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of disclosure information.

4. Receipt of DBS disclosure

- 4.1 DBS disclosure information is handled only by those who jobs deem it essential, and is treated with all due confidentiality and discretion, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

5. Storage and access

- 5.1 Disclosure information is kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

6. Handling

- 6.1 In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. The Council maintains a record of all those to whom disclosures or disclosure information has been revealed and it is a **criminal offence** to pass this information to anyone else who is not entitled to receive it. Failure to comply with this could result in disciplinary action and/or criminal proceedings.
- 6.2 In instances where employees supply a copy of their DBS disclosure certificate to their local manager for purposes of proving that they have a valid DBS check the DBS certificate will be handled, stored, disclosed and destroyed in line with this policy. Any queries relating to the DBS disclosure will be directed to the Town Clerk.

7. Usage

- 7.1 Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

8. Retention

- 8.1 Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, the Council do not keep disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep disclosure information for longer than six months, the Council will consult the DBS about this and will consider the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so.
- 8.2 Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail. Regarding the retention of DBS disclosures for employees in social care services, the Council will need to retain a copy of these DBS disclosures for twelve months from the date the disclosure certificate is received, after which the certificate must be shredded.

9. Disposal

- 9.1 Once the retention period has elapsed, the Council will ensure that any disclosure information is immediately destroyed securely by shredding. While awaiting destruction, disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g., waste bin or confidential waste sack). The Council will not keep any photocopy or other image of the disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a disclosure.
- 9.2 However, notwithstanding, the above, the Council will keep a record of the date of issue of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure requested, the position for which the disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the ` and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



STREET LIGHTING POLICY

Policy Number 21		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	May 2015	Adoption at Annual Stat meeting
2	23.05.16	For adoption At Annual Stat meeting
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
4	21.5.2018	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
5	20.5.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 A review of the Street lighting was initiated by the Town Council in response to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) changing over to part night lighting. Several issues were raised about the age of the Street lighting columns and the lack of provision for an ongoing replacement schedule.
- 1.2 The “DV” sheets (hammer and visual check by ESCC Street lighting sub-contractors) were considered a fair indication of the condition of the columns, but ESCC advised that the full electrical testing of the columns or a push pull test was the definitive test for the metal columns. The Town Council was asked to carry out electrical testing on the columns, which was agreed.
- 1.3 The report indicated that many columns were in poor condition and that these should be replaced as soon as possible. However, the report validity was doubted due to the high % of failures over the whole of East Sussex. Further checks of the tests were carried out and a push pull test was also carried out to determine the validity of the column testing. This proved there were several inaccuracies in the testing and further electrical tests were carried out and new results noted. A test batch of columns were also removed and tested (based on the new results) to determine the accuracy of the later test.
- 1.4 The final report was considered fairly accurate by ESCC, and the Town Council resolved to replace the identified columns as soon as practicably possible. During the long period of time when the columns were being retested, ESCC indicated that for economy, and to fall in line with ESCC policy, part night lighting should be considered by the council.
- 1.5 A local resident (qualified electrical engineer) was asked to report on the implications of a changeover to part night lighting. Following receipt of this report, the Town Council resolved to adopt part night lighting in principle and subsequently agreed to change all lighting except the High Street to part night lighting based on the areas ESCC designated (Green, Yellow pink routes). At that time there were also grave concerns that budget proposals for ESCC Street Lighting budget would mean huge cuts in street lighting across the county.
- 1.6 ESCC later approached the Town Council advising that the new standard for ESCC lighting was LED lighting. The ESCC Street Lighting Engineer gave a verbal report at a council meeting, suggesting that any lanterns that needed replacing (either as part of a complete column replacement or when a lantern failed) should also be replaced by new LED lighting.
- 1.7 The Town Council also resolved to replace any lanterns where a whole column replacement was needed or those lanterns needing replacement on a sound column. It was clear that the cost of carrying out the vast amount of repairs would be beyond a year's budget. From the start of the investigation, Council resolved to set aside sums to enable the full replacement of the identified columns, part night lighting and where possible LED lanterns. It was agreed at this stage that the High Street columns would remain as they were until the full costs were known.
- 1.8 During the quotation period the works were assessed to see if they could be carried out by an alternative contractor at a lower cost. Due to the terms of the contract this was not possible. (Charges for the updating of the system would outweigh any cost savings that could be made by an alternative contractor.)

- 1.9 The Town Council also investigated the possibility of handing the columns over to ESCC for future maintenance as this had been carried out in other areas, (e.g., Uckfield). However, as there was a requirement for a “standard” and a design to be carried out, plus a requirement for a commuted sum for future year’s maintenance, this also proved to be far too costly. The Town Council accepted that for the time being the contractor would remain the same and the essential works would be carried out.
- 1.10 The change over to part night lighting was agreed based on the street colours that ESCC had assessed. Green for important routes, yellow for routes considered high use and pink for side roads and residential areas. (Please see map and legend at the end of this report). Some areas were already adopted by ESCC. ESCC columns are denoted by numbers and the Town Council columns by letters. Council also decided not to paint any new columns except those designated rural by ESCC. (Few fall into this category).
- 1.11 A large budget of around £150,000 was set aside in earmarked reserves and the current year’s budgets and any surplus each year was moved into the earmarked reserves to make provision for the costs as the works took place. The Clerk, in liaison with the street lighting engineer, was delegated to assess and authorise each area of column replacements within the street lighting budget and earmarked reserve budgets, making it easier for the sub-contractors to carry out replacements on an area basis and enabling the Town Council to inform residents as streets were changed over to part night lighting. Residents were informed of the changes via the newsletter.
- 1.12 Prior to the replacements being carried out each area was assessed for the expected replacement cost and Councillors informed of the projected costs. Increases were resolved as they occurred (provided they remained within the budget sums).
- 1.13 Several additional issues arose as the replacements took place, including two separate issues with the power supply from UKPN. One issue left some streets with day burning lanterns and the other with an increase in the costs as the cable to the streetlights was not adequate and required replacing. Despite numerous attempts from ESCC to reduce these costs and UKPN to be accountable, most of the additional costs (due to the contract with UKPN) needed to be funded from the replacement works budget and borne by the Town Council. The areas were divided into street areas 1- 6 and area 6 was held back to ensure that the Town Council did not exceed its budget for the columns without prior approval as the additional costs occasionally increased to more than twice the original estimate costs for the area.
- 1.14 All areas have now been completed excluding area 6 and the estimates for these areas are now expected to come within the budget and will be completed shortly.

2. Policy decisions

Part night lighting

- All columns within the pink routes will change over to part night lighting cells.
- Some columns in yellow routes would change over to part night cells. Those remaining on determined by advice from ESCC (often near junctions)
- All columns in Green routes to be left on standard photocells.

LED lighting

- All new columns would have the lantern change over to LED lighting and all new lantern replacements would change over to LED lighting
- A budget would be assessed for the remaining columns with a view to changing most lanterns to LED excluding the High Street.
- It was resolved that any areas deemed to be requiring all night lighting by the police would be changed back (to all night lighting) on a resolution following a request from the police.
- The High Street columns would remain as they were (for aesthetics, Christmas lighting and character of the High Street). It was agreed these would be looked at, at a later stage once the replacements had been completed and the schedule of renewals approved.
- It was agreed not to remove amenity lighting that had previously been maintained by the Town Council.
- Once the lighting replacement has been completed in all areas a schedule of renewals be drawn up by the Town Clerk and the ESCC Street Lighting Engineer.
- At present Council considered a handover to ESCC desirable but not affordable and may be considered in the future.

A key is provided below indicating the style of part night/all night lighting within the Polegate area.

- | | |
|---|--|
|  | White light lanterns providing all night lighting with 50% dimming between 00:00 and 06:00 |
|  | Part night lighting to be introduced with lights off between 00:30 and 05:30 |
|  | 50% of the units switched off between 00:30 and 05:30. Remaining units on all night to provide reduced lighting on estate distributor connecting roads |



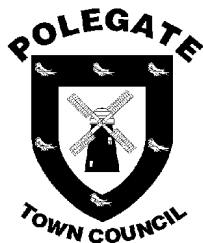
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (EXTERNAL) POLICY

Policy Number 22		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	25.11.13	Personnel 14 th October 2013, For resolution by Finance & Policy Committee 11 th November 2013 ADOPTED 25 th November 2013
2	25.02.16 (amended)	Revision of sections 1.1 – 1.3 to include definitions and additional information on harassment legislation. Minor emendations to sections 2.1 – 2.3
3	11.03.16	Approved by Finance & Policy Committee
4	23.05.16	For adoption At Annual Stat meeting
5	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
8	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
10	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 In support of its value to respect others, Polegate Town Council will not tolerate the bullying or harassment of any member of staff by any member of the public, visitor to the Council, or any other person having contact with the Council's staff. This policy outlines the specific procedures available to all employees to protect them from bullying and harassment.
- 1.2 The Council will issue this policy to all employees as part of their induction and to all members as part of their welcome pack. The Council may also wish to draw the public's attention to this policy via the Data Transparency pages of the Council's website.

2. Definitions

Bullying

Bullying may be characterised as *a pattern of offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour; an abuse of this use of power or authority which tends to undermine an individual or a group of individuals, gradually eroding their confidence and capability, which may cause them to suffer stress.*

Harassment

Harassment may be characterised as *unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This usually covers, but is not limited to, harassment on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability or age.*

Bullying and harassment are behaviours that are unwanted by the recipient. They are generally evidence by a pattern or course of conduct, rather than being 'one off' incidents.

3. Legal position

- 3.1 The Council has a duty of care towards its staff under Common Law arising out of the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. If an employer fails to act reasonably regarding this duty of care by allowing bullying or harassment to continue unchallenged an employee may decide to resign and claim 'constructive dismissal' at an Employment Tribunal.
- 3.2 In addition, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 created a criminal offence of harassment with a fine and/or prison sentence, and a right to damages for the victim. An individual causing harassment may be personally liable to pay damages if a victim complains to an Employment Tribunal on the grounds of discrimination.
- 3.3 The 1997 Act was originally designed to assist in stalking situations but case law has demonstrated that it can be relevant to employment disputes; for instance, employers can be vicariously liable for harassment received in the workplace, that the conduct is viewed as 'serious', or 'oppressive and unacceptable', that a 'course of conduct' needs to be established but that this can link incidents which are separated by long time periods and that the damages for personal injury and distress can be awarded under the Act.

