

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG
01462 730064 enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



6 December 2023

Members of the Establishment Committee: Councillors Buck (Chairman), Mrs M Cooper, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, D Matthews, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot. Other councillors for information.

You are hereby summoned to attend the Establishment Committee meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Greenacre Centre, Stotfold on **Wednesday 20th December 2023 at 7.00pm** for the purpose of transacting business detailed in the agenda.

Emma Payne
Town Clerk

Members of the public:

In addition to attendance in person, you are now able to observe our meetings by joining via **MS Teams**. Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the meeting](#) Please note, our meetings may be recorded for minute taking purposes, and will be deleted after minutes are approved.

Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting and may participate at the 'public participation' agenda item. As per Standing Orders, if you wish to speak, you must notify the Town Clerk of your intention prior to the start of the meeting (contact in advance enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01462 730064 or you will be asked at the appropriate point in the agenda if unable to give prior indication).

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**
 - a) Members to declare interests in respect of any item on the agenda
 - b) Proper Officer to consider written requests from members for dispensationsMembers are reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.
3. **PUBLIC SECTION (MAX. 15 MINUTES)**

Members of the public may speak on matters of concern, ask questions or make statements (maximum of 3 minutes per speaker), after giving notice of their wish to do so to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. Order of speakers will be in order of notification. [Public Participation Policy](#) applies.
4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Members are asked to resolve to adopt the minutes of the Establishment Committee meeting held on 20 October and 25 October 2023 as a true record of the meeting.
5. **CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1 Mayoral Insignia

To consider the Town Council's regalia.

6.2 Stotfold Town Council – 50th Anniversary

To consider commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the formation of Stotfold Town Council.

6.3 Investments

To consider alternative investment opportunities to maximize the Town Council's investments.

6.4 Budget 2024-25

To review the Council's budget for 2024-25; precept calculation and make a recommendation to Council.

6.5 Interim Internal Audit 2023-24

To receive the interim internal audit for the first quarter of 2023-24 and recommend its adoption by Council.

6.6 Mossman EMR

To consider the release of the Mossman EMR to the Guiding Association

6.7 Events & Community Committee

To consider setting up an Events & Community Committee and proposed Terms of Reference.

6.8 Christmas Lights Switch On Event

To receive an income and expenditure report for this event.

6.9 The Haven Additional Works

To receive a request from Grand Union for additional contribution towards the works at The Haven.

6.10 Health & Safety Audit

To receive a report on the Council's duty to Health and Safety and the workplace and the audit from October 2022.

6.11 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

To receive the updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and recommend their adoption to Council.

6.12 Co-Option Policy

To consider the adoption of a co-option policy.

6.13 Staff Handbook

To note the circulation of the new staff handbook to all staff.

6.14 Staff Salary

To note the updated NALC salary scales and the cost-of-living increase for staff for 2023-24.

6.15 Bank Reconciliation

To note the bank reconciliation.

6.16 Work Programme

To receive this committee's work programme

7. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

To resolve to exclude the press and public for the consideration of the following items under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960:

- 7.1 Staffing Matters
- 7.2 Additional Staff Resource

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

24 January 2024

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRA MEETING OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD.**

Committee Members present:

S Hayes (Vice Chairman), Mrs M Cooper, Mrs J Hyde, J Smith, D Matthews, B Saunders, J Talbot.

Also present:

E Payne, Town Clerk

82/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Buck

**83/23 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE
AGENDA**

There were no disclosures of interest.

84/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

A member of the public addressed the meeting regarding a possible breach of the Code of Conduct. They were advised that the Town Council has not received any report from the Monitoring Officer regarding a breach.

85/23 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Members resolved to exclude the Press and Public for the consideration of the following items under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

a) Staff Matters

Members received a confidential report regarding a staffing matter. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Proceed with the negotiations on the basis of recommendations contained within the report from Worknest.

193786/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

25 October 2023

The meeting closed at 1937.

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD.

Committee Members present:

S Buck (Chairman), Mrs M Cooper, S Hayes (Vice Chairman), Mrs J Hyde, J Smith, D Matthews (arrived at 1911), B Saunders, J Talbot.

Also present:

E Payne, Town Clerk

87/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Members were present.

88/23 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA

There were no disclosures of interest.

89/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

There were no Members of the Public present.

90/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received the minutes of the Establishment Committee meeting held on 27 September 2023 and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes are a true record of the meeting.

91/23 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDANCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION.

91/23.1 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Members reviewed the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, noting where the Town Council's documents vary from the model documents issued by NALC. Members noted the section regarding Co-Option and felt that the Town Council's procedures would benefit from being supported by a separate policy.

Members agreed that the Financial Regulations should include a Members were advised that the Financial Regulations are in the process of being updated and may need to be reviewed in the future. It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Devise a Co-Option Policy for adoption by the next Committee meeting.*
- b) Defer the recommendation to adopt Standing Orders and Financial Regulations until a Co-Option Policy is agreed.*

1911 Cllr Matthews arrived.

91/23.2 Town Council Investments

The Clerk explained that due to other matters taking precedence, they had been unable to liaise with Cllr Hayes on this matter. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Defer this item to the next meeting.

92/23.3 Budget 2024-25

Members received a proposed budget for this Committee's responsibilities. It was noted that some additional work needed to be undertaken in light of the library's relocation in the Greenacre Centre and the Clerk will meet with Cllr Hayes to undertake this review. Members were advised that there was an error in the salaries budget which the Clerk had been made aware of.

Clarification was needed on the IT budget and Cllr Smith will provide some information to the Town Clerk on this budget line. Some discussion was held about paying off the Public Works Loan which had been taken out to buy the Simpson Centre. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Defer this item to the next meeting.

92/23.4 Review of Establishment's Committee Q2 Performance

Members received this Committee's Income and Expenditure report for Q2. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Note the report.

92/23.5 Review of VAT Partial Exemption

Members received a letter and report from DCK Accounting Solutions to confirm the Town Council's status relating to VAT. Members were advised that the Town Council should consider engaging sector specific VAT advice in the event of future projects which may mean the Town Council's expenditure exceeds the VAT threshold. Members considered that the cost of engaging the services of a VAT consultant would be worthwhile to avoid any breaches in VAT. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Note the letter and accompanying report.

92/23.6 Town Council Vehicle

Members considered the purchase of another vehicle for the Town Rangers and were advised that it would increase productivity and autonomy of the staff. It was also noted that the truck wasn't necessarily the best vehicle for all the activities of the Town Rangers. Cllr Hayes advised the meeting that the previous vehicle has been purchased, it had been agreed to borrow the capital from EMR S106 and to repay it back over a period of years, precepting for the repayment. The Clerk will investigate how the vehicle had been funded. It was **RESOLVED**:

- a) To purchase a Ford Tipper Vehicle at a cost of £24,094 plus VAT***
- b) That funding to be released from EMR S106 Greenacre Centre***
- c) To repay the funding to EMR at £2,409 over 10 years***

Post meeting note: The purchase of the first vehicle was from EMR Working Capital and not an EMR for S106.

92/23.7 The Haven – Christmas Tree Location

Members received a report regarding enhancing the area by The Haven which would then be the new location for the Town Centre Christmas Tree. Grand Union Housing were prepared to contribute 50% of the cost with the remaining funding from the Town Council. The area could include raised planters which could be used as a community garden. Members considered the options of concrete, block paving and resin. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Release £10,171.45 to be met from EMR Town Strategy for the enhancements to The Haven with the area to be surfaced in resin.

92/23.8 Bank Reconciliation

Members were advised that it is a requirement of internal control, as set out in Financial Regulations, that the RFO and a Councillor signs the bank reconciliations to show that they have been undertaken appropriately and that the balance matches the bank statements. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Bank Reconciliations for April – September 2023 inclusive were signed by the RFO and Cllr Buck.

92/23.9 Work Programme

Members received the Work Programme for this committee, and it was **RESOLVED** to:

Note the work programme.

93/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members resolved to exclude the Press and Public for the consideration of the following items under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

92/23.1 Staff Matters

Members were asked to clarify to the Clerk what period the Assistant Clerk's increase in salary scale had been agreed. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Assistant Clerk has a salary uplift from 28 June 2023, for a period of 6 months, ending December 2023 when there will be a review of the staff structure.

86/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20 December 2023

The meeting closed at 2020.

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT
DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: MAYORAL INSIGNIA

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Members are asked to review the current mayoral insignia, especially in relation to the deputy mayor and their consort.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to:

- a) Agree to the purchase of additional civic regalia for the Deputy Mayor and consorts.
- b) Consider introducing a badge for former Mayors.
- c) Identify a budget for the purchase of regalia.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Civic regalia is a symbol of continuity, of local identity and civic pride. The Town Mayor wears the Town Council's chain of office when attending events which they have been invited to. Sometimes, when the mayor is not available, their deputy attends on their behalf.
- 3.2 Currently the Mayor has a chain of office, and the Deputy Mayor has a plastic badge. The mayor's consort has a small badge to wear when attending events and supporting the Mayor in their duties. The deputy mayor's consort doesn't have anything.
- 3.3 Having a chain of office adds a sense of formality to official functions and events, signifying that they are acting in an official capacity on behalf of the town. Chains are often crafted with symbolic elements that reflects the town's history, culture, or value. They are a visual representation of the towns identify. Wearing a chain adheres to formalities and protocols associated with official functions. It sets a tone of respect and dignity for the occasion and emphasises the important of the role of deputy mayor and their respective consorts. In a crowded environment, it enables the deputy mayor and consorts to be easily recognised.
- 3.4 The introduction of additional civic regalia could form part of the Town Council's 50th anniversary celebrations.
- 3.5 Consideration should also be given to introducing a badge for former Town Mayor's, which are given at the Annual Town Meeting, when the present Mayor steps down.
- 3.6 There are a number of companies who deal with civic regalia including Vaughton's, Fattorini, Civic Regalia and W.H. Darby. An initial enquiry with Vaughton's have come up with the attached

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 A budget is to be determined. Early indication on price for the consort's would be between £1500 and £2,300 depending on the materials used. It would have to be a new item for 2024/25 or the release of General Reserves.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Resources	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Financial	Budget needs to be identified.

