



**HAYWARDS HEATH
TOWN COUNCIL**

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11th November 2024

To all Councillors on the Policy and Finance Committee and others for information

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the **Policy and Finance Committee** to be held on **Monday 18th November 2024** at **7.00pm** at the Town Hall in the Council Chamber when the following business will be transacted.

Yours Sincerely
Steven Trice
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence.
2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 17th September 2024. (Pages 3 - 6)
3. To note Substitutes.
4. Public Forum - *Members of the public are invited to ask questions or raise issues which are relevant and are the concern of this Council. A period of 15 minutes is allocated for this purpose. Notice of intention to address Council should be given to the Clerk by noon of the day of the meeting.*
5. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda.
6. To receive and consider the lists of receipts and payments, and income and expenditure report for the period to 31st August 2024. (page 7 and separate documents)
7. To confirm bank balances and bank reconciliation statements as at 31st August 2024. (Page 8 and separate documents)
8. To consider the Town Councils Grants. (pages 9-17)
9. To consider making a request to Mid Sussex District Council in relation to Governance Arrangements in Haywards Heath. (18-20)
10. To receive a To consider charges for the Town Hall, Allotment Rents and Burial Charges for the 2025/2026 financial year. (21-26).
11. To receive an update on financial matters relating to the Council undertaken by delegated authority. (Report to follow no decisions required)
12. To consider for adoption a Town Council Investment Policy. (pages 28-30)

13. To receive a recommendation from the Environment and General Committee in relation to the introduction of a grants fund for third party Community Events. (pages 31-33)
14. To note a representation made to West Sussex County Council on the development of the proposed at Hurst Farm. (pages 34-37)
15. To consider the Government consultation regarding the ability of Town/Parish Councils to hold remote meeting. (pages 38-42)
16. To consider any items that the Chairman agrees to take as urgent business.

Committee Members: Policy & Finance Committee: AM Cooke (Chair), S Walsh (Vice Chair), A. Bashar, AM. Lucraft, P. Lucraft, A. Murray A. Rees.

*'During this meeting the public are allowed to film the Committee and officers only from the front of the public gallery, providing it does not disrupt the meeting. **Any items in the Exempt Part of the agenda cannot be filmed.** If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) filming must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.'*

Town Mayor Cllr Stephanie Inglesfield

Town Clerk Mr Steven Trice

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17th September 2024

A.M Cooke (*Chairman*)
S. Walsh (*Vice Chairman*)
A. Bashar
P. Lucraft
A.M Lucraft
A. Murray **
A. Rees

* Absent ** Apologies

Also present: Town Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO),
Committee Clerk

20. Apologies

Member	Reason
Cllr Murray	Work commitment

21. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 24th June 2024 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

22. Substitutes

None.

23. Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

24. Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary or other interests.

25. To receive and consider the lists of receipts and payments, and income and expenditure for the period to 31st May 2024.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) presented the period to 31st May 2024. Cllr P Lucraft asked the RFO if the interest received could be tracked and presented to members, the agreed to prepare and share a month-by-month list via email. Without further comment:

Members **RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to approve the lists of payments and receipts, and income and expenditure for the period to 31st May 2024.**

26. To confirm bank balances and bank reconciliation statements as at 31st May 2024.

The RFO advised that all bank reconciliations were up to date. Cllr AM Cooke advised she would like to set up a meeting to discuss spending options of Councillor ward budgets.

Cllr S Walsh queried the GDPR budget line, the Clerk advised this was an ongoing cost to GDPR Info Ltd who are responsible for maintaining the Town Councils GDPR services and handling any Freedom of Information requests the council may receive. Without further comment;

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to approve the bank balances and the reconciliation statement as at 31st May 2024.

27. To consider applications for Town Council Grants.

Members noted the remaining 2024/2025 budget of £7742.00

Each grant application was discussed individually.

Members **RESOLVED** to award;

1. **A grant of £500 to Family support Work towards running costs.**
2. **A grant of £750 to Kangaroos Mid Sussex to help fund a Festive Fair.**
3. **A grant of £500 to Air Ambulance Kent/Surrey/Sussex towards running costs.**
4. **It was proposed by Cllr P Lucraft 2nd by Cllr AM Lucraft and agreed by all to grant £100 to Cuckfield Evening Flower Club towards running costs.**
5. **A grant of £250 to Coro Nuovo towards running costs.**
6. **A grant of £500 to Lindfield Bonfire Society towards running costs,** Members ask that the society advertise the HHTC Logo on their Bonfire Programme.
7. **A grant of £500 to Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity toward running costs.**
8. **A grant of £500 to 4Sight Vision Support toward running costs.**
9. **A grant of £500 to Mid Sussex Radio towards running costs.**

28. To undertake a review of the councils Financial Regulations

The Clerk referred to his report. As reported to the Annual Full Council Meeting the new National Association of Local Council (NALC) Model Financial Regulations were published in May 2024, which was too late to be presented to the Council. Therefore, it was noted that they would be presented to the Committee during the Council year. The Clerks report presents the Model Financial Regulations set against the Council's existing set. A short discussion took place, which acknowledged that the Model Financial Regulations do not necessarily fit the needs of larger Town Council so those currently in place that had been tried and tested, without question by the Auditors, be kept with the addition of the statutory clauses included in the Model Regulations, with all in favour.