4. Process for dealing with bullying and harassment

4.1 You may experience bullying and harassment by members of the public. This behaviour can be either verbal, for example:

- via the telephone
- face to face with the member/s of the public
- written correspondence, letters etc. or
- email or cyberstalking

or physical, for example:

- assaults or violence towards you, or the threat of assault or violence towards you
- damage to your property (e.g., car)
- inappropriate sexual behaviour

4.2 In the first instance ALL suspected incidents of bullying or harassment must be reported to the Town Clerk and comprehensive notes should be made. These notes should include:

- date,
- time,
- content, and
- if possible, the person's name and the name of any witnesses to the incident.

4.3 If it is possible that the incident was caught on CCTV in or around the Town Hall, ask for the system to be checked and any relevant footage saved. Where the bullying is done by email, do not respond to the emails and keep the emails as evidence.

4.4 The Town Clerk will speak to the complainant and examine any notes made, and from this will determine, in agreement with the complainant, whether the incident is severe enough to report to the police. In cases of doubt the Town Clerk should consult the Police. All incidents involving physical assaults or violence will be reported to the Police.

4.5 All such incidents will be reported to the Council for appropriate action including reporting to the Police if appropriate.

5. Sanctions

6.1 Where it is proven beyond all reasonable doubt to the Council that a member of the public has bullied or harassed a member of staff, the Council reserves the right to impose sanctions against that person or persons, including:

- Blocking their email address and not accepting further emails
- Reporting the incidents to the sender's Internet Provider service
- Banning the person or persons from the Town Hall, or other Council owned buildings or facilities.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



CO-OPTION POLICY

Policy Number 23		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	10.01.14	Presented to FC on 30/6/14
2	30.06.14	Adopted with amendments minutes 11025
3	23.05.16	For adoption at Annual Stat Meeting
4	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	20.05.19	For review and adoption at annual stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Casual Vacancies

The council should consider the list of unsuccessful candidates from the last Town Council election and prioritise them in order of the highest number of votes received. If any suitably qualified candidate is put forward, then the council may also consider that candidate.

- 1.1 On confirmation from Electoral Services that a casual vacancy must be filled by co-option, the Clerk will insert an advertisement onto the notice boards locally and the website and if possible, to the press notifying there is a vacancy with the reason for it and confirming there is to be a co-option.
- 1.2 The advertisement must also state the rules for eligibility and direct interested parties to write to the Clerk confirming their eligibility to sit on the Town Council, including a short statement explaining the reasons they want to become a Town Councillor.
- 1.3 There will be a deadline for responses of not less than 3 weeks from the date of the insertion. The date of the meeting when the co-option is to be made will be stated in the advertisement.
- 1.4 The Council will issue this policy to all employees as part of their induction and to all members as part of their welcome pack. The Council may also wish to draw the public's attention to this policy via the Data Transparency pages of the Council's website.

2. At the meeting

- 2.1 At the Council meeting when the co-option takes place, each nominee will be invited to speak for up to 2 minutes. When all the nominees have spoken the Chairman shall seek proposers and seconders for each nomination (whether or not they have spoken) and the vote will follow.
- 2.2 The voting process will follow standing order 8 shown at 4.0 below. To be co-opted onto the Council, the candidate must receive an absolute majority of the vote of those present and voting.

3. After the full Town Council elections

- 3.1 In the event of vacancies following the close of nominations for the full Town Council elections, the Clerk shall follow the above procedure to fill the vacancies and the co-option(s) will take place at the first possible Town Council meeting.

4. Standing Order 8: Voting on appointments

- 4.1 Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

5. Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors

5.1 Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose this requirement to every candidate.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



PENSION DISCRETIONS POLICY

Policy Number 24		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	08.10.12	
2	May 2013	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
3	May 2014	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
4	May 2015	Annual Stat meeting Adopted
5	23.05.16	Adoption at Annual Stat meeting
6	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
8	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
9	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
10	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
11	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

Date of Original Policy Statement – 08th October 2012

Date for Review – every two years or less

Employing Authority Discretions Under

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008 (as amended)
(Prefix A below)

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2009 (as amended) (Prefix B below)

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008 (as amended) (Prefix T below)

The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended) (Prefix D below)

(*) In the following table beside a regulation denotes the discretions where the employer is required to have a policy statement under the regulations

Pursuant to Regulation 66(5) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations in preparing or reviewing and revising this statement the Employer has had and will have regard to the extent to which the exercise of any of the functions in accordance with its policy could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.

Regulation	Discretion	Employer's Policy on the exercise of this discretion
B12 *	Whether to augment membership of an active member (by up to 10 years)	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not have a general policy to augment membership of an active member by up to 10 years but may decide to do so where a sound business case can be made for exercising this discretion. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
B13 *	Whether to grant additional pension to a member (by up to £5,000 p.a.)	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not have a general policy to grant additional pension to a member (by up to £5,000 p.a.) but may consider doing so where a sound business case can be made for exercising this discretion. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
A36	Allow late application to convert scheme AVCs into membership credit i.e., allow application more than 30 days after cessation of active membership	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not have a general policy to allow late application to convert scheme AVCs into membership credit but may do so if exceptional circumstances can be proved such as the member being unaware of this right. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.

A47(2)	No right to a return of contributions due to an offence of a fraudulent character or grave misconduct unless the employer directs a total or partial refund is to be made	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will exercise this discretion to direct a return of contributions in the event of an offence of a fraudulent character or grave misconduct.
A72 (3) & (6)	Whether to apply for a forfeiture certificate (where a member is convicted of a relevant offence) and subsequently whether to direct that benefits are to be forfeited.	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will apply for a forfeiture certificate where a member is convicted of a relevant offence and, following the issue of the certificate, direct that benefits are to be forfeited.
A74(2)	Whether to recover from the fund any monetary obligation or, if less, the value of the member's benefits (other than transferred in pension rights or AVCs / SCAVCs) where the obligation was because of a criminal, negligent or fraudulent act or omission in connection with the employment and as a result of which the person has left the employment.	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will recover from East Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme the amount of loss in cases of criminal, negligence or fraudulent acts by a member.
A76(2) & (3)	Whether to recover from the fund any financial loss caused by fraudulent offence or grave misconduct of an employee (who has left because of that) or amount of refund if less	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will recover from East Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme the amount of loss caused by fraudulent offence or grave misconduct of employee (who has left because of that), or the amount of refund if less.
A83 (8)	Extend normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond the 12-month time limit from joining the LGPS	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not generally extend the normal time limit for acceptance of a transfer value beyond 12 months from joining the scheme but may do so where exceptional circumstances can be proved. In any event the maximum extension will be a period of two years from the member's date of joining the scheme. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
B18(1) *	Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee reduces their hours or grade after reaching age 55 (flexible retirement)	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not have a general policy of exercising this discretion but may exercise this discretion where a sound business case can be made for granting flexible retirement with immediate access to all or part of the member's benefits. POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will consider requests on a case by case basis.
B18(3) *	Whether to waive, in whole or in part, any actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement.	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not waive, in whole or in part, the actuarial reduction on the benefits paid on flexible retirement.

B30(2) *	Whether to grant application for early payment of benefits on or after age 50/55 and before age 60	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not have a general policy of granting early payment of benefits on or after age 50/55 and before age 60 but will consider requests on a case-by-case basis. POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL may exercise this discretion where a sound business case can be made for doing so or where other exceptional circumstances arise that make payment of those benefits justifiable.
B30(5) *	Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction on benefits paid early.	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not generally waive the actuarial reduction applied to benefits paid early under regulation B30(2) above. POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL may consider waiving the actuarial reduction where exercising that discretion can be justified in terms of the sound businesses case made for initially paying those benefits or where other exceptional circumstances arise that make payment of those benefits justifiable. Each case will be considered on its individual merits.
Early Termination of Employment Discretionary Compensation Benefits (where applicable)		
D 5 (1)	Power to increase statutory redundancy payments above statutory weekly pay limit	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not generally increase statutory redundancy payments above statutory weekly pay limit.
D 6	Decision to award up to 104 weeks compensation instead of compensatory added years	POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL will not generally award up to 104 weeks compensation instead of compensatory added years.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy Number 25		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	23.02.15	Adopted
2	28.09.15	For full council review
3	28.09.15	Adopted revised version
4	23.05.16	For adoption at Annual Stat meeting
5	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
8	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
10	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. General statement

The Town Council recognises that Social Media – a term encompassing social networking sites, video sharing, blogging, micro-blogging and message boards – can be a useful method for communication between the Council, its customers and other bodies. This Policy instructs Council staff and Councillors in the appropriate use of social media.

2. Policy

2.1 All member of staff and Councillors are required to read and to comply with the conditions of the policy in respect of the way in which social media are used.

2.2 Except as resolved in Council, no member of staff is to set up a profile that represents or purports to represent the Council on any social networking site (for example, *Facebook*, *Twitter*), nor must any member of staff set up any additional profile(s) on such a site to which the Council already subscribes without the requisite authority.

2.3 The Town Clerk will appoint a single, 'Named Person' to be responsible for maintaining the Council's profile on the relevant social media site. The Named Person will be required to ensure that all details relating to the profile are kept up-to-date and that any content on the site is fresh and relevant. Other members of staff may assist the Named Person at the Town Clerk's discretion.

2.4 The Named Person is expected to limit the use of social media sites to the provision of information to the Council's customers. Such use would include:

- Announcing dates of forthcoming meetings
- Supplying links to the Council's website to enable access to minutes of meetings
- Providing information on local events, Council initiatives and achievements
- Advising on maintenance work due to be carried out.

There is no objection to the Named Person engaging in everyday pleasantries with other users of the social media site, provided such social intercourse does not involve or lead to any of the activities listed at (6) below.