DEPUTY MAYOR

MAYORS CONSORT

No.7 Backplate
78mm x 78mm
49mm Ø Centre

No.14 Backplate
80mm x 86mm
54mm Ø Centre

VAUGHTONS
ENGLAND 1819

Artwork Approval

Signed..... Date.....

This design is copyright and property of Vaughtons and can only be used by Vaughtons for and on behalf of the client.
Vitreous enamel colours do not match pantone references. Our artwork is a visual interpretation and a guide to the look of the finished product.

QUOTE
T350
Design by : Dave Harper
Revised :24.04.23

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT

DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL 50TH ANNIVERSARY

1. SUMMARY

1.1 2024 sees the 50th Anniversary of the formation of Stotfold Town Council, following the changes to the local government structure through the Local Government Act 1972.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked how they would like to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Stotfold Town Council

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Local Government Act 1972 brought about a significant change in the face of local government. These changes were meant to streamline and modernise the existing system, addressing issues of inefficiency and overlapping responsibilities. The key features of the restructuring included:

- Creation of Metropolitan Counties
- Creation of non-Metropolitan Counties
- Abolition of County Boroughs
- Introduction of unitary authorities
- Changes in Boundaries
- Devolution of powers

3.2 Previous to 1974, Stotfold was a parish council, formed in 1895 when the Local Government Act 1894 created a clear distinction between civil and ecclesiastical parishes.

3.3 Celebrating a town council's 50th anniversary is a significant milestone that deserves a thoughtful and meaningful celebration. Here are some ideas to make the occasion memorable:

a) Community Event

- Host a community-wide event, such a festival, fair or parade to bring residents together in celebration.
- Include activities for people of all ages such as games, music, food stalls and cultural performances.

b) Historical Exhibition

- Create a historical exhibition showcasing the town council's journey over the past 50 years, include photos, documents and artifacts that highlight key moments in the Council's history.

- c) **Official Ceremony**
 - Organise a formal ceremony with speeches from current and former council members, as well as other community leaders.
 - Invite local dignitaries, representatives from high levels of government and prominent community figures to attend and speak.
- d) **Time Capsule**
 - Assemble a time capsule filled with current memorabilia, letters from community members and items representing the town's current position. Bury it in a significant location with plans to unearth it at the Council's centennial celebration.
- e) **Public Art Installation**
 - Commission a public art installation that represents the town council's history and its role in the community. This could be a mural, sculpture or other artistic expression placed in a prominent location.
- f) **Special Publication**
 - Publish a commemorative bookly that highlights the town council's achievements, milestones, and contributions over the past 50 years.
- g) **Open House**
 - Host an open house at the town council offices, allowing residents to meet council members, learn about their roles and gain insight into the decision-making process.

3.4 The community should be integral to the planning process to ensure that the celebration reflects the values of the town. This milestone is an opportunity to strengthen community ties and build relationships for the future.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 A notional sum of £50,000 has been included as a new budget item for 2024/25.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Resources	Would need additional staff resources to organise events
Equalities	All activities should be arranged to ensure they are easily accessible and suit a variety of needs
Financial	Budget needs to be established.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: INVESTMENTS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council is fortunate to have received S106 funding in advance for the Greenacre Centre and open space as well as the Prince Charles Play area and Pix Brook. This totals £1,595,805.
- 1.2 Having this money invested in an account which pays a higher level of interest than is currently being received would bring in additional income to the town council, which could be invested in projects.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - a) Approve the opening of an account with CCLA.
 - b) Advise the sum to be invested.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Currently, the Town Council has the following bank accounts:
 - Unity Trust Bank Account: This is the council's current bank account.
 - Unity Trust Deposit Account: This serves as the council's savings account with instant access, featuring a gross interest rate of 2.75%.
 - Barclays Imprest Account: This account is used for paying staff salaries, pensions, and HMRC PAYE/NI.
 - Barclays Instant Access Saver Account: This is a savings account with a high-interest rate of 1.4%. When the Imprest Account is running low, we transfer money from the Unity Trust current account to this account. Then, whenever needed, we transfer from the Instant Access Saver to the Imprest Account.
 - Barclays Legacy Account: This account has a gross interest rate of 1.2%, and the balance as of August 31st is £4,503.94. During the year, there are hardly any transactions.
- 3.2 Other parish and town councils use the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) which is a collective investment scheme. Its current interest rate is 5.249%.
- 3.3 The purchase of PSDF shares is not the same as making a deposit with a bank or other deposit taking body and is not a guaranteed investment. Although it is intended to maintain a stable net asset value per share, there can be no assurance that it will be maintained. Notwithstanding the policy of investing in short-term instruments, the value of the PSDF may also be affected by fluctuations in interest rates. The PSDF does not

rely on external support for guaranteeing the liquidity of the fund or stabilising the net asset value per share. The risk of loss of principal is borne by the shareholder.

- 3.4 It is an instant access fund. Provided the request to release funds is received before 11.30am, the nominated bank account will be credited the following day.
- 3.5 For larger authorities (an annual budget over £430,000), the FSC protection does not apply and the investment strategy, adopted by this Committee in September 2023 should be considered which is a legal requirement for councils with investments over £100,000.
- 3.5 Maintaining an adequate level of liquidity is important to ensure there is funds available to draw down should unexpected costs arise. Keeping a proportion of your portfolio liquid can help avoid incurring expensive borrowing from external sources.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 Having a deposit of £1m in the CCLA would bring an income of £52,000 per annum.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	The Fitch rating for this investment account is AAA
Resources	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Financial	Additional income source for funds.

The Public Sector Deposit Fund

Fund fact sheet – 30 September 2023

Investment objective

To maximise the current income consistent with the preservation of principal and liquidity.

Investment policy

The fund will be invested in a diversified portfolio of high-quality sterling denominated deposits and instruments. All investments at the time of purchase will have the highest short-term credit rating or an equivalent strong long-term rating. The fund is actively managed, which means the authorised corporate director uses their discretion to pick investments, in pursuit of the investment objective.

The weighted average maturity of the investments will not exceed 60 days. The fund will not invest in derivatives or other collective investment schemes.

Target investors

The fund is designed for investors who are looking for capital security and a competitive yield for their short-term investments.

Who can invest?

Any public sector organisation can invest in the fund, but it may be marketed to any retail or professional client. Share class 4 is reserved for public sector organisation investment only.

Responsible investment policy

We monitor our counterparties' environmental, social and governance risk management on a regular basis. Our research utilises external data resources and our in-house Sustainability team.

Key risks

Investors should consider the following risk factors before investing: issuer/credit risk (issuer/financial institution may not pay), market risk (investment value affected by market conditions), operational risk (general business operational risks), maturity profile (timings of investment maturity), liquidity risk (investment in non-readily realisable assets), concentration risk (need for diversification and suitability of investment) and interest rate risk (changes to interest rate affecting income). Please see the fund prospectus for more details.

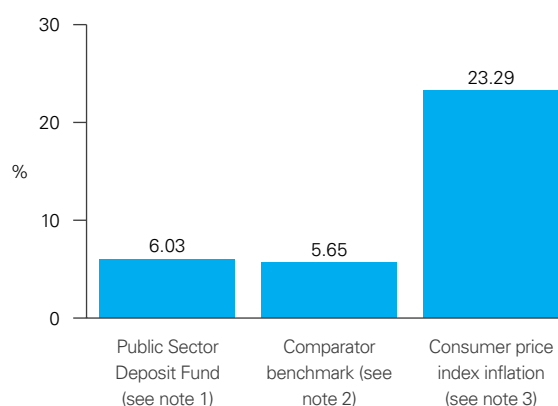
Top 10 counterparty exposures (%)

9.30%	Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg
9.30%	Yorkshire Building Society
8.27%	HM Treasury
7.23%	DBS Bank Limited
4.13%	BNP Paribas
4.13%	Danske Bank AS
4.13%	Handelsbanken plc
4.13%	MUFG Bank
4.13%	Royal Bank of Canada
4.13%	SMBC Bank International plc

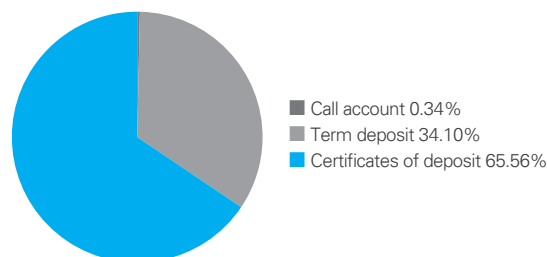
Share class 4 yield as at 30 September 2023

5.20%

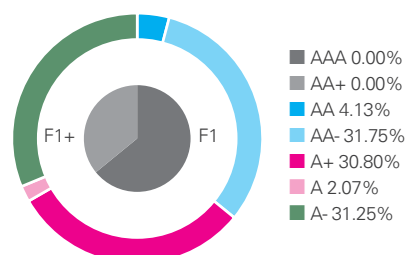
5 years performance



Asset type (%)



Credit rating (%) see note 4



Top 10 country exposures (%)

32.01%	UK
12.40%	Japan
10.33%	Singapore
9.82%	Canada
9.30%	Germany
5.42%	France
4.13%	Denmark
4.13%	Sweden
3.20%	Netherlands
3.10%	Belgium