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council the re-adoption of the Town Councils exiting financial regulations with the addition of the statutory clauses as presented in Appendix 1 be included/reworded in the document.

29. To receive and note the External Audit Report and Certificate 2024

Members welcomed the report and thanked the RFO for his work.

Members **RESOLVED** to note and formally agree the report of the External Auditor for the year ended 31st May 2024

30. To consider the review and adoption of the Town Councils Equality and Diversity Policy

Cllr AM Cooke thanked the Town Clerk for producing the policy and without comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Equality and Diversity Policy 2024 - 2028.

31. Urgent Items

Cllr AM Cooke thanked the Committee Clerk for her work over the past 8 months and wished her well in her new role.

It was advised that the Citizens Advice Bureau were facing some IT infrastructure issues, the Clerk will reach out to the Bureau.

The idea of the Town Council hosting a craft fair at the Town Hall was raised, officers will investigate this and take to a future E & GP Committee meeting.

It was noted that a legal challenge had been raised against the Town Council at considerable cost. Members noted this and noted the payment would be found in future payment listings.

The meeting closed at 20.11 pm.

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk

Date: 18th November

Subject: Lists of payments and receipts, Income & Expenditure for the period 1st June - 31st August 2024.

Please see associated documents;

ITEM 6 - P and F 18/11/24 - FINANCIAL REPORTS PACK – 01 JUNE 2024 TO 31 AUGUST 2024

ITEM 7

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk

Date: 18th November

Subject: To Confirm Bank Balances and the Bank Reconciliation Statements as at 31st August 2024

Please see financial pack for documents;

ITEM 7 - P and F 18/11//24 - FINANCIAL REPORTS PACK – 31st AUGUST 2024

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Committee Clerk
Date: 18th November 2024
Subject: Grant Applications

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is to present for consideration grant applications made by third party organisations.

Summary:

2. Members will find attached nine grant applications as laid out in Appendix 1-6 of this report.

Recommendation(s):

Members are asked to consider the recommendation for four grant applications, the summary of which is attached as Appendix 1-6 of this report and decide on the level of funding to allocate.

Background:

3. The Town Council allocates monies on an annual basis to enable the award of grants to third party organisations that endeavor to enhance the well-being of the local community.
4. The ethos of the grants provided by this Council is for 'pump priming' in the context of enabling the applicants to lever in monies from other organisations, grant-giving charities and national schemes.
5. The grant criteria provides for grants to be made for one off purchases and in some instances running costs. There is also funding for capital costs and new initiatives.
6. It is asked that Members note that grants are made using the free resource (S.137 Local Government Act 1972) which talks about benefitting the area or groups of individuals – not an individual. Therefore, there is no power to grant to an individual. The Clerk has noted that this has happened in the past and would suggest until another mechanism is found the Council do not grant to an individual in the future.

Financial Implications

7. The budget for Grants and Subsidies for the financial year 2024/25 is £10,000, of which £6,358.00, has been allocated or spent, leaving a balance of £3,642 to be allocated. Members will note that the total amounts of grants requested outweigh the total funds available. ***Where Members should consider each grant on their merits and not presume full award will be made before the meeting, coupled with the fact that there are two meetings left in the Council year, it may be appropriate to increase the budget from unrestricted reserves. Members views are sought.***

Legal Implications

8. Further to the section 137 legislation, the Town Council can make a grant under the General Power of Competence, which the Town Council meets the criteria of as exercised and resolved at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council dated 15th May 2023 under minute 20.

Grant Applications

Organisation	Grant Amount Requested	Reason
Waves Music Therapy	£1000	Start up – New music therapy
Mid Sussex Active	£1000	Start up – School sports training
Home-Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex	£500	Running costs
Ensemble Reza	£500	Running costs – Free local concerts
Haywards Heath Foodbank	£500	One off costs – Baby mattresses
Haywards Heath Town Team	£500	Running costs – 2025 Bike Ride
Total cost	£4000	

Grant Application

Appendix 1

Organisation: Waves Music Therapy

Total Project Cost: £1,000

Funding Category: Start- Up Grants

Grant Requested: £1,000

Purpose of Grant: Music therapy project at Warden Park Primary Academy

Breakdown of costs:

Item	Total cost	Amount requested
Clinical music therapy sessions		£1,000
Total	£6,300	£1,000

Information:

Waves Music Therapy was set up as a CIC in 2013 before becoming a registered charity in 2021. The charity provides clinical music therapy for children, young people and adults with complex needs including; social, emotional and mental health challenges and learning difficulties. Their HCPC-registered therapists and experienced practitioners use music as a therapeutic tool to improve emotion wellbeing, communication and resilience. Waves offers 1:1 sessions and group sessions in schools, residential care and community settings, as well as community workshops and projects. In 2023-24 Waves supported over 1500 people. 8% of these people live in Haywards Heath.

Waves Music therapy has, through their Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO), identified the need for a new music therapy project at Warden Park Primary Academy, where 18% of pupils are on the special education needs register and 5% have an Education, Health and Care plan, and is therefore seeking a grant to set up a new musical therapy project at the Academy. The project will provide music therapy to help students improve emotional wellbeing, communication and confidence through creative expression. The wider community will also benefit as improvements in these children's emotional and social development can lead to better engagement with peers, families and teachers.