2.5 On sites that allow the user to become a 'friend' or 'follower' of other users of the site, the Named Person shall have the discretion to follow individuals, commercial organisations, public bodies (e.g., police) or other groups (e.g., local societies) that may be of interest to the Council, or are relevant to the Council's activities. As far as possible, the Named Person should avoid following or befriending users or organisations that hold, or appear to hold, extreme views or opinions, as this might suggest to third-parties that the Council endorses the views held by those other users or organisations.

2.6 The Named Person is not to engage in any of the following activities on any social networking or social media site that is representative of the Council:

- Sending or displaying messages or images that are grossly offensive, racist, sexist or homophobic, or intentionally forwarding such messages or images as have been received from other users of the site.
- Using obscene language or images
- Publishing anything that the Council has deemed Confidential

- Publishing anything that purports to be the Council's opinion upon a particular matter (unless authorised)
- Violating copyright laws
- Using others' passwords and identities (unless authorised)
- Engaging in political debate or exhibiting political partisanship
- Using the Council's profile to promote commercial activities (unless authorised)
- Using the Council's profile for illegal activities
- Any other activity that could be regarded as deliberate misuse of the Council's profile on the site

Any member of staff found engaging in any of the above activities may face disciplinary action. In certain instances, the matter will be considered gross misconduct. Any Councillor engaging in any of the above activities may be in breach of their Code of Conduct.

2.7 If, during the use of a social networking or social media site, the Named Person receives any unsolicited message or image that appears to be grossly offensive, racist, sexist or homophobic, they are responsible for drawing this to the attention of the Town Clerk at the earliest opportunity. The Named Person is not to make any direct reply to the sender of the message or image.

2.8 The Council cannot control and is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information on other websites. For this reason, the Named Person must be circumspect when using the Council's profile to supply links to other websites or users. Where appropriate a disclaimer should be used.

Nothing in this policy prevents Councillors from having their own profiles on social media sites, nor from engaging in political debate or exhibiting political partisanship, provided that there is an indication on the Councillor's profile page that all views expressed are his or her own and do not represent the views of the Council.

Any concerns on the policy must be raised with the Town Clerk or the Town Mayor (as appropriate) in the first instance and will be resolved, if necessary, by the Personnel Committee or the Town Council.

It was resolved on 23rd February 2015 to adopt this policy and to presume this is a working document as social media develops amendments may need to be made.

It was also requested that the clerk investigate the County Council social media policies with a view to adopting similar policy statements in the future.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



GENERAL EMERGENCY POLICY

Policy Number 26		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	23.02.15	Adopted
2	23.05.16	For adoption at Annual Stat Meeting
3	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
4	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	20.05.19	For review and adoption and annual stat meeting
6	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
7	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that Polegate Town Council have control of any foreseeable emergency situation and are able to contain such an emergency situation until the arrival of the emergency services.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The overall responsibility for implementing such controls shall be that of the Town Clerk. There shall be designated lines of command and communication throughout the Council.

3. General responsibilities

- 3.1 In the case of an emergency being declared it shall be the responsibility of the Town Clerk, staff, councillors and others to carry out the instructions of the Town Clerk in order to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

4. Responsibilities of the Town Clerk

- 4.1 The Town Clerk shall, so far as is reasonably practical make every effort to ensure the health, safety and welfare of those to whom she owes a general duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Etc., Act 1974.
- 4.2 The Town Clerk shall act as Emergency Co-ordinator by liaising with the Emergency Services, On-scene Commander and other authorities. They shall receive reports from councillors and staff to ensure that all personnel in their charge are accounted for. The Town Clerk shall give advice to the On-scene Commander in relation to any persons missing, relevant information in relation to hazards recorded in the Fire Risk Assessment Documentation, and any other information that she feels may assist the Emergency Service to better carry out their duties.
- 4.3 The Town Clerk shall ensure the safe evacuation, to the designated Assembly Areas, of all those members of the staff, councillors, members of the public and others under their control in accordance with the Emergency Actions – Fire and Evacuation Procedures.
- 4.4 They shall then remain in control of such personnel until such time that the situation is resolved.

Staff and councillors shall ensure that they are fully conversant with all Polegate Town Council's Emergency Procedures and Instructions.

- 4.5 During a General Emergency the Town clerk shall make every effort to contact the Mayor and appraise him of the situation.

5. Responsibilities of First Aiders

- 5.1 Shall assist nurses and outside medical services, in the attendance of emergency.

6. Responsibilities of staff, Councillors, members of the public and others

- 6.1 Staff and Councillors shall ensure that they are fully conversant with all Polegate Town Council's Emergency Procedures and instructions and make themselves aware of the emergency evacuation routes and exits from the Council buildings / areas.
- 6.2 Councillors and members of the public shall carry out all instructions given to them by the Town Clerk, staff or members of the Emergency Services responsible for their safety during the period of the emergency.

7. Press and media

- 7.1 The Town Clerk shall act as Press Officer for the Council in conjunction with the Mayor and the press liaison councillor. No other member of staff or councillor shall pass on any information related to an emergency within the Council without the express permission of the Town Clerk or Mayor.

8. Damage to council property

- 8.1 The Town Clerk will arrange to make safe and secure all buildings and property subject to an emergency.
- 8.2 The Town Clerk will ensure that as far as practicably possible all computer data is kept safe and backed up regularly.
- 8.3 The Town Clerk will keep a list of 24-hour emergency call out companies that can assist in an emergency. (appendix A)

9. Alarms

- 9.1 In the event of an **intruder alarm** being activated, the Town Clerk will be contacted and will take appropriate action to ensure the building is secure. The security company will contact each key holder in turn if the Town Clerk is not contactable. The Town Clerk will ensure that the key holder list held by the security firm is kept up to date.
- 9.2 In the event of a **fire alarm** being activated the Town Clerk will ensure that all occupants are evacuated, and the emergency services are called.
- 9.3 In the event of a **personal alarm** the Town Clerk will ensure that all staff are safe and contain the situation until help arrives.

10. Data Protection

- 10.1 In the event of a disaster requiring total recovery. The Town Clerk will ensure that all data held on pc systems is backed up daily and an off-site backup kept locally.

Appendix A

Electrician – Graham Cottingham [Graham Cottingham Ltd](#)
31 Battle Road, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 1DY
01323 849750

or Richard Parkin IEC (24 hr)

Plumber – Glyn Ripley 07980300349

Glazers – 3 ways glass 01323 646966 (not 24 hr)

Locksmith – A1 Locksmiths 01424 729947: 07956573150: 01323 459226

Heras fencing to shut off each park
Richard Weller - Wellers Hire - Local firm only £6 delivery charge

Wellers Hire

Unit 26 Hawthorn Road

Eastbourne

East Sussex

BN23 6QA

Heras fencing

Tel: 01323 730108

Approximate cost to fence Oakleaf = 8 panels @ £3 = £24 + 6 (delivery) = £30

Approximate cost to fence Wannock = 27 panels @ £3 = 81 + 6 = £87

Approximate cost to fence Skate park = 32 panels @ £3 = 96 + 6 = £102

Anti climb fencing – winner tools worthing

Dale Road

Meadow Road Industrial Estate

Worthing

West Sussex

BN11 2RU

Phone: 01903 230906

Worthing firm £65 each directions delivery

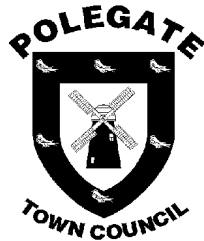
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Policy Number 27		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	21.04.23	21.04.23 adopted by finance & policy

1 DIGNITY AT WORK

1.1 Policy Aim

- a) Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect at work. The aim of this policy is to promote dignity and respect in the workplace and provide a fair way of dealing effectively with bullying, harassment and discrimination.

1.2 Policy Scope

- a) This procedure applies to all parties to the Town Council, employees, Members and the public.

1.3 The Policy

- a) Bullying, harassment and discrimination are unacceptable behaviours and will not be tolerated in any circumstances.
- b) Bullying is defined by ACAS as, “offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient”.
- c) Harassment is defined by ACAS as, “unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident.”
- d) Examples of bullying and harassment include:
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
 - copying memos that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know
 - ridiculing or demeaning someone
 - telling derogatory jokes
 - 'picking on' someone or setting them up to fail
 - exclusion or victimisation
 - unfair treatment
 - overbearing supervision
 - misuse of power or position
 - unwelcome sexual advances e.g. touching, standing too close
 - displaying or circulating discriminatory or offensive pictures, images or materials
 - making threats or comments about job security without foundation
 - deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism
 - preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.
- e) We expect people:
- to respect one another in the workplace and other work settings
 - to be clear about the Council's standards in relation to behaviour at work as set out in the Polegate Town Council Ground Rules
 - to raise issues about behaviour at work, sooner rather than later, to resolve problems with working relationships.
- f) We expect managers:

- to promote feedback within teams
 - to respond to inappropriate behaviour when observed
 - to act on information given to tackle problems as they arise.
- g) Any report of bullying, harassment or discrimination will be treated seriously and dealt with promptly. All reports of this nature will be investigated and if appropriate, formal action will be taken in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy. Serious breaches of the policy may lead to dismissal. Members will be aware that where their Code of Conduct is transgressed a complaint can be made to the Standards Board (more detail is available in the Code of Conduct).
- h) Anyone raising a concern about bullying or harassment within the workplace will be protected from victimisation, as will any persons giving or providing evidence in relation to the matter raised. Any employee found victimising another because they made a complaint will be subject to disciplinary action.