Note 1: Source: CCLA - Performance shown after management fees and other expenses, with the income reinvested. The daily yield on the fund will fluctuate, and past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results. Note 2: From 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark is the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Before 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark was the 7-Day Sterling London Interbank Bid Rate. Note 3: consumer price index inflation is lagged one month. Note 4: Using Fitch Ratings

Income

Average yield over the month	5.15%
Yield at the month-end shown	5.20%

Total return performance by year

12 months to 30 September	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
The Public Sector Deposit Fund	+0.75%	+0.47%	+0.04%	+0.67%	+4.01%
Comparator benchmark	+0.58%	+0.21%	+0.01%	+0.73%	+4.05%
Relative (difference)	+0.17%	+0.26%	+0.03%	-0.06%	-0.04%

Annualised total return performance

Performance to 30 September	1 year	3 years	5 years
The Public Sector Deposit Fund	+4.01%	+1.56%	+1.18%
Comparator benchmark	+4.05%	+1.58%	+1.11%
Relative (difference)	-0.04%	-0.02%	+0.07%

Performance shown after management fees and other expenses, with the income reinvested. From 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark is the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Before 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark was 7-Day Sterling London Interbank Bid Rate. **Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results.** Source: CCLA

Market update

Revised figures on the UK economy indicated that it has fared less badly since the onset of the pandemic than was previously thought. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) said that in the year 2020, economic activity had shrunk by 10.4% - still a historically painful slump, but slightly less than the 11% decline reported before the latest revisions. The ONS also found that by the end of 2021 the UK economy had already recovered to surpass pre-pandemic levels, whereas previously it was thought still to be 1.2% smaller at that point than before the pandemic hit. The main factors in the revision of the data were the rate at which companies had been building up stock through the pandemic era, where previously they were thought to have been running supplies down; and the inclusion of increased healthcare activity as part of economic output.

The rate of price rises in the UK slowed, surprising most forecasters who had anticipated that annual growth in the headline consumer price index (CPI) would rise from 6.8% in July to 7% in August; instead the rate fell to 6.7%. The core inflation rate, which ignores volatile components such as food and energy, fell even more markedly, from 6.9% to 6.0%. The surprisingly soft inflation data were a key factor in the decision by the Bank of England's monetary policy committee (MPC) to leave the UK's official interest rate unchanged at 5.25%. Not all of the MPC were convinced, however, with four of the nine members having voted to raise rates by a further 0.25%.

Key facts

Authorised corporate director	CCLA Investment Management Limited
Fund size	£968m
Fitch money-market fund rating	AAAmf
Weighted average maturity	46.32 days
Launch date	May 2011
Dealing day	Each business day (see note 5)
Withdrawals	On demand
Fund domicile	United Kingdom
ISIN (share class 4)	GB00B3LDFH01
Interest payment dates	End of each month
Ongoing charges figure	0.08% (see note 6)

Please Contact

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Note 5: Dealing instructions (including cleared funds for purchases) must be received by 11:30 am.

Note 6: The ongoing charges figure is based on the annual management charge but excludes portfolio transaction costs.

Please refer to <https://www.ccla.co.uk/glossary> for explanations of some of the terminology used in this document.

Risk warning and disclosures

This document is a financial promotion and is for information only. It does not provide financial, investment or other professional advice. The market update contained in this document represents CCLA's house view and should not be relied upon to form the basis of any investment decisions. To make sure you understand whether our product is suitable for you, please read the key investor information document and the prospectus and consider the risk factors identified in those documents. CCLA strongly recommend you get independent professional advice before investing. Under the UK money market funds regulation, the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) is a short-term low volatility net asset value money market fund. You should note that purchasing shares in the PSDF is not the same as making a deposit with a bank or other deposit taking body and is not a guaranteed investment. Although it is intended to maintain a stable net asset value per share (where £1 invested in the PSDF remains equal to £1 in value in the PSDF), there can be no assurance that it will be maintained. The value of the PSDF may be affected by interest rate changes. The PSDF does not rely on external support for guaranteeing the liquidity of the fund or stabilising the net asset value per share. The risk of loss of principal is borne by the shareholder. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results. The value of investments and the income from them may fall as well as rise. You may not get back the amount you originally invested and may lose money. Any forward-looking statements are based on our current opinions, expectations and projections. We may not update or amend these. Actual results could be significantly different than expected. The PSDF is authorised in the United Kingdom and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority as a UK UCITS Scheme and is a Qualifying Money Market Fund. Issued by CCLA Investment Management Limited (registered in England and Wales number 2183088, at One Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB), is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. For information about how we collect and use your personal information please see our privacy notice, which is available at <https://www.ccla.co.uk/our-policies/data-protection-privacy-notice>.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL - BUDGET 2024/25

NOTES TO SUPPORT BUDGET

The Clerk has taken advice from Rialtas about the Town Council's use of EMR.

Currently the Council earmarks a reserve which is then used during the year to undertake various projects or revenue expenditure. This would be better undertaken by setting a revenue budget.

Earmarked reserves are funds set aside for specific projects, initiatives, or expenditures. These reserves allow councils to allocate resources based on their priorities, such as improving infrastructure, investing in community projects, or purchasing new equipment. Putting aside reserves for future projects, or sinking funds for future maintenance of buildings is a prudent planning process. They are not designed for projects like youth work, which should have a revenue budget.

Any unspent budgets at the end of the financial year, can then be transferred into a reserve, rather than the general reserve.

Where there are plans to increase or include a new budget, the following notes should be considered when reviewing the budget which can be found here:

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Cost Centre	Account Code	Budget	Amount	Comments
EARMARKED RESERVES				
EMR	9004	Mossman Centre	£4457	This EMR may be transferred to tenants.
EMR	9003	SE Forum	£17	Transfer to General Reserves
EMR	9005	Town Strategy	0.00	Used to The Haven Works
EMR	9006	Building Fund	£20,000.00	Increase
EMR	9009	Cemetery	0.00	No increase 2024/25. This fund will increase with the income from the 4G mast paid into the EMR.
EMR	9015	Rec Rolling Improvement	0.00	No increase 2024/25
EMR	9017	Streetlights	£10,000	Increase
EMR	9018	Rec MUGA	£10,000	Rename Riverside MUGA
EMR	9020	Est – Office Equipment	£5,000	Increase for new IT equipment e.g. laptops
EMR	9021	Elections	£5,000	Build up reserve
EMR	9022	Comm Leisure Centre	£5,000	Move to General Reserve

EMR	9023	Handyman Role	£8,139.52	Move to salaries budget 601.
EMR	9024	Christmas Lights	£2001.03	The event budget should be a revenue code with any EMR to build up reserve for future lights.
EMR	9029	Clerk of Works A Road	£119.00	Move to General Reserve
EMR	NEW	Arlesey Road MUGA	£10,000	New EMR
RECREATION				
21	203	Electricity	£2,250	New electricity supplier and end of contract
21	206	Maintenance & Repairs	£5000	Increased budget to cope with additional repairs
22	203	Electricity	£30,000	Increase in contract price.
23	New	Income – CR Service Charge	£600	Consider increasing the amount charged to the charity for the administration of the CR allotments
23	206	Allotments Maintenance & Repairs	£1,000	Additional budget for more permanent signage
25	203	Hitchin Road Rec Electricity	£1450	Increase in contract price.
26	203	Brook Street - Electricity	£600	Increase in contract price.
27	206	Open space – maintenance and repairs	£30,000	Increase to £30,000 to consider the match funding for the Pitch Power grant from the FA (£60K)
27	212	Skip Hire	£7,000	Larger skip
27	237	Floral Planting	£3,000	Additional planters in the High Street are planned
28	2006	Agency Grants	0	Should be against cost centre 32 – Verges where the expenditure occurs
33	235	Arlesey Road – Pitch Maintenance	£8,000	Maintenance other than grass cutting e.g. slitting, seeding and Verti drain etc.

BUILDINGS				
51	Simpson Centre			
	With the departure of the library in Spring 2024, it is hard to determine what the budget for this asset is likely to be. Therefore, the Clerk has replicated the budget from last year.			
52	5001	Income Memorial Hall	£16,000	Conservative increase in income
52	508	Gas Memorial Hall	£4000	Increase with new contract
52	509	Electricity Memorial Hall	£2300	Increase with new contact
55	5008	Income GAC	£15,000	Library lease TBC
55	506	Water	£4,000	With the increased use of the kitchen/toilets after the library relocates, this has been increased from £3,000 to £4,000
55	508	Gas	£7,500	Increased from £6000
55	509	Electricity	£18,500	Increased from £17,500. The library and cafe will have its own electricity meters which will be recharged.
CEMETERY				
41	4001	Income – burials	£15,000	Increase from £12,000
41	4006	Income – plot purchase	£10,000	Increase from £8,000
41	409	Tree works	£10,000	Increase from £6,000
ESTABLISHMENT				
61	6004	Income – Interest	£50,000	Increase from new investment
61	601	Staff Salaries	£242,000	Increase in staff salaries for contractual increase. Any restructuring would be additional cost.
61	611	Insurance	£12,000	Increase in insurance premium as STC built assets will be revalued in 2024/25 with increase in insurance premium
61	NEW	Professional Fees	£2,000	New budget line to consider Rialtas EOY shutdown and other professional advice. £2K has been removed from

				subscription/licence budget (618)
61	612	Audit Fees	£3,000	Additional fees for new internal auditor
61	615	Maintenance/IT	£15,000	Cloud based Rialtas, 3 x new laptops and infrastructure: Decisions annual fee
61	618	Subscriptions/Licence	£10,000	Decrease by £2K (see above)
61	New	Vehicle Repayments, fuel, insurance, maintenance	£17,410	New budget items for the running costs of the two vehicles
61	New	Christmas Event	£15,000	New budget line
61	New	Stotfold 50	£50,000	New revenue budget for commemoration of Stotfold 50 Anniversary
61	New	Youth Work	£10,000	This is a new revenue budget for
61	New	Arlesey Road repayment	£4,000	New revenue budget to repay the loan to S106