The project involves creating a half day post at Warden Park for the remainder of the academic year. The total cost of this project is £6,300. A grant of £1,000 is requested to begin the pilot project. This will pay for 3 children to have sessions from November to January and allow Waves to secure further funding during this time. Clinical music therapy sessions cost £60 per session which includes: clinical contact time, travel, supervision, reports and referrals.

Website Link: www.wavesmusictherapy.com

Previous grants awarded:

Waves Music Therapy has not requested any council grants previously.

Other funding sought:

Waves have stated that, as custodians of The Toby Project, a legacy fund which supports children and young people, if they can run this pilot project, they will be able to approach the board about continued funding of the project from February 2025. They have previously received funding from; the National Lottery, D'Oyly Carte and Comic Relief. Additionally, they have several corporate sponsors and have bids pending with Childwick Trust and Youth Music.

Recommendation: It is recommended that a grant award of this value would be in line with the council's grant guidance notes and criteria.

Grant Application**Appendix 2****Organisation:** Midsussex Active**Total Project Cost:** £4,000**Funding Category:** Start- Up Grants**Grant Requested:** £1,000**Purpose of Grant:** Primary schools sports training**Breakdown of costs:**

Item	Total cost	Amount requested
Staffing costs		£600
Equipment costs		£300
Log books and certificates		£100
Total		£1,000 Start-Up

Information:

Mid Sussex Active (MSA), a not for profit organisation, supports schools in a multitude of ways, including; Provision of competitions and festivals, professional development, the training and co-ordination of sports leaders and volunteers and expanding the sporting opportunities for all, both in schools and the local community. Currently working with 42 schools, they have an impact on almost 15,000 young people each year, with 30% of their users being in Haywards Heath.

MSA would like to expand their existing primary school sports training program with a new project taking in 14 schools in Haywards Heath and surrounding villages. The project will involve direct training for 150 children, including resources and equipment, who will in turn implement activities and sessions in their own primary schools, running events for their peers. Alongside the physical benefit, which directly links to the government initiative to ensure children are active for 60 minutes a day, this training program aims to increase confidence and provide positive leadership experiences.

Website Link: www.midsussexactive.org.uk**Grants awarded since 2019/20 Financial Year:**

Year of application	Grant awarded	Purpose of grant
2020	£750	Inclusive sports projects
2021	£500	Training sports leaders in schools

Other funding sought:

The project will cost £4,000 in total and MSA are requesting a grant for £1,000. This covers the cost of staffing, equipment and resources. MSA aims to part fund the remaining costs via schools' subscriptions and sponsorship from external leisure suppliers.

Recommendation: It is recommended that a grant award of this value would be in line with the council's grant guidance notes and criteria.

Grant Application

Appendix 3

Organisation: Home-Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex

Total Project Cost: £267,895

Funding Category: Running costs

Grant Requested: £500

Purpose of Grant: Continued provision of one to one support for local families

Breakdown of costs:

Item	Total cost	Amount requested
Salaries	£190,739	
National Insurance and Pension	£22,998	
Staff Training, Development and Other Costs	£650	
Staff Travel	£3,500	
Volunteer Expenses, Training and Recruitment	£3,750	
Other Family Support Costs	£1,700	
Family Group Expenses	£9,752	
Offices and Premises Rent	£10,596	
Office Costs	£13,972	
Legal and Professional Fees	£4,736	
Fundraising and Marketing	£1,000	
Home-Start Membership Levy	£4,502	
Total	£267,895	£500 Running Costs

Information:

Home-Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex (CHAMS) was formed in 1998. They are dedicated to giving vulnerable young children, under the age of 5, the best possible start in life. They provide emotional and practical support to disadvantaged families, within the family home and weekly groups dealing with issues such as isolation, new parents, toddlers and multiple births.

In Haywards Heath, Home-Start CHAMS currently offer their home visiting, one to one support service which is provided by volunteers who have undertaken comprehensive training and are closely supervised by paid staff. The volunteers visit the families each week to offer non-judgemental, emotional, and practical support with the focus on the early development needs of young children to ensure that, regardless of their circumstances, they are given the best possible start in life. CHAMS work with parents who are facing issues such as isolation, neglect, financial hardship, illness, disability, bereavement, or multiple births. The volunteers provide friendship and support, helping families deal with their issues, so that parents can cope on their own and provide a secure start in life for their children. They are currently supporting 2 families in Haywards Heath, with an aim to support at least 5 families over the year. Last year, they supported 2 families. In 2022-23, they supported 7 families in Haywards Heath, in 2021-22 4 families were supported.

Website Link: www.homestartchams.org.uk

Grants awarded since 2019/20 Financial Year:

Year of application	Grant awarded	Purpose of grant
2022	£250	Support for a family in Haywards Heath
2023	£500	Running costs

Other funding sought:

To cover their ongoing costs Home-Start have secured funds from: Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Grand Duo, Children In Need, Ernest Kleinwort, Garfield and Weston, the Albert Hunt Trust, the Longley Trust, the Lindsey Foundation, Sandra Charitable Trust, the National Lottery Community Fund, St James' Place, the Shanly Foundation and Holliday Charitable Trust, as well as through fundraising events and donations. They have bids pending with Burgess Hill Town Council and North Horsham Parish Council.