1.4 The Procedure

- a) In some cases it may be possible to rectify matters informally. Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease. If you feel able to, you may prefer to resolve your concerns directly with the other person involved; alternatively you may prefer to speak to the Town Clerk to resolve the situation. If the issue involves the Town Clerk please follow the procedure as set out in paragraph 17.
- b) If you decide to make a formal complaint it should be made in writing, signed and given to the Town Clerk. Where the behaviour causing concern is believed to be bullying, harassment or discrimination, the Town Council has a duty of care to all employees to make sure this is reported in writing.
- c) Once a written complaint has been received an investigation will be carried out either by the Town Clerk or the independent investigating officer. The complaint will be investigated within 5 working days of the issue being raised unless otherwise agreed by all parties. The alleged bully or harasser will be informed of the complaint and that an investigation will take place. They will see the complaint and have an opportunity to produce a written response in order for the Town Council to resolve the issue fairly and to consider disciplinary action. During the period of the investigation, if appropriate, staff may be temporarily redeployed?.
- d) The investigating officer will need to gather the facts and take witness statements where necessary. When a meeting takes place each party may ask a colleague or Trade Union Representative to attend the meeting if they wish. All employees will have the opportunity to see and amend their witness statement before signing it as a true and accurate reflection of the circumstances.
- e) The investigating officer will write a report identifying the background to the case, the details of the behaviour or problem reported including a chronology of events and a summary of the facts that agree and differ between the statements taken. The report will make recommendations and will be presented to the Town Clerk for the appropriate action to be taken.
- f) Recommendations may include:
- actions to be taken to make clear the appropriate standards of behaviour;
 - actions to be taken to assist the alleged bully or harasser to change their behaviour;
 - disciplinary action for the alleged bully or harasser (see Disciplinary policy).

g) If people feel that they are being bullied, harassed or discriminated against by the Town Clerk the procedure is as follows.

- If you feel able to, speak to the Town Clerk to try and resolve the situation. If not, speak to the Chair of the Personnel Committee if you wish to try to resolve the situation informally.
- If you decide to make a formal complaint it should be made in writing, signed and given to the Chair of the Personnel Committee who will arrange for an independent investigating officer to investigate within 5 working days.
- The investigating officer will report to the Personnel Committee who will forward their recommendations to the full Council for action.

1.5 Appeals

- a) The Grievance Procedure can be used by those who believe that their concerns about behaviour in the workplace have not been treated appropriately or in accordance with this policy.

1.6 Monitoring

- a) A monitoring programme should be established where behaviour at work has been addressed through this policy. This will consist of the Town Clerk monitoring the standards of behaviour through performance reviews and reaffirming acceptable standards of behaviour at team meetings and in other communications.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Policy Number 28		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	21.04.23	21.04.23 adopted by finance & policy

1 EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING POLICY

1.1 Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to enable all employees of Polegate Town Council to undertake volunteer work during working hours as part of the community leadership role of the Town Council and to encourage employees to contribute to their local community.

1.2 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all staff once they have successfully completed their probationary period.

1.3 Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteering can provide benefits to individuals as well as to the organisation. The benefits of volunteering are that it:

- helps the organisation meet its objective to be a community leader;
- improves the public perception of the organisation;
- develops and strengthens partnerships with other organisations;
- allows employees to develop their skills and abilities;
- improves teamworking and communication across sections;
- supports employees in making the transition from employment to retirement;
- improves employee motivation and morale;
- attracts new recruits and help retain existing employees;
- encourages other organisations to do the same if the Town Council leads by example, thereby building capacity.

1.4 Employer Support for Volunteering

- a) Employees are entitled to apply for up to three days volunteering leave per annum (pro-rata for part time staff) provided that they are prepared to match that with their own time. The time off will be paid. The time off does not have to be used all at once, for example, it may be taken as an hour a week to listen to reading in a school. The Town Council will not pay Travel and Subsistence costs. The individual should investigate whether the voluntary organisation chosen is able to pay expenses.
- b) In exceptional circumstances, such as national events, employees may be able to apply for longer periods of volunteering leave with the agreement of the Town Clerk and in consultation with the Chairman of the Personnel Committee as appropriate. The requirement to contribute a maximum of 3 days annual leave, where the activity is not part of the employee's personal development plan, still applies.
- c) If appropriate, volunteering can be considered as one of the methods for meeting development needs and in these circumstances the employee does not have to match the volunteering with their own time (unless they wish to) and travel and subsistence will be paid.
- d) The employee will decide which organisation to volunteer for.

1.5 How to apply

- a) Where an employee is volunteering for training and development purposes they must discuss and agree the need with their line manager during their Performance and Development Review and include it in their Personal Development Plan. They must then make arrangements with the voluntary group that they have chosen. The Employee Volunteer Scheme Application Form must be completed by the volunteer and passed to the Town Clerk for approval. Attached to the form must be copies of current insurance certificates for the organisation they will be volunteering for as set out in paragraph 27.7b.
- b) Where an employee is applying for volunteering leave they need to apply to their line manager to have time off and make arrangements with the voluntary group they have chosen. An Employee Volunteer Scheme Form must be completed and passed to the CEO for approval. Attached to the form must be copies of current insurance certificates for the organisation they will be volunteering for as set out in paragraph 27.7b.

1.6 How to approve an application (Managers)

- a) When considering sponsoring or promoting an application for volunteering managers need to consider the following factors;
 - the involvement supports the Town Council's Community Leadership role;
 - there is no conflict of interest;
 - the Council can accommodate the time implications of the activity (maximum up to 3 days, pro rata for part time staff);
 - the individual will develop as a result of the activity;
 - the activity will not bring the Council into disrepute;
 - the activity is appropriate for the individual concerned.
- b) The decision of the Town Clerk will be final and will be based on a completed form and the relevant insurance certificates as requested in section 27.5 'How to Apply' para a, b and in section 'Health and Safety' para b.

1.7 Health and Safety

- a) Whilst the Town Council is not responsible for any volunteering activity that employees undertake, managers and employees should satisfy themselves that risks have been considered and accepted before an activity is undertaken as a risk assessment may be necessary. Guidance can be obtained from the Town Clerk.
- b) The Town Council's insurance may provide cover if the voluntary work is broadly related to Council activities e.g. litter picking. If the work is outside of Town Council activity e.g. cleaning out at a donkey rescue centre, the Town Council's insurance will not provide cover. Volunteers need to check with the Town Clerk whether their activity is covered by the Town Council's insurers or not. Volunteers also need to prove that the Voluntary Organisation has Employer and Public Liability policies that cover volunteers.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



EMPLOYEE EXPENSES POLICY

[illegible]

1 EMPLOYEE EXPENSES POLICY

1.1 Introduction

This policy applies to all employees of the council and provides a framework to show how an employee can claim and be reimbursed for reasonable and authorised expenses that are incurred during their normal course of work.

1.2 Expectations

Employees are expected to:

- Behave honestly, responsibly and within the guidelines of this policy
- Submit expenses claims within reasonable timescales, on approved forms and provide enough information to explain the need for the expense
- Keep all receipts and provide VAT receipts (where appropriate) to allow the council to reclaim the VAT

The council will:

- Check claimed expenses are authorised in line with this policy
- Approve and pay legitimate claims promptly

If an employee fails to comply with this policy, this may delay reimbursement or cause claims to be rejected. Persistent or deliberate non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

1.3 Travel related claims

The council has followed the guidance of HM Revenue and Customs in setting the following travel related expense rates:

- Private car mileage – 45p per mile (up to a maximum of 10,000 miles per annum, thereafter 25p per mile)
- Additional passenger mileage in a private car – 5p per mile per passenger
- Motorcycle mileage – 24p per mile
- Bicycle mileage – 20p per mile
- Rail or bus fare – reimbursement of cost (standard class) as shown on ticket
- Parking – reimbursement of cost as shown on ticket (only where no free parking is available within reasonable walking distance)

The council may amend these rates if guidance from HM Revenue and Customs changes, or alternate legislation recommends changes.

Mileage should only be claimed for distances in excess of normal travel to work. You cannot claim mileage for normal travel between home and work.

The council will not, under any circumstances, reimburse employees for penalty fines incurred due to speeding, unsafe driving or any other motoring offence, parking fines or fines for failing to purchase the correct ticket on public transport.

1.4 Other expenses claims

The following expenses are acceptable, and employees will be reimbursed for:

- Overnight accommodation and sustenance where required for attendance at a work-related event (where agreed in advance with the line manager)
- Professional membership fees (where relevant and agreed in advance with the line manager)
- Annual eye-testing (for employees who regularly use Visual Display Units (VDU's))

1.5 Claims process

- a) Employees must complete an approved expenses claim form (appendix B) promptly after incurring expenses (and no later than three months after the claim date) and submit to their line manager for approval.
- b) The line manager is responsible for checking the claim complies with this policy and includes receipts (where applicable). Once satisfied, the line manager will sign the form, thereby authorising the payment to be made.
- c) Payment will be made direct to the employee (not through the payroll) either by cheque or direct credit to their nominated bank account.
- d) Any employee unsure whether a claim is likely to be accepted is advised to speak to their line manager prior to incurring the expense.

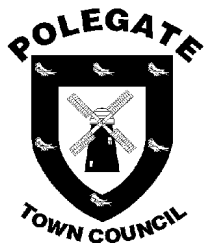
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



HONORARY FREEMAN OF THE TOWN POLICY

Policy Number 30		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	03.02.16	First draft
2	29.02.16	Minor emendations made by Town Clerk
3	11.03.16	Approved by Finance & Policy Committee
4	23.05.16	For adoption at Annual Stat meeting
5	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
6	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
7	20.05.19	For review and adoption at Annual Stat meeting
8	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
9	22.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting
10	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 By virtue of Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 Part XIX and the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the Council can award a 'Title of Dignity' to a person in recognition of significant contributions being made to the local community. Polegate Town Council may award an 'Honorary Freeman of the Town' or 'Honorary Freewoman of the Town.'

2. Nomination process

- 2.1 Nominations, by motion, must be made by a serving Town Councillor but the honour is **open to anyone who has served the Town as a current Councillor** and who meets the following nomination criteria:
- i. The nominee is a Town Councillor or Officer
 - ii. The nominee has made an outstanding contribution to, or rendered eminent service to, the Council during their term of office
 - iii. The nominee has made an exceptional and outstanding contribution to the local community in many ways over a period of 20 years or more
 - iv. If a serving Councillor is to be honoured, the end of the current serving term may be used in calculating the 20 years of service.
- 2.2 There is no limit to the number of nominations or holders of the title, but the nature of the nomination criteria means it is unlikely that the honour will be frequently awarded and will therefore remain distinctive.
- 2.3 Once a nomination has been received it will be considered by a Special Meeting of the Full Council. Members may conduct enquiries to verify the merits of a nomination. The motion must be approved by no less than two-thirds of members of the Council present and voting.