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL - BUDGET 2024-25

Precept request	£795,300.00
2024/25 Committee Expenditure (see below)	£695,300.00
2024/25 EMR Requirements (see below)	£100,000.00
	£795,300.00

EMR	Opening Balance 01/04/2023	Net Transfers	Closing Balance	Forecast 2023/24	Proposed Increase 2024/25	EMR After Increase	
9002 EMR Working Capital	5,849.97	-1,136.74	4,713.23	4,713.23		4,713.23	
9003 SE Forum	17.00		17.00			17.00	
9004 Mossman	4,457.00		4,457.00			4,457.00	
9005 Town Strategy	9,803.93	-9,803.93	0.00	0.00		0.00	Used for The Haven Works
9006 Building Fund	130,428.00		130,428.00		20,000.00	150,428.00	
9008 Pitch Power Grant	0.00	11,784.00	11,784.00			11,784.00	
9009 Cemetery Projects	242,912.92	6,635.29	249,548.21	259,548.21		249,548.21	Increase from rent for 4G mast
9010 Teasel	450.00		450.00			450.00	
9015 Rec Rolling Improv	57,487.06	28,805.02	86,292.08			86,292.08	
9017 Street Lights	34,890.00	10,000.00	44,890.00		10,000.00	54,890.00	
9018 Riverside Rec MUGA	27,935.03	-26,335.88	1,599.15		10,000.00	11,599.15	
9020 Est Office Equip	4,343.55	3,500.00	7,843.55		5,000.00	12,843.55	
9021 Elections	15,858.00	-220.05	15,637.95		5,000.00	20,637.95	
9022 Comm Leisure Centre	5,000.00		5,000.00			5,000.00	
9023 Handyman Role	8,139.52		8,139.52			8,139.52	
9024 Christmas Lights	807.35	10,000.00	10,807.35	2,001.03	10,000.00	12,001.03	
9025 GAC Sinking Fund	122,735.00		122,735.00		20,000.00	142,735.00	
9026 Youth Work	2,438.00	11,260.00	13,698.00		0.00	13,698.00	
9027 S106 GAC	199,510.00	4,000.00	203,510.00			203,510.00	
9028 S106 Pixbrook	434,385.00		434,385.00			434,385.00	
9029 Clerks of Works A Road	119.00		119.00			119.00	
9030 Riverside Cpk Ext	40,000.00		40,000.00			40,000.00	
9031 S106 Prince Charles Ave	135,000.00		135,000.00			135,000.00	
9032 Treework	1,257.00	10,000.00	11,257.00		10,000.00	21,257.00	
9033 S106 Greenacre Park	827,872.30		827,872.30			827,872.30	
9036 Facilities Team Set Up	0.00	13,710.47	13,710.47			13,710.47	
NEW Arlesey Road MUGA Sinking Fund					10,000.00	10,000.00	
	2,311,695.63	72,198.18	2,383,895.81	266,262.47	100,000.00	2,475,089.49	

Committee Summary	2022/23			2023/24			2024/25		
	2022/23 Income	2022/23 Expenditure	Net Inc over Expenditure	Income Forecast	Expenditure Forecast	Net Inc over Expenditure Forecast	Income	Expenditure	Net Inc over Expenditure
Recreation Summary	£6,788	£186,542	£179,754	£6,515	£166,228	£159,713	£6,615	£140,440	£133,825
Building Management Summary	£38,991	£186,542	£147,551	£15,590	£112,298	£96,708	£40,535	£119,150	£78,615
Cemetery Summary	£45,246	£50,877	£5,631	£26,000	£42,800	£16,800	£31,000	£26,850	£4,150
Establishment Summary	£19,348	£278,887	£259,539	£17,350	£389,302	£371,952	£25,350	£508,360	£483,010
Town Strategy	0	£5,165	£5,165	£0	£4,000	£4,000	£0	£4,000	£4,000
	£110,373	£708,013	£597,640	£65,455	£714,628	£649,173	£103,500	£798,800	£695,300

PRECEPT CALCULATION

	2023/23	2023/24	2024/25
Precept (£)	£638,610	£913,926	£795,300
£ increase		£275,316	-£118,626
Council Tax Base Increase	3569	3674 105	3741 67
Band D	£178.93	£248.76	£212.59
Band D % Increase		£69.82 39.02%	-£36.16 -14.54%
Precept % Increase		43.11	-12.98

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RECREATION

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
Rec Grounds/Lands & Lighting							
<u>21 MUGA</u> (Riverside & Arlesley Road)							
203	Electricity	157	54	1,500	1,446	1,500	2,250
206	Maintenance & Repairs	87	18	1,200	1,182	1,200	5,000
	Total Expenditure	5,641	72	2,700	2,628	2,700	7,250
	Net Exp	5,641	72	2,700	2,628	-72	-2,700
<u>22 Street Lighting</u>							
203	Electricity	18,809	1,206	22,000	20,794	22,000	30,000
206	Maintenance & Repairs	11,185	1,756	20,000	18,244	20,000	20,000
	Total Expenditure	29,994	2,962	42,000	39,038	42,000	50,000
	Net Exp	29,994	2,962	42,000	39,038	42,000	50,000
<u>23 Allotments</u>							
2003	Income - Allotments	2,417	2,485	2,300	-185	2,500	2,000
NEW	Income - CR Service Charge	0	0	0	0	0	600
2011	Income - Common Rd Allots	0	468	0	-468		0
	Total Inc	2,417	2,953	2,300	-653	2,500	2,600
202	Water Rates	812	389	1,000	611	1,000	1,000
206	Maintenance & Repairs	745	628	700	72	700	1,000
226	Pest Control	555	512	650	138	650	750
236	RBS Support Allotments	233	168	600	432	600	600
	Total Exp	2,345	1,697	2,950	1,253	2,950	3,350
	Net Exp over Inc	72	1,256	-650	-1,906	-450	-750

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RECREATION

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
<u>25 Hitchin Road Rec</u>							
202	Water Rates	143	52	500	448	500	500
203	Electricity	538	219	1,000	781	1,000	1,450
231	Bowls Club Grant	266	312	3,650	3,338	3,650	3,650
	Total Exp	947	583	5,150	4,567	5,150	5,600
	Net Exp over Inc	947	583	5,150	4,567	5,150	5,600
<u>26 Brook Street Car Park & Toilet</u>							
201	Car Park Rates	1,060	1,060	1,500	440	1,500	1,500
202	Water Rates	376	108	500	392	500	500
203	Electricity	300	-3	0	3	300	600
206	Maintenance & Repairs	2,916	1,243	2,000	757	2,000	2,000
	Total Exp	4,652	2,408	4,000	1,592	4,300	4,600
	Net Exp over Inc	4,652	2,408	4,000	1,592	4,300	4,600

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RECREATION

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
<u>27 Open Spaces</u>							
2005	Income - Open Spaces	7,288	6,134	6,000	-134	6,000	7,000
	Total Inc	7,288	6,134	6,000	-134	6,000	7,000
205	Legal & ROSPA	440	440	3,500	3,060	3,500	3,500
206	Maintenance & Repairs	37,714	12,750	15,000	2,250	15,000	30,000
207	Landscape/Grass Cutting Contr	40,195	8,690	110,000	101,310	50,000	5,000
209	Lease costs - CBC land	0	0	300	300	300	300
211	River lvel Drainage	19	0	10	10	10	20
212	Skip Hire	6,260	2,080	5,000	2,920	6,000	7,000
213	Subscriptions/Licences	126	0	250	250	250	250
223	Centenary Wood/Teasel	252	1,508	1,500	-8	1,508	1,500
225	Water Meter - The Green	61	18	60	42	60	70
237	Floral Planting	0	0	1,500	1,500	1,500	3,000
	Total Exp	105,288	25,486	137,120	111,634	78,128	50,640
	Net Exp over Inc	98,000	19,352	131,120	111,768	72,128	43,640
<u>28 Agency</u>							
2006	Income - Agency Grants	4,371	0	4,015	2,015	0	0
	Total Exp	4,371	0	4,015	2,015	0	0

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RECREATION

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
<u>32 Verges</u>							
2006	Income - Agency Grants	4,371	0	4,015	4,015	4,015	4,015
	Total Inc	4,371	0	4,015	4,015	4,015	4,015
207	Grass Cutting Contract	23,661	4,272	110,000	105,728	25,000	5,000
	Total Exp	23,661	4,272	110,000	105,728	25,000	5,000
	Net Exp over Inc	19,290	4,272	105,985	101,713	20,985	985
<u>33 Arlesey Road playing field</u>							
201	Rates	0	0	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
232	Utilities	1,643	681	3,500	2,819	3,500	3,500
235	Pitch maintenance	6,500	0	0	0		8,000
	Total Exp	8,143	681	4,500	2,819	4,500	12,500
	Net Exp over Inc	8,143	681	4,500	2,819	4,500	12,500
<u>34 Green Wheel</u>							
233	Green Wheel	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
	Net Exp over Inc	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25

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RECREATION

Rec Grounds/Lands & Lighting Summary

Income	6,788	2,953	6,315	3,362	6,515	6,615
Expenditure	186,542	38,161	313,935	272,774	166,228	140,440
Net Exp over Inc	179,754	35,208	307,620	269,412	159,713	133,825