Recommendation: It is recommended that a grant award of this value would be in line with the council's grant guidance notes and criteria.

Grant Application

Appendix 4

Organisation: Ensemble Reza

Total Project Cost: £5,425

Funding Category: Running costs

Grant Requested: £500

Purpose of Grant: Running costs of 7 monthly lunch time concerts, Jan-July 2025

Breakdown of costs:

Item	Total cost	Amount requested
Musicians fees (£150 x3, x 7 concerts)	£3,150	
Venue hire (£75 x7)	£525	
Project managing (Marketing, running concerts, evaluation) (£250 x7)	£1,750	£500
Total	£5,425	£500 Running Costs

Information:

Ensemble Reza is a Sussex-based group of string players, committed to making music accessible to all, bringing different ages and backgrounds together. Over the past decade they have created a unique programme of local community events including: Evening concerts, community workshops, performances at The Hawth, educational programmes and free lunch time concerts. These concerts have regularly taken place in Haywards Heath.

Ensemble Reza is planning a series of 7 monthly free lunchtime concerts at Haywards Heath Methodist Church from January to July 2025. These informal, friendly, free concerts bring together the community including: school groups, children and adults with additional needs, the retired and the elderly, providing a positive atmosphere where people can connect, learn and participate - a benefit to the local community.

Ensemble Reza has calculated the costs of running these 7 concerts, including: Musicians fees, venue hire, marketing and project management as £5,425. They are requesting a grant of £500 to go towards these costs.

Website Link: www.ensemblereza.com

Grants awarded since 2019/20 Financial Year:

Year of application	Grant awarded	Purpose of grant
2019	250	Running costs – Wellbeing concert

Other funding sought:

In addition to this grant application, £2,125 has been raised towards the cost by Friends of Ensemble Reza via donations. Based on previous concerts, Ensemble Reza also hope to raise around £2,800 (£400 x7 concerts) towards costs.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that a grant award of this value would be in line with the council's grant guidance notes and criteria.

Grant Application**Appendix 5****Organisation:** Haywards Heath Foodbank**Total Project Cost:** Ongoing, Unlimited**Funding Category:** One Off Costs**Grant Requested:** £500**Purpose of Grant:** To continue providing Babybank Support services**Breakdown of costs:**

Item	Total cost	Amount requested
Babybank Moses Basket mattresses	-	
Total	£Unlimited	£500 one off cost

Information:

Since 2012, Haywards Heath Foodbank, a registered charity has worked to provide emergency food and support to any local people in crisis. As well as providing food, Haywards Heath Foodbank also provides a Babybank service. In addition to nappies, food, formula and baby toiletries they provide a wide range of baby items; cots, Moses baskets, bedding, clothes for babies and children up to age 3, pushchairs, stairgates and highchairs.

With a continued, growing demand for their services, the Foodbank have identified an issue regarding baby mattresses. While they can provide Moses baskets, both new and pre-loved, the mattresses for these baskets cannot be reused and recycled. This means a brand new mattress must be provided with every Moses basket. These mattresses provide support to those with young babies. Each mattress retails at £16-£40. The grant money is requested for the Foodbank to purchase these mattresses, so that their own money can be freed up to purchase food.

Website: www.haywardsheath.foodbank.org.uk**Previous grants awarded:** Major funding was given during the Covid Pandemic, which should not affect the decision of this grant request.**Recommendation:** It is recommended that a grant award of this value would be in line with the council's grant guidance notes and criteria.

Grant Application

Appendix 6

Organisation: Haywards Heath Town Team

Total Project Cost: £6000

Funding Category: Running Costs

Grant Requested: £500

Purpose of Grant: Event costs for 2025 Haywards Heath Bike Ride

Breakdown of costs:

Item	Total cost	Amount requested
Running costs for 2025 Bike Ride		
Total	£6000	£500

Information:

Haywards Heath Town Team CIC (HHTC), formed in 2013, is a not for profit community organisation that seeks to develop and promote the benefits and growth of Haywards Heath for its residents and businesses. It organises events throughout the year for the enjoyment of all ages, while promoting a sustainable and healthy lifestyle.

Each year, HHTC runs the Greater Haywards Heath Bike Ride to raise funds for local charities. Since the initial Ride, they have raised nearly £200,000 for their beneficiaries. Every penny of each entry fee goes to charity and this fee is purposely kept low to ensure anyone and everyone can enter the Ride. The event encourages inclusivity in the community, also benefiting the health and wellbeing of local residents. Each year more than 500 participate in the event, which increases footfall to local businesses.

Based on previous years events, the 2025 Bike Ride is estimated to cost almost £6,000 to run. This covers: Road closures, medical assistance, toilet hire, medals, leaflets and banners. HHTC are requesting £500 to go towards these running costs.

Website: www.haywardsheathlive.org.uk/hh-bike-ride

Previous grants awarded: The Bike Ride was seed funded at the outset of the event but nothing directly since. Other projects have been funded as per below.