3. Award

- 4.1 Following a resolution by Full Council that an award is justified, the title of 'Honorary Freeman of the Town' will be granted by the Town Mayor and the title holder presented with a certificate citing the grounds for the award. The presentation will be made by the Town Mayor at an appropriate event. The event may be held immediately after the conclusion of the Special Full Council meeting, or on another suitable date determined by the Council.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY

Policy Number 31		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	29.02.16	To Town Clerk following amendments
2		To finance for discussion
3	23.05.16	For adoption at Annual Stat Meeting
4	22.05.17	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	21.05.18	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	20.05.19	For review and adoption at annual stat meeting
7	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
8	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
9	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Polegate Town Council is committed to dealing with all complaints equitably, comprehensively, and in a timely manner. Usually, dealing with complaints is a straightforward process, but in a minority of cases complainants pursue their case in a way that can impede the investigation of their complaint or have significant resource issues for the Council. This can happen either while their complaint is being investigated, or once the Council has finished dealing with the complaint.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to help the Council deal with unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants in ways that are consistent and fair. It lets staff and customers know what we consider to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious behaviour. It sets out what is expected of staff when they are confronted with such behaviour, what options are available, and who can authorise the options.
- 1.3 Unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainants can be a problem for Council staff and members. The difficulty in handling such complainants can place a strain on time and resources. Whilst the Council endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy to the needs of all complainants there are times when there is nothing further that can be done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 In this policy the term 'unreasonably persistent' refers to those complainants who, because of the nature or frequency of their contact with the Council, hinder the Council's consideration of their, or other people's, complaints. The term 'vexatious' is recognised in law and means '*denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant*'. These terms are used in this policy to clarify that we are attempting to deal with persons who seek to be disruptive to the Council through pursuing unreasonable complaint behaviour.
- 2.2 The term 'complaint' in this policy includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1988 and reference to the complaints procedure is, where relevant, to be interpreted as meaning requests under those acts.

3. Scope of Policy

- 3.1 This policy should only be used in exceptional circumstances after all reasonable measures have been taken to try to resolve complaints under the Council's complaints procedures. Judgement, discretion and proportionality must be used in applying the criteria to identify potential unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants and in deciding on the appropriate action to be taken in specific cases.
- 3.2 The policy should only be invoked following careful consideration of all the issues by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor or other Councillor.
- 3.3 Where the Town Clerk and the Mayor/Councillor are not in agreement over the appropriate course of action, the matter may be referred to the Full Council for a final decision.

4. Definition of an unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainant

- 4.1 Each case will be viewed individually and decided on its merits. However, a complainant (and/or anyone acting on their behalf) may be deemed to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious if previous or current contact with them shows that they meet any of the criteria in Appendix 1, dependent upon degree.

5. Strategy for dealing with unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants

- 5.1 Where complainants have been identified as unreasonably persistent or vexatious under the scope of this policy, taking account of the criteria in Appendix 1, the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor or other Councillor, will determine what action to take. The Town Clerk will implement such action and will notify complainants, in writing, of the reasons why they have been classified as unreasonably persistent or vexatious and what action will be taken. They will also be notified of the review procedure below.
- 5.2 This notification may be copied for the information of others already involved in the complaint or matters closely related to it. A record must be kept for future reference of the reasons why a complainant has been classified as unreasonably persistent or vexatious.
- 5.3 The Town Clerk may decide to deal with complaints in one or more of the following ways:
- Banning the complainant from making contact by telephone except through a third party (e.g., solicitor/councillor/friend acting on their behalf)
 - Banning the complainant from communicating with the Council by email
 - Banning the complainant from entering any Council building except by appointment
 - Restricting contact with the Council to one named member of staff only
 - Placing limits on the number and duration of contacts with staff per week or month
 - Restricting telephone calls to specified days/times/duration
 - Requiring any personal contacts to take place in the presence of a witness and in a suitable location
 - Informing the complainant that further contact on the matter of the complaint will not be acknowledged or replied to. In this case a designated member of staff should be identified who will read future correspondence
 - In extreme circumstances, where the complainant's behaviour is such that it threatens the safety and welfare of staff, reporting the matter to the Council's solicitors or to police. In cases of imminent risk, the complainant need not be given prior warning of that course of action

6. Reviewing decisions and withdrawing 'unreasonably persistent or vexatious' status

- 6.1 Once a complainant has been determined as unreasonably persistent or vexatious, such status needs to be regularly reviewed and, where appropriate, withdrawn at a later date. Such action may be appropriate where a complainant subsequently demonstrates a more reasonable approach or submits a further complaint for which the normal complaints procedures would appear appropriate.

- 6.2 Complainants also have an opportunity to apply to have their unreasonably persistent or vexatious status withdrawn.
- 6.3 The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor or other Councillor, will review their decisions to categorise a complainant as unreasonably persistent or vexatious at least every year. In addition, they will review that decision on receipt of a request to do so from the person so categorised, provided that such a request has not been received in the preceding six months.
- 6.4 If the person categorised as unreasonably persistent or vexatious is not satisfied with the decision reached by the Town Clerk, they may request that the decision is reviewed by the Council. Such a request for a review may only be received once in any six-month period. Upon receipt of such a request, the Council will review the decision, in consultation with the Town Clerk and the Mayor or other Councillor who determined that the complainant was unreasonably persistent or vexatious.
- 6.5 The Council, on review, may either withdraw the categorisation of a person as unreasonably persistent or vexatious or amend the strategy being applied to that person.
- 6.6 If the Council considers it appropriate to withdraw the status of unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainant, normal contact with the complainant and application of the Council's complaints procedure will be resumed. Notice of that decision will be supplied to the person(s) as soon as practicably possible.
- 6.7 The Council's decision will be given to the complainant in writing, as far as is practicable, within two weeks of receipt of the request.
- 6.8 Copies of all decisions by the Town Clerk or the Council relating to the categorisation of a person as an unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainant will be retained at the Council offices.

7. Timescales for dealing with unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants

Stage one	Complaint received that appears to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious.	Day 1
	Complaint is acknowledged within 5 days of receipt	Day 5
	The Clerk and Mayor (or Councillor) will examine the complaint. If the complaint is not judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious the Council's normal Complaints Procedure will apply. If the complaint is judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious the Town Clerk and Mayor or appointed Councillor will determine what action to take against the complainant. A response will be sent to the complainant no later than 15 days from the date of receipt of complaint.	Day 15

Stage two	If the Town Clerk and the Mayor or other appointed Councillor are unable to agree upon whether the complainant is persistent or vexatious; or what action should be taken against the complainant, a Special meeting of the Council shall be called as soon as practicable and, in any event, at least seven clear working days after the Town Clerk and Mayor/Councillor are unable to agree.	As soon as practicable after the disagreement on action to be taken.
Stage three	Full Council meets to determine matters that could not be agreed upon in Stage 2 above. Once Full Council has determined the course of action a response will be sent to the complainant not more than 14 working days from the date of the meeting.	14 working days from date of Full Council decision

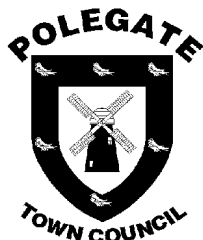
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



UNMANNED ARIEL VEHICLE (DRONE) AND MODEL AIRCRAFT POLICY

Policy Number 32		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	07.07.17	Addition of the words Failure to adhere to the policy may result in legal action.
2	21.05.18	Re-adopted at annual stat meeting
3	20.05.19	For review and adoption at annual stat meeting
4	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

1.1 Polegate Town Council recognises the growing recreational use amongst the public of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), otherwise known as Drones. The Council also acknowledges the use of UAVs as a tool to assist in surveying, crime prevention and in other professional/commercial fields. This policy clarifies the permissions and prohibitions in relation to the use of UAVs over Council land and property.

2. Prohibitions

2.1 The recreational/personal use of drones over land and properties owned by Polegate Town Council is prohibited. The reasons for this prohibition are:

- Granting permission could render Polegate Town Council liable to prosecution in the event of injury to a third party, or damage to property owned by a third party;
- Proximity of Council land and properties to private housing, businesses and road/rail infrastructure, where drone activity could cause harassment, alarm or danger;
- The possibility that subsequent actions against the Council may be brought about because of drone activity on Council land.

3. Permissions

3.1 Permission to use a drone for other than recreational or personal purposes will require an application to the Council by the individual or organisation concerned. Each application will be considered on its merits, having due regard to issues of privacy, health and safety, human rights, data protection and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

3.2 The following list outlines the purposes for which the Council may grant permission for the use of drones on Council land:

- Law enforcement – by police or other law-enforcement agencies
- Surveying – to facilitate inspection of dangerous structures, footpaths and bridleways, and ‘difficult to reach’ areas where a drone is the only means of access
- Conservation – aerial inspection of listed buildings or conservation areas
- Arboriculture and Biodiversity – to identify distribution of flora and fauna
- Archaeology – to identify possible sites of archaeological interest prior to groundworks being initiated
- Academic and Educational – to gather evidence/information for inclusion in scientific studies, dissertations or for other purposes related to learning
- Commercial – use by property developers, TV and film production companies.

The above list, and the examples contained within it, is not exhaustive.

4. Application for permission to use a drone

4.1 Any application to the Council for permission to use a drone over Council land or properties must be made in writing, either by letter or email. The application should contain the following information:

- The name of the applicant and the business or organisation they represent
- A copy of the flight plan, including the drone’s launch and landing points
- The purpose of the flight

- A completed risk assessment for the operation
- A copy of the applicant's public liability insurance – minimum £5 million
- If the use of the drone is for a commercial purpose, a copy of the Permission for Aerial Work, issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (N.B. – The CAA Permission for Aerial Work is not required for non-commercial purposes, but the applicant must be able to state that the person who will operate the drone is competent in its use).