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BUILDING

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
Buildings Management							
<u>51 SIMPSON CENTRE</u>							
5003	Income - Simpson Centre	4,140	4,570	0	-4,570	-4,570	4,570
5004	Income - library utilities	2,000	0	0	0	2,000	2,000
5005	Income - Library lease	2,565	0	0	0	2,565	2,565
	Total Income	8,705	4,570	0	-4,570	-5	9,135
505	Rates - Simpson	8,483	8,907	8,750	-157	8,750	9,100
507	Water Charges - Simpson	710	197	250	53	750	400
510	Electricity - Simpson	4,228	1,220	2,500	1,280	4,000	4,500
	Total Exp	13,421	10,324	11,500	1,176	13,500	14,000
	Net Exp over Inc	4,716	5,754	11,500	5,746	13,505	4,865
<u>52 MEMORIAL HALL</u>							
5001	Income - Memorial Hall	18,801	10,715	8,000	-2,715	15,000	16,000
	Total Income	18,801	10,715	8,000	-2,715	15,000	16,000
504	Rates Memorial Hall	4,790	4,491	5,100	609	4,491	5,100
506	Water Charges - Memorial Hall	1,214	345	1,500	1,155	1,500	1,600
508	Gas - Memorial Hall	2,185	539	3,500	2,961	3,500	4,000
509	Electricity - Memorial Hall	528	1,192	1,800	608	1,800	2,300
	Total Exp	8,717	6,567	11,900	5,333	11,291	13,000
	Net Exp over Inc	10,084	4,148	-3,900	-8,048	3,709	3,000

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BUILDING

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
<u>53 Buildings General</u>							
512	Maintenance	19,681	3,352	12,000	8,648	12,000	12,000
518	Bin Hire	2,320	1,054	5,000	3,946	5,000	5,250
538	Services Contracts	15,556	6,173	13,000	6,827	15,500	16,000
	Total Exp	59,334	10,579	30,000	19,421	32,500	33,250
	Net Exp over Inc	59,334	10,579	30,000	19,421	32,500	33,250
<u>55 GREEN ACRE CENTRE</u>							
5008	Income	11,136	195	250	55	195	15,000
5009	Income - Solar Panels FIT	349	369	250	-119	400	400
	Total Inc	11,485	564	500	-64	595	15,400
504	Rates	13,224	15,207	14,300	-907	15,207	15,400
506	Water charges	884	213	3,000	2,787	3,000	4,000
508	Gas	3,982	1,590	6,000	4,410	6,000	7,500
509	Electricity	8,889	3,080	15,000	11,920	17,500	18,500
537	Cleaning contract	13,245	5,938	13,000	7,062	13,300	13,500
	Total Exp	40,224	26,028	51,300	25,272	55,007	58,900
	Net Exp over Inc	-28,739	-25,464	-50,800	-25,336	-54,412	-43,500

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BUILDING

	Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
Building Management Summary						
Income	38,991	15,849	8,500	-7,349	15,590	40,535
Expenditure	121,696	53,498	104,700	51,202	112,298	119,150
Net Exp over Income	82,705	37,649	96,200	58,551	96,708	78,615

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CEMETERY

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
CEMETERY							
<u>41 CEMETERY</u>							
4001	Income Burials	19,000	7,925	9,000	1,075	12,000	15,000
4002	Income - Memorials and Plaques	6,031	2,340	4,000	1,660	4,000	4,000
4003	Income - Chapel Lease	2,000	833	2,000	1,167	2,000	2,000
4004	Income - Keys	1,955	0	0	0	0	0
4006	Income - Plot Purchase	16,260	1,525	8,000	6,475	8,000	10,000
	Total Income	45,246	12,623	23,000	10,377	26,000	31,000
401	Rates	5,240	3,144	5,800	2,656	5,800	5,800
402	Wate Rates	106	41	300	259	750	300
404	Maintenance/Repairs Ex Cuts	3,298	415	4,000	3,585	4,000	4,500
405	Grounds Maintenance	25,457	4,687	80,000	75,313	25,000	5,000
408	Pest Control	680	50	650	600	650	650
409	Tree Works	6,038	80	6,000	5,920	6,000	10,000
411	RBS Cem Package	296	377	600	223	600	600
	Total Exp	50,877	8,794	97,350	88,556	42,800	26,850
Cemetery							
	Income	45,246	12,623	23,000	10,377	26,000	31,000
	Expenditure	50,877	8,794	97,350	88,556	42,800	26,850
	Net Exp over Inc	5,631	-3,829	74,350	78,179	16,800	-4,150

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ESTABLISHMENT

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
ESTABLISHMENT							
<u>61 ESTABLISHMENT</u>							
6003	Income Miscellaneous	98	20	50	30	50	50
6004	Income - Interest	19,239	11,375	2,500	-8,875	17,000	25,000
6008	Income - Mayor Event	11	240	0	-240	300	300
	Total Income	19,348	11,635	2,550	-9,085	17,350	25,350
601	Staff Salaries	136,793	85,587	230,000	144,413	230,000	242,000
602	Employers NI	12,861	7,354	34,500	27,146	15,000	20,000
603	ER Pension Cont	36,660	16,157	3,500	-12,657	38,200	40,000
604	Staff Training	4,052	1,809	5,000	3,191	5,000	5,000
605	Clerk's Expenses	261	0	1,500	1,500	500	500
607	Photocopier Costs	559	212	1,000	788	750	750
608	Telephone/Fax/ISDN	3,754	1,880	5,000	3,120	4,000	4,000
609	Postage	481	178	600	422	600	600
610	Stationery	3,856	350	2,500	2,150	2,500	2,750
611	Insurances	7,347	9,002	7,000	-2,002	9,002	12,000
612	Audit Fees	1,850	150	3,000	2,850	1,900	3,000
NEW	Professional Support	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
613	Legal Fees	2,433	0	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
614	Advertising	3,405	937	6,000	5,063	6,000	6,000
615	Maintenance/IT	14,897	4,336	12,000	7,664	12,000	15,000
618	Subscription/Licence	12,879	11,608	12,000	392	12,000	10,000
619	PWLB Loan Repayments	19,520	8,366	20,000	11,634	20,000	20,000
620	Civic Allowance	1,323	276	1,500	1,224	1,500	1,500
621	Bank Charges	529	187	600	413	600	600
627	Travel Expenses	73	74	250	176	250	250
630	Grants	5,650	7,107	15,000	7,893	15,000	15,000
631	Councillor Training/Mileage	89	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
NEW	Vehicle Repayments (S106)	0	0	0	0	0	2,410
NEW	Vehicle Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	5,000
NEW	Vehicle Fuel	0	0	0	0	0	5,000
NEW	Vehicle Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	5,000
NEW	Christmas Event	0	0	0	0	0	15,000

STC Budget 2024-25 V4.xlsx
ESTABLISHMENT

		Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
NEW	Stotfold 50	0	0	0	0	0	50,000
NEW	Youth Work	9,615	3,740	0	-3,740	8,500	15,000
NEW	Arlesey Road Repayments (S106)	0	0	0	0	0	4,000
	Total Exp	278,887	159,310	366,950	207,640	389,302	508,360
	Net Exp over Inc	259,539	147,675	364,400	216,725	371,952	483,010
62 PRECEPT							
6004	Precept	638,610	456,963	913,926	456,963	913,926	795,300
	Total Income	638,610	456,963	913,926	456,963	913,926	795,300
	Net Income	638,610	456,963	913,926	456,963	913,926	795,300

STC Budget 2024-25 V4.xlsx
Town Strategy

	Last Year's Actuals	Actual YTD (mth 6)	Current Annual Budget	Variance	Forecast for 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25
TOWN STRATEGY						
<u>71 TOWN STRATEGY</u>						
701 Town Strategy	5165	0	4000	4000	4000	4000
Total Exp	5,165	0	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT
DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Joint Panel of Accountability and Governance, Practitioners Guide 2023, sets the standards for governance and accounts for smaller authorities. Its membership consists of representatives from NALC and SLCC together with other stakeholders.
- 1.2 The guide is reviewed regularly, and the proper practices outlined in the guidance, should be applied in preparing the AGAR including the internal audit.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - a) Note the Interim Internal Auditor's report and recommend it's adoption by Council.
 - b) Consider reviewing the internal audit provision for the Town Council for 2024 onwards.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Smaller authorities e.g., authorities with a turnover over £25K and less than £6m are required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to 'undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector auditing standards and guidance.'
- 3.2 The Town Council has engaged the services of Julie Betts, the Parish Clerk at Bromham Parish Council as its internal auditor and from initial investigations, they have been undertaking this service since 2018. It is good practice to review the internal auditor on a regular basis.
- 3.3 There is no requirement for the person providing the internal audit service to be professionally qualified, however, essential competencies should be sought from any internal audit service and should include basic bookkeeping experience and accounting processes. Where the authority exceeds £200K, this should include accrual accounting and balance sheets.
- 3.4 As part of the appointment of the internal auditor, the authority should, at least annually, carry out a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit process to assure the authority that standards are being met, and that the work of the internal audit is effective.
- 3.5 The internal auditor should produce an action plan highlighting areas for improvement and development. An action plan should be produced setting out the areas for

improvement required, any proposed remedial actions, the members, or officers responsible for delivering improvement and the deadlines for actions to be completed.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 There is a budget for the internal and external audit provision.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	An effective internal audit provision is a essential part of risk management.
Resources	It is the RFO's responsibility to ensure that the internal audit is effective.
Equalities	N/A
Financial	N/A

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE FOR STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

AUDIT PROGRAMME – 2022/2023 (for accounts year end 31st March 2023)

The Internal Auditor for Stotfold Town Council is required to carry out the tests detailed below in accordance with the suggested approach contained in the 2014 edition of “Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales – A Practitioners Guide”. Where an entry has been made in column 4 the supporting Working Papers are attached. This pro-forma may be used, or report may be given in the Internal Auditor’s own report format.