Year of application	Grant awarded	Purpose of grant
2019	£250	Running costs
2019	£250	STEM project
2020	£500	One off event

Other funding sought:

HHTC has sought and gained sponsorship from local businesses to help fund the cost of running the Bike Ride. Previous sponsors have included: Orchards Shopping Centre, Mansell McTaggart and Mike Oliver Associates.

Recommendation: It is recommended that a grant award of this value would be in line with the council's grant guidance notes and criteria.

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk
Date: 18th November 2024
Subject: Governance Arrangements for Haywards Heath

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is to consider electoral arrangements for the Town.

Summary:

2. Members are asked to consider the electoral arrangements of Haywards Heath including Ward Boundaries for Town and District representation. Furthermore, the status of housing development on the Town borders, currently in neighbouring Parishes, that sit coalesced to the Town. This is with a view to asking Mid Sussex District to undertake a Governance Review to deal with the issues outlined in the background of this report before the 2027 local elections.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to authorise the Town Clerk write to Mid Sussex District Council to formally request that a Governance Review be undertaken for Haywards Heath that would be completed for the Town/District Elections in May 2027.

Background:

3. As Members will be aware, a governance review was undertaken regarding the Ward Boundaries for Haywards Heath in 2022 amongst others, which resulted in the Town Council moving from 5 Wards to 9 Wards. These arrangements came into effect at the local elections held in 2023. Some of the recommendations of the Electoral Commission during the review were not taken forward.
4. As mentioned, the above was not achieved and needs to be revisited alongside the issues that the review created with regards to representation differing in areas of the Town and Lindfield. These are as follows and would be the rationale for making a request for Governance Review.
 - a. a tidying up the alignment of wards within the north of the town, which now has differing Councillor(s) for Town and District. This relates to Haywards Heath North East and Lindfield.
 - b. bringing into the town the housing along the relief road (Sandrocks, Rookery Farm, the Beaches and other ad-hoc developments), which currently sit within Ansty and Staplefield Parish but are coalesced with Haywards Heath.
 - c. There was also the suggestion that The Hollow, which runs alongside America Lane Allotments, currently sitting in Lindfield Rural, is incorporated into the Town. This was vehemently objected to during the last consideration of such.
5. This review needs to be commissioned next year to get the review undertaken well ahead of the next Town and District elections in 2027.

6. Members will, find in Appendix 1 a map of the Town/Parish boundaries as associated the Town and a Town/District Ward map from the Mid Sussex District Council website.

Financial Implications

7. None.

Legal Implications

8. The Town Council can make such a request under the General Power of Competence, which the Town Council meets the criteria of as exercised and resolved at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council dated 15th May 2023 under minute 20.

Town Clerk
Continued next page.

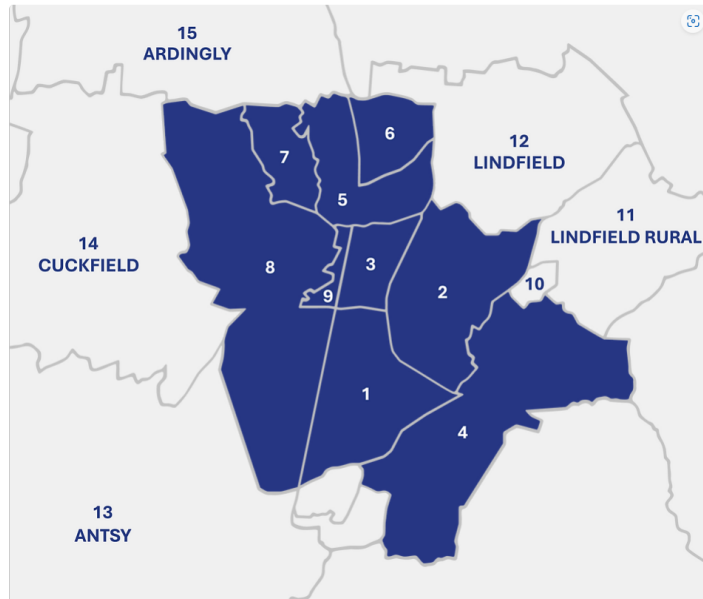
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3. Bentswood & Heath West Ward
4. Franklands Ward
5. Haywards Heath North Central Ward
6. Haywards Heath North East Ward
7. Haywards Heath North West Ward
8. Lucastes & Bolnore Ward
9. Lucastes Boltro Ward
10. [The Hollow](#)
11. [Lindfield Rural](#)
12. [Lindfield Parish](#)
13. [Antsy](#)
14. [Cuckfield](#)
15. [Ardingly](#)

Unsure of your ward? Click the link below to search the district map.

[Electoral Boundary Map](#)



Electoral Boundary Map

Democratic Services - Boundaries

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk
 Date: 18th November 2024
 Subject: Town Council Charging Schedules 2025/2026

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is for Members to consider price increases for services offered by the Town Council for the 2025/2026 financial year.

Summary:

2. In line with the budget setting process the Town Council reviews its charging schedules for Council services on an annual basis. These charges relate to the rooms available at the Town Hall, Weddings, Allotments and Burial fees. Current costings for services offered by the Town Council are outlined in this report in Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and points 9 (allotment fees) and 10 (wedding fees) set against a proposed percentage rise for Members to consider for implementation from the 1st April 2025 (2025/2026 financial year).