5. Council action on receipt of application

- 5.1 The decision as to whether permission will be granted is delegated to the Town Clerk.
- 5.2 On receipt of an application, the Town Clerk will ensure that sufficient information has been supplied to enable an informed decision regarding permission to be made. Additional information will be sought if necessary.
- 5.3 When deciding, the Town Clerk will consider the privacy, health and safety and legal aspects of the application as mentioned above.
- 5.4 If the Town Clerk grants permission the applicant will be informed as soon as practicable. The applicant will be supplied with a copy of the Council's 'Rules for the use of drones on Council land' (attached to this policy).
- 5.5 If the Town Clerk determines that an application be refused the applicant will be informed and an explanation given for the refusal. There is nothing to prevent an applicant resubmitting a revised application.

6. Land and property owned by Polegate Town Council

- Brightling Road Leisure Ground including Brightling Meadow
- Polegate Town Hall, 49/51 High Street
- Polegate War Memorial Recreation ground field Pavilion and office
- Gosford and Cophall Allotments
- High Street (public) Toilets

Failure to adhere to the policy may result in legal action.

Rules for Drone operators

All successful applicants will be supplied with a copy of 'The Drone Code', issued by the Civil Aviation Authority, which sets out the following rules:

- Always keep your drone in sight;
- Stay below 120 metres (400 feet);
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the drone you are operating;
- Keep the recommended distance from people and property
 - 50 metres (150 feet) from people and property
 - 150 metres (500 feet) from crowds and built-up areas;
- You are responsible for each flight. Failure to fly responsibly could result in criminal prosecution.

Additional rules set by Polegate Town Council

- The drone operator should wear a high visibility jacket or tabard;
- A sign, no smaller than A2 size, stating '**CAUTION – Drones in operation**' is to be sited in such a way that it can be seen by other persons using the land.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



INVESTMENT POLICY

Policy Number 33		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	07.07.17	Add the definition, Investment of cash and reserves.
2	21.05.18	Readopted at annual stat meeting 21/5/18
3	20.05.19	For review and annual stat meeting
4	05.05.21	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
5	16.05.22	Adopted at Annual Stat Meeting
6	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

1.1 Polegate Town Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing any temporary surplus funds held by the council.

1.2 The Local Government Act 2003 Section 12 provides the power to invest

- (a) for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment, or
- (b) for the purpose of the prudent management of its financial affairs.

Section 15(1) of the Act requires a local authority to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

1.3 The current guidance makes the distinction between investments that are:

- a) high security and high liquidity (specified investments)
- b) loans, and
- c) those with potentially greater risks and lower liquidity (non-specified investments)

1.4 A '*specified investment*' is one which is made in sterling, is not long term (less than 12 months), not defined as capital expenditure and is placed with a body which has a high credit rating or made with the UK Government, a UK Local Authority or a Parish or Community Council. Any other type of investment is considered '*Non-Specified Investment*' to which there can be greater risk and where professional investment advice might be sought.

2. Investment objectives

2.1 The council's priorities are, in the following ranking order:

- (i) The security of capital (protecting the capital sum from loss)
- (ii) The liquidity of investments (keeping funds readily accessible for expenditure when needed)
- (iii) Maximising income (earning the highest possible amount of interest within the framework of the national economic situation)

2.2 The council will aim to achieve a high rate of return on investments commensurate with adequate safeguards of security and liquidity.

2.3 All investments, deposits and interest will be in pounds sterling.

2.4 The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) maintains that the borrowing of monies purely to invest or to lend and make a return, is unlawful and the council will not engage in such activity.

2.5 If external investment managers are used, they will be contractually required to comply with this policy.

3. Specified investments

- 3.1 Specified investments are, by definition in the MCHLG guidance, those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and with a maturity date no longer than a year.
- 3.2 Such short-term investments made with the UK Government or a Local Authority to Town/Parish Councils will automatically be specified investments, as will those with bodies or investment schemes of “high credit quality”.
- 3.3 For the prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, the council will use:
 - (a) deposits with UK banks, UK building societies, UK local authorities or other UK public authorities; and
 - (b) the Debt Management Office of HM Government

4. Non-specified investments

- 4.1 Non-specified investments have greater potential risk – examples include investment in the money market, permanent interest-bearing shares from building societies and corporate stocks and shares.
- 4.2 Given the unpredictability and uncertainties surrounding such investments, the council will not use non-specified investments.

5. Liquidity of investments

- 5.1 Subject to retaining sufficient working capital as defined in the council’s Reserves Policy, the RFO will determine the amounts and maximum period for which funds may be prudently invested in accordance with paragraph 3 above.
- 5.2 The placement of surplus funds shall be delegated to the RFO, with such delegated authority confirmed annually by the council.
- 5.3 All delegations under this paragraph are subject to the safeguard arrangements in place within the council’s Financial Regulations, including payment signatory authorisations, reconciliations and reporting to council, as appropriate.
- 5.4 Credit ratings will be monitored at quarterly intervals. If the credit ratings fall during that period, the RFO will decide on the appropriate action.

6. Long-term investments

- 6.1 Long-term investments are defined in the MCHLG guidance as greater than 12 months and it requires that, should any council wish to invest for periods greater than 12 months, it must identify procedures for monitoring, assessing and mitigating the risk of loss of invested sums.

7. End of year reporting

- 7.1 An investment forecast for the coming financial year will be included in the council's budget preparation. At the end of the financial year, the RFO will report on investment activity to the Finance and Policy Committee.
- 7.2 The Investment Policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance and Policy Committee, and approved by council before the commencement of a new financial year.
- 7.3 Council will be able to amend or make variations to the Investment Policy at any time.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



REDUNDANCY POLICY

[illegible]

1 REDUNDANCY POLICY

1.1 Policy Aim

- a) It is the aim of Polegate Town Council to ensure, as far as possible, security of employment and the avoidance of compulsory redundancies for its employees by means of effective forward planning. However, from time to time circumstances may make it necessary to consider reductions in staffing levels. In that event, the provisions of this policy shall be applied.
- b) The purpose of this policy is to ensure that, wherever staffing reductions are considered necessary:
- all staff who are affected by the anticipation of a redundancy situation and compulsory redundancy will be given fair and equitable treatment;
 - wherever practicable, redundancies will be avoided and alternative measures considered such as flexible working, reduction in overtime, early retirement, seeking voluntary redundancies, retraining or redeployment into existing vacancies; and,
 - so far as possible, changes will be affected with the understanding and agreement of the staff involved.
- c) This policy reflects the size of the Town Council, currently 9 staff, and therefore no reference is made to statutory provision for collective redundancies of 100 staff or more under the Collective Redundancies and Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1995. In addition, the Town Council does not recognise a Trade Union for collective bargaining purposes and no reference is made to consulting Trade Unions (where applicable) as set out in statute. However, where redundancies of 2 or more are proposed, employees will be invited to elect an appropriate number of employee representatives for consultation purposes. These representatives will take part in the consultation on behalf of all affected staff.

1.2 Policy Scope

This procedure applies to all staff of the Town Council, including those on Fixed Term Contracts provided that they have at least 2 years continuous local government service at the time of the redundancy.

1.3 Redundancy and the Law

- a) Redundancy arises where the Council ceases to operate, relocates, no longer needs as many employees to carry out a specific function or where a specific job is no longer required.
- b) Redundancy is a dismissal in law. The dismissal must result from a diminution or cessation of the employer's need for employees to carry out work of a particular kind or in a particular place. This does not necessarily mean that the workforce as a whole is being reduced in number, or that the overall work has been reduced. A redundancy can occur in an organisation that is growing, if that growth requires a change in the way work is organised, leading to one or more jobs of a particular kind no longer being needed.

1.4 Notification

Written notification of pending redundancies has to be given to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) at least 30 days before the first dismissal if between 20 and 99 employees are likely to be made redundant. There is no requirement to notify BIS if less than 20 employees are expected to be made redundant.

1.5 Consultation

- a) **Consultation with all affected staff must start at least 30 days before the first dismissal takes effect when between 20 and 99 employees are likely to be made redundant. Consultation must happen as soon as there are formulated proposals which imply a reduction in the workforce.**
- b) For 19 or less employees there is no statutory minimum period, but employers are required to consult as soon as possible. Where only an individual employee is likely to be selected for redundancy, consultation is also necessary and must begin as soon as possible. As a good practice employer the Town Council will apply the 30 day rule as set out at 1.4.
- c) Consultation must be meaningful taking into account the views of the affected staff. Where redundancies of 2 or more are proposed, employees will be invited to elect an appropriate number of employee representatives for consultation purposes in accordance with 1.1c. In all cases staff will be notified in writing of the following:
- the reasons for the redundancies;
 - the number of redundancies and in which job categories;
 - the total number of employees of that description employed at the Town Council;
 - the proposed selection criteria;
 - the proposed redundancy procedure and timescale; and,
 - the proposed method of calculating the amount of any redundancy payments.

In addition, consultation will include constructive discussion of ways and means of avoiding redundancy and how the Council can help to limit the effects on those that may be dismissed by reason of redundancy.

- d) Consultation must still be carried out where only one person is proposed for redundancy. The employee will be given the opportunity to comment on their selection and to challenge the results. During consultation individuals will receive an explanation of why and how the individual post has been selected, possible ways of avoiding the redundancy e.g. by offering retraining and possible alternative work.
- e) Consultation should take place whilst the proposals are still at the formative stage and employees given adequate information and time to respond. Any counter proposals offered by either staff or the individual employee involved, should be responded to in writing. All redundancy proposals will be made by the Town Clerk in conjunction with the appropriate member of the OfficeTeam. All redundancy proposals will be approved by the Personnel Committee.
- f) The consultation process must conclude before any redundancy notices are issued.

1.6 Selection for Redundancy

- a) The first stage in selection is to identify the pool of job holders who may be affected. A pool could be one employee or the whole workforce depending on the need driving the decision e.g. shutting down a service (so the employee(s) delivering that service would be the pool) or saving x% from the payroll budget (so all employees would be potentially affected).

- b) Once the pool has been identified, the next stage is to identify the selection criteria that will be applied. The Council will seek to agree the selection criteria with the employee representatives. In selecting for redundancy the Council will ensure that the selection criteria are fair, that they are used in an objective way and applied consistently to ensure that no employees are unfairly selected for redundancy. Fair criteria include:
- skills and qualifications;
 - experience;
 - standard of work performance;

 - conduct/disciplinary record; and,
 - attendance record (however, the Council will be mindful of any absence related to disability).
- c) It is automatically unfair to select employees for redundancy because of Trade Union membership, activity, non-membership or acting as an employee representative, gender including transgender, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, disability, pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption, parental or dependents leave, age or for seeking to enforce a statutory right. In addition, it may be unfair if they are selected for redundancy because they are employed on a fixed term or part time basis or have caring responsibilities.