1st half audit carried out – period 1 April 2022 to 30 Sept 2022 on 26 October 2022

2nd half audit carried out – periodto on (date)

1 Internal Control	2 Tests	3 Initial if Yes	4 W/P Reference	5 Comments
Previous Internal Audit Report	Do the minutes record that Council has considered the Internal Audit Report for the previous year and the matters arising addressed?	Yes		169/22 7 September 2022
Proper bookkeeping	Is the cashbook maintained and up to date?	Yes		
	Is the cashbook arithmetically correct?	Yes		
	Is the cashbook regularly balanced?	Yes		

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Has the Council formally adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations?	Yes		4 May 2022
	Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed?	Yes		4 May 2022
	Have items or services above a de minimis amount been competitively purchased?	Yes		
	Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices and have they been authorised and minuted?	Yes		
	Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Yes		Refund 21 July 2022
	Is Section 137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?	Yes		
Risk Management Arrangements	Does a scan of the minutes identify any unusual activity?	No		All ok

1 Internal Control	2 Tests	3 Initial if Yes	4 W/P Reference	5 Comments
Risk Management Arrangements (contd)	Do the minutes record the Council carrying out an annual risk assessment?	Yes		
	Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	Yes		
	Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	Yes		
Budgetary Controls	Has the Council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?			To be done second half year
	Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to Council?	Yes		

	Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	No		No unexplained variances from budget.
Income Controls	Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Yes		
	Does the precept recorded in the cashbook agree to the District Council's notification?	Yes		
	Are security controls over cash adequate and effective?	Yes		
Petty Cash Procedures	Is all petty cash spent recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts?	Yes		
	Is petty cash expenditure reported to Council?	Yes		
	Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?	Yes		

Payroll Controls	Do salaries paid agree with those approved by Council?	Yes		
	Are other payments to the Clerk reasonable and approved by Council?	Yes		
	Has PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the Council as an employer?	Yes		
Assets Controls	Does the Council keep an Assets Register of all material assets owned?	Yes		
	Is the Register up to date?	Yes		
Bank Reconciliation	Is there a bank reconciliation for each bank account?	Yes		
	Is the bank reconciliation carried out regularly on the receipt of statements?	Yes		
	Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	No		
Year-End Procedures	Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis?	Yes		

	Do accounts agree with the cashbook?	Yes		
	Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?	Yes		
	Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?	Yes		

I confirm that I have no concerns with the Audit and Accounts for Stotfold Council. Thank you to Jo for providing the information required.

Julie Betts
1 November 2022

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT
DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: MOSSMAN EARMARKED RESERVE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council holds an earmarked reserve (EMR) for the Mossman Centre, Cllr Saunders, who represents the Town Council on the management committee, is seeking the release of this EMR to the Guiding Association, who leases the centre from the Town Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the request.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There is currently an EMR held for the Mossman Centre of £4,457.
- 3.2 The Guiding Association is the sole tenant of the Mossman Centre and their lease states that all repairs and redecoration are the responsibility of the tenant including fences.
- 3.3 Cllr Saunders has advised the Clerk that there are some fencing works to be undertaken, along with redecoration to window frames, doors, porch, and toilets. Quotations supplied to the Town Clerk indicate expenditure of over £1,000 for these works to be undertaken.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 The Guiding Association has received grant funding previously.

2022/23	£1500 for play equipment
2015/16	£173.00 for gazebo and storage
2014/2015	£500 for anniversary trip

- 4.2 The Town Council holds this EMR in a separate legacy account with Barclays. The balance as of October 2023 was £4,516.01.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Resources	N/A
Equalities	The Association is open to all girls.
Financial	Would reduce the amount of EMRs held by the Town Council and more accurately reflect the Council's position

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE:	ESTABLISHMENT
DATE:	20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE:	EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT:	EVENTS & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the Clerk's evaluation of lines of reporting within the organisation, it is their recommendation that an Events & Community Committee is established, which reports to the Establishment Committee. This will oversee the Town Council's civic and public events.
- 1.2 Having a separate events committee can lead to more effective, engaging, and well-managed community events while allowing other Committees to focus on other broader responsibilities.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the recommendation that an Events & Community Committee is set up and, if in agreement, review the proposed terms of reference.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Specialised Focus:

An events committee can focus specifically on organizing and managing events, ensuring that these activities receive dedicated attention and expertise. This specialization allows for a more thorough understanding of the intricacies involved in planning successful events.

3.2 Efficiency:

By delegating event-related responsibilities to a dedicated committee, the overall workload of the town council can be better distributed. This can enhance the efficiency of both day-to-day council operations and event planning efforts.

3.3 Expertise and Creativity:

An events committee can bring together individuals with diverse skills and experiences in event planning, marketing, and creative design. This diversity can lead to more innovative and engaging events that cater to the varied interests of the community. This is why it has been suggested that non-Councillors are included in this Committee.

3.4 Resource Allocation:

A separate events committee can focus on securing resources, both financial and logistical, specifically for events. This allows the town council to allocate resources more efficiently, ensuring that events receive the necessary support without affecting other functions.

3.5 Risk Management:

Event planning often involves inherent risks. Having a dedicated committee allows for a more focused approach to risk management, including contingency planning,

security measures, and compliance with Safety Advisory Group policies and procedures.

3.6 Accountability:

Establishing a separate events committee creates a structure for accountability. Members of the committee can be held responsible for the success and outcome of specific events, allowing for a more transparent evaluation of performance. Having a fully constituted Events & Community Committee will have greater transparency than a working party, which does not have to produce publicly accessible notes.

3.7 Feedback Mechanism:

The committee structure provides a formalized feedback mechanism, allowing community members to express their opinions and suggestions for events. This feedback can inform future planning and help in continuously improving the quality of events.

3.8 Community Engagement:

The Committee would also have responsibility for greater community engagement including the promotion of the annual Town Council survey, data capture for an ebulletin, social media enhancements and improvements to the website.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 Any events planned would have their own budget, and the Committee would have delegated powers to spend within that budget.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Great accountability would mean the risk would be better managed
Resources	Some additional staff resource will be required.
Equalities	N/A
Financial	There are budgetary implications.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVENTS AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Membership of Committee

- Four Town Council Members of the Events and Community Committee are established at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council or at its formation (as per Standing Orders);
- Up to two Co-opted members of the public may join during year if authorised by Town Council. These persons do not have a right to vote or to move or second a motion.
- The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council are ex-officio members of all meetings.
- Three members shall constitute a quorum for meetings. If there are insufficient numbers of elected Members then the meeting will continue as a working party, with all recommendations to be ratified by Council.

Frequency of Meetings

Between 4 and 6 six meetings in each full municipal year.

Decision/Delegated Powers

- The committee has delegated powers to deal with all the implementation and management events that are promoted by the Town Council and its partners.
- To consider all aspects relating to planning and hosting of Council events, including health and safety requirements, road closures and notifications to Safety Advisory Group.
- To monitor and review each event.
- The Committee will endeavour to ensure that the Town Council and its committees make decisions, take actions and carry out projects that support the diverse communities within Stotfold.
- The Committee is to deal with day-to-day events related matters; making recommendations to Establishment Committee when required.
- To formulate a budget request for revenue expenditure/capital for the next financial year, ready to recommend to Establishment Committee's November meeting. This includes any charges for events including vendors, funfairs, catering etc.
- The Committee has delegated powers to spend within budget, other requests will be forwarded to the Establishment Committee.
- The Committee is authorised to establish time expired sub-committees and working groups, and to appoint advisers as and when necessary to assist in its work.
- Communication and Consultation, including website, social, surveys.
- Delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk, Democratic & Governance Services Manager, and the Community & Engagement Officer to take decisions on the arrangements for council events.
- To report to the Establishment Committee on the outcome of its deliberations.

Christmas Light I&E Detail

	<u>Year 2022</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Year 2023</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Income				
Donation from Satchell Estate Agent			£750.00	Payment not received yet
Countywide Christmas Tree Donation			£250.00	Received
James Dean Funfair			£300.00	Received
EAT Feast			£280.00	Received
Event day both mulled wine and Calendar sale			£1,341.67	Received
Calendar			£35.00	On going
Donation from local business, ice skate, calendar sale	<u>£6,383.43</u>		<u>£2,956.67</u>	
Expenditure				
Toolstation - Stanley LED Light			-£182.06	Will be used for future events
OceanCreative - Signs for for car park closure			-£108.00	
OceanCreative - Xmas boards			-£300.00	
80 Calendar	-£293.60		-£283.27	
Road Closure- RenTeq Highway			-£2,480.00	
Real Christmas Tree	-£1,370.00		-£1,620.00	2 Trees - GAC and Town Centre
Mulled Wines	-£434.75	Drinks for Xmas quiz night	-£504.20	50% of cost
Christmas Light	-£303.92		-£83.96	
		Refreshments inc tea,		
Mince Pie	-£682.79	mulled wine, minced pies	-£377.65	
Mulled Wine Heaters			-£247.50	Will be used for future events
				Christmas tree lights for future
Christmas Tree Light + Father Xmas gifts	-£162.02		-£229.64	events
				Replaced broken festoon, will be
Christmas Direct - Christmas light for Brook Street car park			-£148.28	used for future events
Terry Seymour -high street Xmas Light Installation	-£3,207.00		-£2,650.00	All TC lights
Plant Scape - Street Xmas Light	-£4,795.00		-£4,375.00	Invoice hasn't been received
St Johns Ambulance - Event day First Aid Cover	-£200.00		-£105.60	Invoice hasn't been received
HTC - Crowd Control Barriers & Cones			-£600.00	Invoice hasn't been received
SFL Mobile Radio - Rent walkie Talkie			-£124.50	Invoice hasn't been received
J.R.Scaffolding - provide & install stage			-£300.00	
Ice Queen - Hire for the switch on event	-£5,030.00			
	<u>-£16,479.08</u>		<u>-£14,719.66</u>	
Total	<u>-£10,095.65</u>		<u>-£8,806.32</u>	

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT
DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: THE HAVEN ADDITIONAL WORKS

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This committee previously released funds for works at The Haven, which facilitated the new location for the town centre Christmas tree.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to consider this report and advise the Clerk how they wish to proceed.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The area in front of The Haven consisted of shrubs, which were maintained by Grand Union's maintenance team.