Members are recommended to;

- (a) Increase the hire costs for the Town Hall, by 3% for community hirers and 3% for commercial hirers, for the 2025-2026 financial year as per Appendix 1.
- (b) Increase the annual percentage rise to Cemetery fees by 3%, for the 2025-2026 financial year as per Appendix 2.
- (c) Increase the annual percentage increase in allotment rental fees by 3%, for the 2025-2026 financial year as per point 9 of this report.
- (d) To keep Wedding fees at £400 as per point 12 of this report.

Background:

3. Members are asked to consider the recommendations for Town Council service charging as suggested in the recommendations of the report.

Town Hall

4. Generally, in the past, justification for annual rises has been based on rate of inflation with an apportionment for staff cost increases. Annual inflation rate in the UK fell to 1.7% in September 2024, the lowest since April 2021, compared to 2.2% in each of the previous two months and forecasts of 1.9% moving forward. It is envisaged this will rise over the winter due to the energy price cap and the effect of the Autumn budget.
5. Inflation has an effect on general operation costs as service providers and purchasing. Where a substantial rise in fees was recommended in previous years across all services to ensure that the services are not provided at a loss to the Town Council, it is suggested to pitch this year rise around 2% plus an additional 1% for staff costs.
6. Town Council needs to be cognisant of the pressure on our community hirers and their members so this seems a sensible approach.
7. Member's views are sought in line with the recommendation. The Town Clerk will have the tools available to outline cost implications of a higher/lower rise than suggested if

required. Please note that all new costs will be rounded up/down to the nearest 50p or £1 for accounting ease.

8. Therefore, the recommendation makes a suggestion of 3%, for both community hirers and commercial hirers. See Appendix 1.
9. It must also be noted that the charges at the Town Hall are more expensive than that of other venues in the Town such as the Yews and Ashenground Community Centre so a modest rise seems appropriate.

Cemetery Fees

10. With regards to Cemetery fees, a rise based on a predicted rate of inflation again suggested in line with the rise in Town Hiring charges. Where the Council does not have any direct utility costs to absorb apart from water on the site the costs are balanced against the services brought into the Town Council via KPS (interment digging and preparation), which are certain to rise as they set their charges in the present economic climate. Therefore, the recommendation makes a suggestion of 3%, for cemetery fees.

Allotments

11. The current price for an allotment is £0.46p per m². An increase of 3% on £0.46p per m² is £0.02p totalling £0.48 per m² (rounded up to the penny). Therefore, the recommendation makes a suggestion of 3%, for allotment fees.

Weddings

12. This year has seen a slowdown in weddings due to a surge after lockdown being completed. The Town Hall continues to offer good value for money in terms of a venue for a wedding so officers do not want to over price the service. So, in this instance it is recommended to hold the cost at £400. This is on the grounds that Town Council does not wish to price itself out of the market and the fact that the costs of the registrars are an additional cost to that of the hire of the Town Hall.

Last Year's Agreed Rises For Information

13. Room Hire - Last year Members agreed to a rise of 7% increase for non-commercial hirers and 7% increase for commercial hirers.
14. Cemetery - Last year Members agreed a 7% increase for the Cemetery.
15. Allotments - Last year Members agreed a 7% increase for allotments fees.
16. Weddings held at the Town Hall – Last year Members agreed £25 pound rise in wedding fees.

Financial Implications

17. The new hiring charges schedule for the Town Hall, Weddings, Allotments and Cemetery will come into effect from 1st April 2025. Please note this will only affect bookings that have not been made for next year at the date of this meeting. Any bookings taking place before the 1st April 2025 (within the current financial year) will be charged at the 2024/2025 rates.

Legal Implications

18. It is a statutory requirement within the Town Council's internal audit that it demonstrates prudent financial planning with consideration of fees paid for Town Council services being considered.

Town Clerk

**HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL
PROPOSED MEETING ROOM CHARGES**

			3% Increase	
			2024/2025 £ per hr	2025/2026 £ per hr
Jubilee Room	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	19.25	19.83
		Sat	28.50	29.36
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	28.50	29.36
		Sat	41.50	42.75
Room 1	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	19.25	19.83
		Sat	28.50	29.36
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	28.50	29.36
		Sat	41.50	42.75
Room 2	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	23.00	23.69
		Sat	31.00	31.93
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	37.00	38.11
		Sat	47.00	48.41
Room 3	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	15.50	15.97
		Sat	23.00	23.69
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	22.00	22.66
		Sat	34.75	35.79
Rooms 1 & 2 jointly	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	36.00	37.08
		Sat	52.00	53.56
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	57.75	59.48
		Sat	82.00	84.46
Room 1 & Jubilee Room jointly	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	31.00	31.93
		Sat	48.00	49.44
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	49.25	50.73
		Sat	75.50	77.77
Rooms 1 & 2 & Jubilee jointly	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	49.25	50.73
		Sat	78.50	80.86