1.7 Redundancy Compensation

- a) An entitlement to redundancy pay arises when an employee has two years' continuous service with the same employer or one covered by The Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc) (Modification) Order 1999 (known as the Modification Order).
- b) In calculating entitlement to, and the amount of, a redundancy payment, the Town Council must count **all** continuous local government service and other relevant service up to a maximum of 20 years under the Modification Order.
- c) The Town Council has agreed to calculate the redundancy payment as per the statutory requirement.
- d) The Town Council has the discretion to purchase on behalf of the employee additional annual pension up to the value of £5,000 (this may be purchased in multiples of £250 up to the maximum value of £5,000). In addition to the redundancy compensation, Polegate Town Council has elected not to apply this discretion.

1.8 Early Retirement on Grounds of Redundancy

- a) Employees qualify for an immediate pension if they are retired early on the grounds of redundancy (or in the interest of the efficiency of the service) and are aged 55 or over with 3 months' membership or have transferred pension rights of any length into the LGPS from another scheme.
- b) If an employee has not received an enhanced redundancy payment under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 an authority may compensate a member for redundancy by granting them augmented pension service up to a period of 10 years under regulation 12 of the Local Government Pension scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007. Polegate Town Council has elected to apply an enhancement and therefore this provision will not apply.

- c) The Town Council has the discretion to purchase on behalf of the employee additional annual pension up to the value of £5,000 (this may be purchased in multiples of £250 up to the maximum value of £5,000) in addition to the redundancy compensation, Polegate Town Council has elected not to apply this discretion.

1.9 Notice Period

The amount of notice that an employee is entitled to receive is set out in s.86 of the ERA 1996 as set out below, unless the contract of employment with Polegate Town Council provides for a greater period.

Length of continuous service with the Town Council	Notice required
One month but less than two years	One week
Two years but less than three years	Two weeks
Each additional year	One additional week
Twelve years plus	Twelve weeks

1.10 Support

- a) Where practical redundancies will be avoided but where an employee has been issued with a notice of redundancy the following support is available:
- an entitlement to reasonable time off during working hours, with the prior agreement of the Town Clerk to seek new employment (e.g. to attend an interview or visit a recruitment agency), or make arrangements for training for future employment;
 - a trial period of four weeks when an employee is redeployed into another post to establish whether the new job is suitable without necessarily losing the right to a redundancy payment. Trial periods can be extended to a maximum of 12 weeks to allow for retraining by mutual agreement; and,
 - the employee may ask to be allowed to leave the Council's employment before the expiry of their notice period and if agreed, this will not invalidate the right to a redundancy payment.
- b) Where an employee has been redeployed the following is available:
- salary protection for 3 years where the employee is redeployed into a job at a lower grade than their redundant post. At the expiry of the 3-year period the full terms and conditions of the lower graded post will take effect and the employee's salary will reduce to the maximum scale point of the new grade; and,
 - the possibility of protecting pension benefits by the issue of a Certificate of Protection of Pension Benefit and where this is applicable, advice should be sought from the Town Clerk.
- c) Further advice and guidance can be sought from the Town Clerk by all staff and at any point in the redundancy process.

1.11 Appeals

a) An employee who has had their employment terminated on grounds of redundancy has the right of appeal against their dismissal.

b) The employee should write to the Town Clerk within 5 working days of receiving the notice of redundancy stating one of these specific reasons for appeal:

- the selection criteria used was unfair or unfairly applied; or
- the employer did not seek alternative employment

and details as to why this is applicable to their situation.

c) On receipt of the appeal the Town Clerk will inform the Appeal Panel consisting of Members of the Council who will arrange a meeting as soon as possible and normally within 5 working days. The employee will be invited to the meeting and informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at the appeal meeting. At the appeal meeting the employee will have the opportunity to present oral and/or written submissions. The Appeals Panel will carefully consider the matter and provide a written response normally within 5 working days. The employee will be informed that this is the final stage of the procedure and the decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

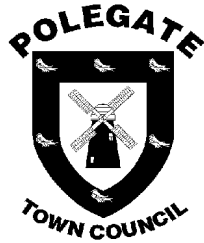
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



RESERVES POLICY

Policy Number 35		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Polegate Town Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the council will determine and review the level of reserves.
- 1.2 Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed to meet estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. The level of reserves will vary according to local circumstances and will be informed by the future expenditure plans of the authority.
- 1.3 As authorities have no legal powers to hold revenue reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs, or for specifically earmarked purposes, whenever an authority's year-end general reserve is significantly higher than the annual precept, an explanation must be provided to the external auditor.
- 1.4 Authorities with significant self-generated income (other than the precept) should consider situations that may lead to a loss in revenue as well as increased costs and adapt their general reserve accordingly.
- 1.5 The council conducts a review of its reserves through its annual budgeting process and, on an ongoing basis, through regular scrutiny of its finances through formal meetings and day-to-day management by the RFO.

2. Types of reserves

GENERAL RESERVE

- 2.1 The general reserve represents the unspecified balances held by the council. The purpose of the general reserve is to operate a working balance to help manage the impact of uneven cashflows during the financial year, and to provide a contingency amount for emerging or unforeseen events.
- 2.2 The balance of the general reserve will increase or decrease at the end of each financial year, subject to the final actual performance against budget.
- 2.3 There is no definitive minimum or maximum level of general reserves that an authority should hold, although recommended guidance within the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide recommends the level should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure (NRE*).

**NRE is defined as the precept less any loan repayments and/or amounts included for capital projects and transfers to earmarked reserves.*

The council aims to maintain the general reserve within the range of three to six months NRE and review these at least annually as part of the budget setting process.

EARMARKED RESERVES

- 3.1 Earmarked reserves allow the accumulation of funds for use at a future date for specified planned expenditure projects. Balances on earmarked reserves will increase through decisions of the council to add to the requirement and decrease as they are spent on the specified projects. Once a project has ended, the earmarked reserve will be closed, and any remaining balance transferred to the general reserve.
- 3.2 There is no minimum or maximum level of recommended earmarked reserves as this will depend entirely on the planned future projects of the authority.
- 3.3 Some earmarked reserves are restricted and can be used only for the purpose they were initially put aside for. These typically include:
- **Section 106 and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – can only be used to fund certain items
 - **Capital Receipts** – used for receipt of funds from the sale of any capital item valued at over £10,000. The funds can only be used to purchase another capital item and/or repay borrowing
 - **Some Grants** – may be restricted to the original reason for the grant award, and unused funds may be required to be returned to the granting body.

The council aims to maintain a level of earmarked reserves appropriate to the level of future planned expenditure projects and review these at least annually as part of the budget setting process.

4. Monitoring and reviewing reserves

- 4.1 The level of both general and earmarked reserves is monitored by the RFO through the accounting system, and regularly reported to the Finance & Policy Committee.
- 4.2 Decisions to increase amounts held in earmarked on an annual basis will form part of the budget setting process, with formal approval confirmed by council. In year decisions to transfer funds between reserves will be considered by the Finance & Policy Committee, with a recommendation put to council for approval.

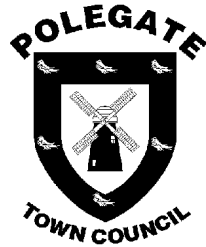
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



FIXED ASSET POLICY

Policy Number 36		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	22.05.23	Adopted at Annual Stat meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Polegate Town Council is required to maintain an asset register to ensure fixed assets are appropriately safeguarded. This includes items of a capital nature where values tend to be high, and which have a useful life of more than one year.

2. Scope of the asset register

- 2.1 The term 'fixed assets' mean property, plant and equipment with a useful life of more than one year used by the authority to deliver its services. To ensure transparency, the following items are included in the council's asset register, whether purchased, gifted or otherwise acquired, together with their holding location:

- Land and buildings held freehold or on long term lease in the name of the council
- Community assets
- Assets considered to be portable, attractive or of community significance

- 2.2 The following items fall outside the definition for inclusion and are therefore excluded from the council's asset register:

- Assets rented or loaned to the council
- Assets owned by charitable trusts where the council is the trustee
- Items held for resale, i.e., stock
- Consumable items or items with a useful life of less than a year
- Cash and short-term investments
- Intangible assets

- 2.3 In accordance with good practice, the council has set a *de minimis* level of £1,000 below which expenditure will not generally be capitalised. All expenditure above the *de minimis* level will be deemed capital expenditure and added to the fixed asset register.

- 2.4 An annual inspection of the fixed asset register will occur to ensure that all items can be physically verified. Discrepancies between the physical verification process and the register will be investigated promptly by the Clerk / RFO. Any assets which cannot be located after investigation will be removed from the asset register and recorded in the schedule of disposals. Any new assets identified will be added to the register.

- 2.5 The asset register and schedule of disposals will be reviewed annually by the F & GP Committee and then approved by Full Council.

- 2.6 The total value of the council's assets recorded on the asset register as of 31 March each year is reported at line 9 on the authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The council must be able to track and explain fully any changes in the asset register from year to year.

3. Valuation of assets and the fixed asset register

- 3.1 Assets that are either under construction or have not been brought into use should be included on the asset register only once complete and they benefit the community.

- 3.2 Once recorded on the fixed asset register, the value of assets must not change from year to year until disposal. Concepts of depreciation and impairment adjustment are not appropriate for Local Councils (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG): A Practitioner's Guide).
- 3.3 Assets are recorded at net value and must be valued by one of the following means based on available information:
- Actual purchase price (where known)
 - Proxy (estimated purchase price) value, where actual purchase price is not known
- 3.4 Where the council receives an asset as a gift at zero cost, for example by community asset transfer, it should be included with a nominal £1 value as a proxy for the zero cost.
- 3.5 Assets that do not have a functional purpose or any intrinsic resale value (for example, a village pond or war memorial) should be recorded in the asset register in the same way as gifted assets, i.e., with a nominal £1 proxy cost.
- 3.6 Other key information recorded in the asset register includes the date of acquisition, the location of the asset, a useful life estimate of the asset and an estimated cost of replacement.