3.2 The Town Council identified the area as a potential site for a Christmas tree, in the centre of the High Street, and more visible and accessible for all residents. After a time, Grand Union was identified as the owner and they agreed to undertake the works to improve the area, including a socket for the Christmas tree, raised planters and a resin surface.

3.3 The feedback from residents on the Christmas tree's new location has been very positive. There are also plans to have a community garden in the raised beds, which is being investigated by the Recreation Committee.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 The original works were quoted at £20,342.89 plus VAT. The Town Council agreed to pay 50% of the costs. However, there were additional costs for the resin due to a miscalculation on the area to be covered, which has meant that the costs have increased to £33,587.32 plus VAT. 50% of the total cost would be £16,7936.66, an increase of £6,622.21.

4.2 This committee approved the release of the EMRs of £10,171.45. This came from the Town Strategy (£9,808.93) with the remainder from General Reserves. (£362.52).

4.3 General Reserves currently sit at £194,857.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Resources	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Financial	Release of General Reserves

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT
DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: HEALTH & SAFETY AUDIT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council has a subscription with Worknest which offers a variety of streams within the service including SafetyNest, which offers health and safety advice.
- 1.2 In October 2022, the advisor from SafetyNest visited the Town Council and undertook a health and safety audit. There was a total of over 60 recommendations from this audit. The majority of these were medium risk, with five high risk including PAT testing, fixed wiring testing and a lack of risk assessments. Until November 2023, no one was aware of this audit, until SafetyNest made an appointment to review progress on the audit.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - a) Understand their responsibilities to promote a health and safety approach within the organisation.
 - b) Note the progress to date to implement a health and safety system within the organisation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As an employer, the Town Council has the responsibility for health and safety in the workplace and it is normally the Clerk who is responsible for the implementation of this within the organisation. In fact, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, defines the general duties of **everyone** to maintain health and safety within the workplace. In short, everybody is responsible in some part for health and safety.
- 3.2 To fulfil the employer's responsibilities, they should:
 - Carry out risk assessments.
 - Identify who needs protecting from potential hazards.
 - Implement health and safety procedures.
 - Create a health and safety policy.
 - Display the health and safety law poster.
 - Communicate to employees.
 - Provide training and first aid kits.
- 3.3 Breaching H&S legislation is a criminal offence. By not ensuring that employees have a safe working environment, employers can face consequences, including fines and for serious breaches, prison sentences. A work-related illness or injury can put an

employee out of work for a while, impact their quality of life and can damage the organisation's productivity, finances, and reputation.

3.4 Having a health and safety-based ethos in the organisation, also demonstrates to residents that the Town Council safeguards their employees and residents, complies with legislation which demonstrates an ethical governance and responsible decision-making process.

3.5 All staff should have basic training in the following:

- Display Screen Equipment (if applicable)
- Manual Handling
- Working Safely
- Fire safety
- Basic H&S induction including reporting procedures.

3.6 Depending on the nature of the employee's role, more specific training should be available: e.g. Town Rangers – safe methods of operating machinery, maintenance of PPE. All this training needs to be recorded.

3.7 Additional responsibilities for the Town Rangers who drive the Council vehicles is more than compliance with road traffic regulations. The 1974 Act requires employers to take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of their employees and others who may be affected by their activities when at work. This includes when they are driving or riding at work, whether they are in the Council's vehicles or their own.

3.8 This means that all employees who use their own vehicles to attend meetings, should have business use in their insurance which must be provided to the Town Clerk on an annual basis. Employees using the Council vehicles, must provide details of their driving licences. There should be a record of regular vehicle inspections.

4. IMPLEMENTING A HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEM IN THE WORKPLACE

4.1 This means creating an environment where employees actively prioritise and participate to maintain health and safety. This is undertaken by:

- Demonstrating the commitment to health and safety from Councillors, through the Town Clerk
- Allocating resources and time to establish and maintain a strong H&S culture.
- Communicating the importance of H&S to all employees
- Encouraging open communication channels for reporting hazards, incidents and near misses.
- Providing comprehensive training on health and safety procedures.
- Ensuring employees understand the potential risks associated with their tasks.
- Involving employees with development of health and safety policies and procedures.
- Encouraging employees to participate in safety committees or teams.
- Developing and communicate safety policies and procedures.
- Regularly reviewing and update policies to reflect changes in the workplace.
- Providing necessary safety equipment and resources for employees
- Investigating incidents thoroughly and implement corrective actions.
- Conducting regular audits and inspections to identify potential hazards.
- Using audits to evaluate the effectiveness of safety measures in place.
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement in health and safety

- Soliciting feedback from employees and use to refine processes.
- Recognising the impact of stress and fatigue on safety
- Encouraging a healthy work/life balance to prevent burnout.
- Establishing and communicate emergency procedures.
- Conducting regular drills to ensure employees are familiar with emergency procedures.

4.2 The Town Clerk has allocated some of the tasks contained in the H&S audit to other officers who have responsibility for the Town Rangers or building management. The remaining actions have been allocated to the Town Clerk as the person responsible for H&S within the organisation.

4.3 Some of the most urgent items contained in the original audit have already been completed:

- DSE Risk Assessment for each employee using screens.
- Portable Appliance Testing
- H&S Policy distributed to all employees who have signed a disclaimer to show that they have read and understood the contents.
- H&S is a standing item on the Team Meeting agenda with any H&S issues raised and reported.
- Rubbish and debris removed from plant room.

4.4 An excel spreadsheet with the full results of the H&S audit can be found here:

[Health and Safety Audit Oct 2022.xlsx](#)

4.5 The w/c 22 January 2024 has been identified as Health and Safety Week, where the outstanding actions contained within the audit will be undertaken, risk assessments prepared, inventories drawn up etc.

5. FINANCIAL

5.1 There are financial implications in the implementation of a health and safety in the organisation. This can range from PPE for the Town Rangers, legionella testing for premises or PAT testing.

5.2 There should be sufficient budgets to ensure that these actions can be implemented, and that training can be undertaken.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	An efficient health and safety system reduces the risk to the organisation
Resources	All employees are responsible for health and safety; however, a nominated person should have overall responsibility.
Equalities	N/A
Financial	Sufficient budgets should be in place for all H&S procedures to be implemented including an adequate training budget.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE:	ESTABLISHMENT
DATE:	20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE:	EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT:	CO-OPTION POLICY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following a review of Standing Orders, the Town Clerk has been asked to investigate a Co-Option Policy to be considered for adoption.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the attached proposed policy, and if in agreement, recommend its adoption to Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Having a co-option policy is not a failure of the democratic process, but rather a positive tool that can help councils address shortfalls or imbalances in their member. Co-opting members can help ensure that the Council has a mix of Councillors drawn from various backgrounds who are capable, enthusiastic, and engaged in reflecting on their communities.
- 3.2 This co-option policy has been based on proforma policies available from SLCC and from NALC's Legal Topic Note 8, Elections and Co-Option, in addition to best practice from other town councils.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	A robust policy ensures that the Town Council co-opts in an effective manner, reducing the risk to the Council's reputation.
Resources	N/A
Equalities	Having an efficient policy and ensures that the process is open to all residents.
Financial	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

CO-OPTION POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The normal process for filling a casual vacancy is election by the local electorate at a by-election. Co-option is the process by which the Town Council selects a new Councillor, rather than a by-election taking place.
- 1.2 There are two circumstances under which the Town Council may proceed to fill a casual vacancy by co-option:
 - When a seat has been left vacant because no eligible candidate stood for election at the ordinary elections for a new council (currently every four years).
 - When a seat falls vacant but the required ten electors of the relevant ward have not called for a poll (by-election) within the legally specified time period following publication of the notice of vacancy (see section 2 below).
- 1.3 If the period of vacancy has six or more months to run until the next ordinary election, the Town Council must use the co-option process, as soon as practicably possible. If the next ordinary election is within six months, the Town Council does not have to co-opt.
- 1.4 The Town Council is not obliged to select anyone from the candidates who apply in the co-option process; if the process is unsuccessful (whether through lack of or no suitable candidates which achieve a majority vote) then the Town Council will rerun the co-option process, subject to the timescales at 1.3 above.
- 1.5 The Town Council will manage the process of co-option itself, with this policy outlining the procedure to be followed by the Town Council when co-option is considered, to ensure a fair and transparent process is undertaken.

2. Timeline of a Casual Vacancy Occurring

- 2.1 Upon learning of a casual vacancy from a seat falling vacant (through the disqualification, resignation, or death of a councillor, for example), the Town Clerk will notify Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) Electoral Services Department of the vacancy.
- 2.2 CBC will advertise the vacancy and require the Town Council to make sure the notice of a casual vacancy is shared in conspicuous places. The Town Council meets this requirement by displaying the notice on its noticeboards, social media, and website.
- 2.3 A legal timeframe of fourteen days is assigned, from the date of the notice, for ten or more electors in the relevant town ward with the vacancy to contact the Returning Officer requesting that a poll (by-election) be held. If this occurs, the District Council will issue a notice of poll and manage the by-election process accordingly.