	Commercial	Mon - Fri	83.00	85.49
		Sat	120.00	123.60
Use of kitchen	For making tea& coffee		13.00	13.39
	Full use		19.25	19.83
Whole use of upstairs including use of kitchen	Non-Commercial	Mon - Fri	69.00	71.07
		Sat	89.00	91.67
	Commercial	Mon - Fri	99.50	102.49
		Sat	123.50	127.21
Wedding receptions/celebratory functions		Mon - Fri	96.00	98.88
		Sat	120.00	123.60

			£ per session	
Council Chamber		Mon - Sat	99.00	101.97
Mayors Office		Mon - Sat	13.00	13.39

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL
PROPOSED CEMETERY CHARGES 1st April 2025 onwards

	2024/2025	3% increase
Interments		
Adult single grave	653.00	672.59
Adult double grave	717.00	738.51
Child (1 month -12 years)	0.00	0.00
Still born	0.00	0.00
Single depth casket	124.00	127.72
Double depth casket	198.00	203.94
Shallow interment of ashes	71.00	73.13
Purchase		
Adult grave	626.00	644.78
Child's grave	0.00	0.00
Cremation plot	186.00	191.58
Memorials		
Headstone/kerbset	179.00	184.37
Flat stone	71.00	73.13
Vase	0.00	0.00
Hardwood cross	0.00	0.00
Additonal inscription	0.00	0.00
Garden of Remembrance		
Headstone	128.00	131.84
Lectern	108.00	111.24
Flat tablet	71.00	73.13
Other charges		
Non residents	Quadruple fee	
Copy of cemetery register A3	3.10	3.19
Copy of cemetery register A4	1.80	1.85
Memorial rose bush	22.00	22.66

Report to follow, no decisions to be made

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk
Date: 18th November 2024
Subject: Investment Policy

Purpose of Report:

9. The purpose of this report is to consider a policy of the Town Council.

Summary:

10. As Members are aware the Town Council has invested a substantial amount of money during the last eighteen months with a sector led investment company. The following report presents an Investment Policy for adoption that will underpin the current investment and any future investment that Town Council wishes to make.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to comment upon and adopt an Investment Policy for Haywards Heath Town Council as presented in Appendix 1.

Background:

11. On the advice of the Internal Auditor, within his mid-year Audit 2023/2024, Members will find as per Appendix 1 a proposed Investment Policy for the Town Council. This document is designed to future proof the existing investment with CCLA Investment and any fixed term investments which the Town Council may wish to enter into in the future.

Financial Implications

12. None relating to the policy

Legal Implications

13. Audit requirement for Policy Development.

Town Clerk

Introduction

1.1 This policy is created under guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003. The extant guidance was issued by MHCLG in 2018.

1.2 Haywards Heath Town Council acknowledges its responsibility to the community and the importance of prudently investing any monies held by the council.

Objectives

2.1 The general policy objective of the Council is prudent investment of its balances. The Council's investment priorities are:

1. Security of operating monies and reserves **and then**
2. Liquidity of investments

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

Investment Policy

3.1 The Town Council has the opportunity to diversify its reserves between multiple relatively highly rated UK banks, building societies and financial institution with the sector. The Town Council shall only use specified investments as defined by MHCLG guidance.

3.2 A significant percentage of the Council's bulked reserves can be placed on interest bearing term/notice deposits.

3.3 To retain liquidity these shall be placed with phased end dates i.e. there will always be some maturing sooner than others.

3.4 No one fixed term investment shall be for a period longer than 12 months other than instant access accounts.

3.5 The Town Council shall only invest with banks/building societies which it defines as "High Credit Quality". This being those with a credit rating of A with Moody's Investors Service or BBB with Standard and Poor's or Fitch Ratings Ltd.

3.6 The Town Council may also invest in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit fund subject to it maintaining a credit rating as required in 3.5

3.7 Investments shall be decided and placed by the Responsible Financial Officer having used due diligence including as a minimum finance search engines and ratings agencies.

- This shall be under the oversight of the standing Policy and Finance Committee
- The actual movement of money shall be by the usual authorised signatories

3.8 The procedure for undertaking investments, considering the need for timely and speedy placing of deals shall be documented by the Responsible Financial Officer and approved by the Policy and Finance Committee before any investments are placed.

3.9 The Town Clerk and/or Responsible Financial Officer shall review credit ratings of organisations in which the Council holds investments on a quarterly basis. Should the credit rating of an organisation fall below that specified under 3.5, the Responsible Financial Officer shall consult the Policy and Finance Committee and take the appropriate action.

3.10 The Town Council considers that by only using specified investments that the officers and members involved in determining the placement of investments have sufficient capability and skills.

Non-Financial Investments

4.1 The Council owns one property (40 Boltro Road) [\[1\]](#) which falls under the definition of an Investment Property under the International Accounting Standard 40. However, as it was acquired at no cost on the council's establishment. it will always pass the required fair value model assessment required by the MHCLG guidance. The Council will, however, regularly assess the asset's performance as an investment.

Investment of Current Year Funds

5.1 The Town Clerk may transfer a portion of current year funds into instant access interest bearing accounts and transfer funds from such interest bearing accounts on a routine basis as required, subject to oversight from the Policy and Finance Committee.

5.2 The Town Clerk shall determine and routinely review the minimum balance to be held in the current account in consultation with the Policy and Finance Committee and shall ensure this is maintained.