4. Valuation of assets for insurance purchases

- 4.1 The fixed asset register will be used to inform the insurers of council assets. The council's assets need to be secured, properly maintained, and efficiently managed.
- 4.2 For the purposes of insurance, the value to be used is the replacement value of the item, not the purchase price or market value.
- 4.3 The council should ensure assets are valued accurately for insurance purposes to avoid under (or over) insuring. Assets should therefore be valued every **five years** to ensure the appropriate level of insurance is held.

5. Disposal of assets and removal from asset register

- 5.1 Obsolete assets that are no longer in use or are awaiting disposal should be clearly recorded as such.
- 5.2 For accounting purposes, acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets should be treated as any other purchase or sale and recorded as part of annual payments or receipts, expenditure, or income.
- 5.3 Where the total proceeds from the sale of a fixed asset exceeds £10,000, it is deemed to be a capital receipt, and is 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 significant enhancement 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.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



LONE WORKING POLICY

[illegible]

1 LONE WORKING POLICY

1.1 Aim and Objectives

This procedure is designed to help and encourage employees to be alert to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily but to give staff a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all employees who may be working alone at any time. This supports the Council's overall policies relating to safer working practices and should be read in conjunction with these. It forms part of the Health and Safety procedure.

1.3 Definition

Lone working refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone in the community or are the only staff presence in a location. They will be physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance.

1.4 The Procedure

- All duties start and finish at 49 High Street, unless by prior agreement with the Town Clerk.
- At all times, staff should notify a colleague of their whereabouts when they are carrying out Council activities.
- If you are off site attending a meeting, the nature and the location of the meeting should be recorded in the PTC calendar in every instance including the likely time of your return.
- Individuals should carry a mobile phone and it is their responsibility to ensure that it is switched on and charged at all times. If for any reason your mobile phone is not working then an available number should be used and circulated to all staff prior to leaving the building. All individuals should sign in and out of the building on every occasion in accordance with Fire Regulations.
- If the Town Clerk is of the opinion that a job role holds more risk due to the nature of the job role, then a separate risk assessment will be completed to identify measures to reduce the risk.

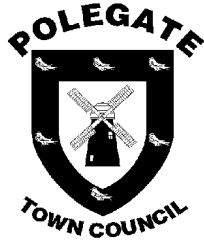
Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

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Polegate Town Council



PROTECTING VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

[illegible]

1 PROTECTING VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

1.1 Introduction

Polegate Town Council is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable persons that use its services and promotes a safeguarding culture and environment.

1.2 Safeguarding

The council will endeavour or safeguard children and vulnerable persons, in that:

- The welfare of the child and vulnerable adult is paramount
- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All employees, volunteers and elected members of the council have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer
- All employees, volunteers and elected members of the council are not to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred

1.3 Duty of care

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be carried out in accordance with the eligibility criteria in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Polegate Town Council has a duty of care to protect others from harm. This includes a range of processes including risk assessment and health and safety practices.

Allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour by an employee or councillor must be referred immediately to the Town Clerk who will refer the matter to Social Services at East Sussex County Council for investigation.

You must refer – you must not investigate.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

[illegible]

1 SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

1.1 Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out the Town Council's approach to dealing with the disruption of severe weather (or other emergency) to travel to and attendance at work.

1.2 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Town Council.

1.3 Policy Principles

In adverse weather conditions the Town Council will have due regard to the health and safety of employees.

In general, employees have an obligation to carry out their normal contractual hours during adverse weather conditions.

The Town Council has a duty to pay a normal day's pay when employees are capable of working and the Town Council prevents them from so doing. For example, the Town Council may close the Office or instruct the employee not to travel to work.

An employee's ability to undertake work will depend on their role and their ability to work from alternative locations in an emergency.

1.4 Responses to Absence and Lateness

Managers and staff should discuss as soon as possible how any absence from the workplace or lateness caused by extreme weather conditions should be treated.

When employees have difficulty in carrying out their work as normal the Town Council will consider the following responses.

Working from another location - Home working and home-based working may be a feasible response for a limited number of staff in the circumstances.

Flexible working or leave - Employees who will be absent or delayed or who wish to leave work early because of worsening conditions should agree this with their manager.

In these circumstances where an employee attends work, they will receive a normal day's pay regardless of the hours spent working. Where an employee cannot make it to their normal place of work and are unable to work from home or another local authority workplace they will need to take the time as annual leave, lieu time make up lost hours or take unpaid leave.

1.5 Absence due to childcare commitments because of school closures

As a result of school closures some employees may need to take time off to care for their dependent children. Other dependants, older or disabled relatives may also need caring for in a severe weather emergency. Dependency leave is not a right to take extended leave, but only the right to take off what time is reasonable to allow the unforeseen event to be dealt with.

1.6 Misuse of these arrangements

If the Council has reason to suspect that an employee is abusing this flexible approach to lateness or absence, a full investigation will be undertaken in line with the disciplinary policy. If such abuse is established it will be treated as any other form of unauthorised absence.

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Polegate Town Council



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

[illegible]

1 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

1.1 What is Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing occurs when an employee raises a serious concern about malpractice or wrongdoing or provides information about illegal or dishonest practices within an organisation that has come to their attention through their work.

The concern may be about something that:

- Is unlawful or illegal
- is a failure to comply with a legal duty
- Is a miscarriage of justice
- Is against the Council's Standing Orders or policies
- Amounts to improper conduct
- Endangers the health and safety of any person
- Is unauthorised use of public funds
- Is fraudulent or corrupt
- Might cause damage to the environment.

1.2 Policy Aim

Employees may often be the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong with an aspect of the Council's work. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the Council.

The aim of this policy is to:

- encourage employees to feel confident about raising concerns about any aspect of the Town Council's work;
- to provide a process for those concerns to be raised in confidence and for the employee to receive feedback on any action taken; and,
- to reassure employees that they will be protected from possible reprisals or bullying if they have a reasonable belief that a disclosure has been made in good faith.

1.3 Policy Scope

This policy applies to any person who works for the Town Council including those who are temporary, agency, an apprentice or on work experience and those contractors working for the Council on Council Premises, e.g. Edburtons.

1.4 Policy Principles

The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment it expects employees, and others that it deals with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work to come forward and voice those concerns.

It has been written in accordance with the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which protects workers making disclosures about matters of concern where they may have reasonable grounds for believing they are true.

This policy is not intended to address grievances relating to individual employment. A separate Grievance Procedure exists for this purpose at 15 in the Staff Handbook.

1.5 Safeguarding and Victimisation

The Council recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you provide a service. The Council will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

1.6 Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

This policy encourages you however to put your name to your concern whenever possible. Please note that you:

- must disclose the information in good faith;
- must believe it to be substantially true;
- must **not** act maliciously or make false allegations; and,
- must **not** seek any personal gain.

1.7 How to raise a concern

You should normally raise concerns with the Town Clerk. If you believe the Town Clerk is involved you should inform the Mayor.

Concerns are best raised in writing but can be raised face to face. The information required to investigate an allegation are details of the background and history of the concern, names, dates and places and the reason for the concern.

If you are a member of a trade union or a professional association you may prefer to invite them to raise the matter on your behalf.

1.8 How the council will respond

The action taken by the Council will depend on the nature of the concern. The matters raised may:

- Be investigated internally;
- Be referred to the Police;
- Be referred the external auditor; or,
- Form the subject of an independent inquiry.

In order to protect individuals and the Council, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so what form it should take. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

Within 10 working days of a concern being received, the appropriate officer will write to you:

- Acknowledging receipt of the concern;
- Indicating how the matter will be dealt with;
- Telling you if any initial enquiries have been made; and,

- Telling you whether further investigation will take place and, if not, why not.

The amount of contact between the people considering the issues and you, will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from you.

When any meeting is arranged you have the right, if you so wish, to be accompanied by a union or professional association representative or a friend not involved in the area of work to which the concern relates.

The Council will take steps to minimise any difficulties which you may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the Council will advise you about procedure.

The Council accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal constraints, you will receive information about the outcomes of any investigations.

1.9 How the matter can be taken further

This policy is intended to provide you with an avenue to raise concerns within the Council. If you feel you are not satisfied with the Council response you may feel it is right to take the matter to:

- The Town Council Auditor
- The relevant professional body or regulatory organisation
- Your solicitor
- The police
- Your local Citizens Advice Bureau

You will need to ensure that you do not disclose confidential information or that disclosure would be privileged and you should check this point with your contact.

1.10 Independent Advice

Public Concern at Work is an independent charity that provides free confidential advice for employees who are considering expressing concerns covered by this policy. They can be contacted at www.pcaw.org.uk/advice

Statement prepared for adoption by Polegate Town Council at its meeting on 22.05.23

Signed by

Mayor of Polegate

Town Clerk/Proper Office/RFO

Fees and Charges as at May 2022

Allotment Rents Cophall – per rod (includes Water) Gosford Way – per rod Deposits (refundable at termination provided terms of agreement adhered to)	£7.70 £5.00 £50.00	2021 notified 12 months in arrears
Brightling Road Pleasure Ground Licence Polegate & District Model Engineering Club	 £120.00 per year	A deposit of £100 (refundable) A charge for the hire of the field will be made of £200 if the field is to have a portion of exclusive use and not community based. Specific area allocated and fenced off for safety.
Council Chambers Chamber – hourly rate including Kitchen	 £27 for first hour £10 per hour for each hour after	Minimum 2 hours Hired during office hours 9am-1pm
51 High Street Polegate	£27 for first hour £10 per hour for each hour after	

There are FREE groups

*List of parties who are currently permitted to have charges waived for hire of
Council Property*

All groups represented on the current council plus the current local MP

ALL COUNCILLORS (except during election time)

Affiliated Groups with free use

- Citizens Advice Bureau (Wealden Citizens Advice)
- Twinning Association
- ~~Neighbourhood Watch~~
- Sussex Police

*Please note ALL groups must have a councillor /staff member available to lock
and unlock for insurance purposes.*