- 2.4 If the requirements at 2.3 are not met and a poll is not requested by ten or more electors, Central Bedfordshire will notify the Town Council that the casual vacancy may be filled by co-option.
- 2.5 As alluded to at 1.2 and 2.1, the other way in which a casual vacancy can occur (rather than by a seat falling vacant), is from the lack of eligible candidates at ordinary elections. In this case, Central Bedfordshire's Elections Department would notify the Town Council immediately after the results of the ordinary elections are known that co-option can take place.
- 2.6 As per 1.3 above, where there is six months or more until the next ordinary election, the Town Council will follow the process set out within this policy document upon notification that co-option can take place.
- 2.7 If co-option is not used to fill a vacancy due to there being less than six months to the ordinary election, that seat will be filled as usual in the ordinary election process.

3. Advertisement Process

- 3.1 Although seeking 'expressions of interest' is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.
- 3.2 On receipt of written notice from Central Bedfordshire (the local electoral authority) that a casual vacancy may be filled by means of co-option (see section 2 above):
- The Town Clerk will advise the Mayor and Council of the vacancy to be filled by co-option before ensuring this is advertised.
 - The co-option advertisement will include the closing date for requests for consideration (fourteen days after the date of the advertisement) and the number of vacancies, and the meeting date when the co-option will be held. This will be shared on the Town Council's website, social media platforms and noticeboards.
- 3.3 Councillors may point out the vacancies and the process to any qualifying candidate(s). Candidates found to be offering inducements of any kind will be excluded from the process.

4. Application Process

- 4.1 Applicants for a vacancy will be asked to:
- Confirm their eligibility for the position of councillor within the statutory rules and that they are not disqualified from standing. A copy of the criteria is set out within the Councillor Casual Vacancy Application Form.
 - Submit information about themselves by completing a Councillor Co-option Application Form (see Appendix A), including a description of their interest in becoming a councillor and specifying any skills or qualifications which may benefit the Town Council.

5. Decision-Making Process

- 5.1 Copies of all applications will be circulated, via agenda, to all Councillors by the Town Clerk at least three clear working days prior to the Full Council meeting where the co-option will be considered. The applications will be treated by the Town Clerk and Councillors as strictly confidential. GDPR will be adhered with personal details being redacted.
- 5.2 The co-option process will be determined in a public session of the Town Council.
- 5.3 Councillors are bound to declare a prejudicial interest if they or a member of their family or close associate are related to or have a close relationship to an individual candidate. If a Councillor is uncertain of whether an interest is declarable, they can seek the advice of the Town Clerk ahead of the meeting. If a dispensation is requested and not granted, the Councillor will have to withdraw from the meeting for the co-option item of the agenda.
- 5.4 A candidate can only be elected by co-option following a majority vote of Full Council. A majority vote is a majority of the total number of Councillors present at the meeting e.g., if there are 15 councillors voting, the majority would be 8 votes.
- 5.5 Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled. Voting is by a show of hands.
- 5.6 Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons have 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 any one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.
- 5.7 Where the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, the candidates shall be appointed to the Council if they meet the eligibility criteria.

6. Successful Co-option – Next Steps

- 6.1 Successfully co-opted candidates become Councillors in their own right, with immediate effect (subject to the signing of the declaration of acceptance of office).
- 6.2 The co-opted members will be asked to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before or at the first meeting of the Town Council after their election and to agree to be bound by the Town Council's adopted Code of Conduct. They may then take their seat at the Town Council and will have the ability to be appointed to committees and/or become a representative to local organisations.
- 6.3 The Register of Members Interests form must be completed within 28 days of election and sent to Central Bedfordshire's Monitoring Officer.
- 6.4 Any newly co-opted members will be provided with a welcome pack and invited to attend an induction session with officers. This should take place, where possible, before the next Full Council meeting.

Revision History

Date	Comments
20/12/23	Policy devised on NALC and SLCC best practice.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE:	ESTABLISHMENT
DATE:	20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE:	EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT:	STAFF HANDBOOK

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A staff handbook, also known as an employee handbook, serves as a crucial document for an organisation. A proforma handbook has been developed via Worknest for adoption by the Town Council. The policies contained in it are industry standards including statutory leave entitlement; and policies such as grievance and disciplinary are based on ACAS guidance.
- 1.2 It is a valuable tool for promoting transparency, consistency, and legal compliance. It serves as a reference guide for employees and contributes to a positive and well-organized workplace culture.
- 1.3 In addition, it can be regularly updated, unlike staff contracts of employment, which must be amended with the agreement of both parties.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - a) Clarify the points outlined in item 4 below.
 - b) Note the distribution of the staff handbook to all employees.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Having a comprehensive, and well written staff handbook is beneficial to any organisation:
 - a) **Communication of Policies and Expectations:**

A handbook provides a centralized and comprehensive source for employees to understand company policies, procedures, and expectations. It helps ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding what is acceptable behaviour and conduct within the organization.
 - b) **Legal Protection:**

A well-drafted handbook can serve as a legal document that outlines the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and employees. This can be particularly important in areas such as anti-discrimination policies and grievance procedures, helping to protect the organisation from potential legal issues.
 - c) **Consistency in Enforcement:**

A handbook helps in maintaining consistency in the application of policies across all employees. It ensures that rules and regulations are applied uniformly, reducing the risk of favouritism or discrimination.

- d) Employee Orientation and Onboarding:**
New employees can use the handbook as a valuable resource during their onboarding process. It provides them with essential information about the company culture, policies, benefits, and procedures, helping them integrate into the organization more smoothly.
- e) Reference Guide:**
The handbook serves as a quick reference guide for employees to find information about various company policies without having to consult the Town Clerk or their line manager every time they have a question.
- f) Changes and Updates:**
As policies evolve or new regulations come into effect, the handbook can be updated to reflect these changes. This ensures that employees are aware of the latest information and any modifications to company policies.
- g) Risk Mitigation:**
By clearly communicating policies and procedures, a handbook can help mitigate the risk of misunderstandings and conflicts between employees and the organisation. It establishes a transparent framework for addressing issues and resolving disputes.
- h) Professionalism and Image:**
A well-structured and comprehensive staff handbook contributes to the overall professionalism of the organization. It reflects a commitment to transparency, fairness, and a positive work environment, which can enhance the company's image both internally and externally.

4. BESPOKE POLICIES

4.1 The staff handbook can be viewed with the following link:

[Employee Handbook November 2022.docx](#)

4.2 Member's comments on the following are sought:

Page 6	Ethical Conduct – Gifts and Hospitality	A de minimus for gift and hospitality. Suggested amount of £25.
Page 9	Dress Code	Do Members want to introduce a dress code?
Page 15	Drug and Alcohol	Do Members want to consider drug and alcohol testing? Officers have access to company vehicles and operate machinery.
Page 20	Sickness Absence	Please confirm the length of time off sick before OH is requested.
Page 22	Jury Service	Paid or Unpaid?
Page 22	Compassionate/ Bereavement Leave	Do Members want to specify the relationship for compassionate/bereavement leave? Paid or Unpaid?
Page 24	Annual Leave	Staff are allowed to carry over 5 days into the next leave year. This should be restricted, with the 5 days taken before the end of May.
Page 33	Homeworking	This has been included to allow staff to work flexibly at home. Do Members wish to comment

		on the proportion of time spent working from home.
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5. FINANCIAL

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Having clear and concise policies reduced the risk of potential legal challenges
Resources	Resource for all staff.
Equalities	N/A
Financial	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: ESTABLISHMENT
DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2023
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: STAFF SALARY INCREASE 2023/24

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Town Council staff salaries are in line with the National Joint Council's salary scales. This means that any cost-of-living increase has to be negotiated in conjunction with NJC unions, who ballot their members on any negotiated salary increases.
- 1.2 It took 7 months for the relevant stakeholders to reach agreement on the salary increase for 2023/24 which has now been calculated and paid as back pay to all staff.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 2 November 2023, the bodies who agree the NJC salary increase reached a settlement on the pay award for 2023/24.
- 3.2 It was a flat increase of £1,925 for salary scale points up to SCP 43 and from SCP 44 and above, an increase of 3.88%.
- 3.3 Salary scales have been reviewed and a back dated pay award from 1 April 2023 was paid in staff salaries in November 2023. Any former employees will also be paid back pay along with any implications for pension payments.
- 3.4 Any increase in salary scales, will be following satisfactory performance management and will take effect from 1 April 2024.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There is an existing staff salary budget.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Resources	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Financial	Met from existing budgets.

ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Description	Responsible Officer	Neccessity
24/01/2023	Training and Development Policy	To recive a policy for the training and development of Councillors and Staff for consideration	Town Clerk	N/A
	Business Continuity Plan	To consider adopting a Business Continuity Plan	Town Clerk	Risk Management
	Procedure for Dispensations	To consider adopting a procedure for the granting of dispensations	Town Clerk	Internal Control
	First Aiders & Fire Wardens	To consider a remuneration to staff undertaking these roles	Town Clerk	Internal Control
	Decisions Software	To consider the implementation of Decisions Software for productivity	Town Clerk	N/A
	Procedure for Dispensations	To receive a policy for the granting of dispensations	Town Clerk	Governance
	TOIL Policy	To reconsider the introduction of TOIL to manage staff hours	Town Clerk	Resource Manangement
27/03/2024	Business Continuity Plan	To consider a proposed Business Continuity Plan for adoption by Council	Town Clerk	Risk Management
	Grant applications	To consider any grant applications received	Town Clerk	Internal Control