5.3 The CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund shall usually be used for this purpose and the effectiveness of this shall be reviewed by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Banking and Investments working group at least annually.

Revision

6.1 Any revisions to this policy shall be approved by the Policy and Finance Committee under its delegated authority from Full Council.

6.2 The Finance Committee shall review this policy annually and recommend any proposed changes to Full Council prior to the commencement of the new financial year. Where no changes are proposed, Full Council shall note the policy.

6.3 Notwithstanding 4.2 this policy shall be reviewed in the event the Bank of England increases its base rate above 3% or the Financial Services Compensation Scheme is extended to cover the Town Council.

[\[1\]](#) In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Parish Property as defined by the Local Government Act 1933.

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Events and Community Officer

Date: 18th November 2024

Subject: Community Event Fund

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is to consider whether the Town Council should launch a Community Event Fund.

Summary:

2. The following report asks for members to consider the introduction of a funding stream dedicated to third party events that would support the Town Council's existing grants programme.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to ratify the recommendation of the Environment and General Purposes committee dated 1st October and introduce a grant fund for third party Community Events administered and overseen by the Committee within the 2025/2026 budget, with the level of monies available being determined through the budget setting process.

Project Outline:

3. The ECO would like to introduce Community Event Funding. The purpose of the Community Event Funding is to allow the Council to increase events within the town, without an additional strain on officer's workloads. The proposition will allow the Council to be involved with more in partnership events, to increase its presence with residents.
4. The ECO has written a proposed Community Event Funding criteria, with guidelines (Appendix 1). Should the proposal be agreed, the ECO will then create an application form. The ECO proposes delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk and the Events and Community Officer to agree and award the event funding and provide regular reports to Council on the Community Event Funding.

Financial Implications:

5. Possible budget to be set during the 2025/2026 budget setting process.

Legal Implications:

6. The Town Council can introduce the Grant Funding Programme using the General Power of Competence, which the Town Council meets the criteria of as exercised and resolved at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council dated 15th May 2023 under minute 20. This removes the section 137 requirements of the LGA 1972 Act which restrict the level of monies to be paid in to third parties.

Events and Community Officer

Community Event Funding Scheme Criteria

Purpose

The Community Event Funding Scheme aims to support local events that foster community spirit, inclusivity, and engagement within Haywards Heath. The scheme provides financial assistance to organizations and groups planning events that benefit the local community.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. **Location:** Events must take place within the boundaries of the electoral town of Haywards Heath.
2. **Applicant Type:** Applications are open to non-profit organisations, community groups, and local charities. Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible.
3. **Community Benefit:** Events must demonstrate a clear benefit to the local community, such as promoting social cohesion, cultural enrichment, or community well-being.
4. **Inclusivity:** Events should be inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or ability, unless a specific target for the event has been identified.
5. **Environmental Impact:** Events should aim to minimise their environmental impact and promote sustainability.

Funding Limits

- **Maximum Grant:** Up to £750 per event.
- **Match Funding:** Preference will be given to events that can demonstrate additional sources of funding or in-kind support.

Application Process

1. **Application Form:** Complete the Community Event Funding Scheme application form, available on the Haywards Heath Town Council website.
2. **Supporting Documents:** Provide a detailed event plan, budget, and evidence of community support or need for the event. Applicants should state how other/ general event overheads are being covered.
3. **Submission Deadline:** Applications must be submitted at least 8 weeks before the event date.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following:

1. **Community Impact:** The extent to which the event benefits the local community.
2. **Feasibility:** The practicality and viability of the event plan.
3. **Value for Money:** The cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget.
4. **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** The event's efforts to be inclusive and accessible.
5. **Environmental Considerations:** Measures taken to reduce environmental impact.

Further details

- One funding application per organisation/ event will be considered per Council year (April- March).
- Retrospective applications will not be considered. No funds covered in the application should have been spent prior to the application being successful. All funding applications should be received no later than 1 month prior to the event date.
- All funds should be spent and used for the specific activity and at the event detailed in the application for which it was granted.
- The Town Council reserves the right to verify any details submitted in application. If this is necessary, it may result in a delay in the decision-making process. If false information is given, the Town Council reserves the right to refuse your application outright.
- Haywards Heath Town Council reserves the right to monitor the application and use of funds awarded and may recover funds if the purpose for which the Community Event Funding payment varies to the extent that the application would not have been eligible for consideration at the time of the application.
- Where an organisation receives funding, the event, or activity should be free of charge for the community to attend or take part in.
- All successful applicants must complete and return a Community Event Funding Feedback form within two months of the event.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants must:

1. **Event Report:** Submit a post-event report detailing the outcomes, attendance, and financial expenditure.
2. **Receipts:** Provide receipts for all expenses covered by the grant.
3. **Acknowledgment:** Acknowledge Haywards Heath Town Council's support in all promotional materials and at the event.

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk

Date: 18th November 2024

Subject: Hurst Farm School and Associated Highway Issues

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is for Members to consider a matter that relates to the Town's infrastructure.

Summary:

2. The following report presents a letter that has been written by the Leader of the Town Council to the Cabinet Member responsible for Education at West Sussex County Council with regards to the proposed school in the development of Hurst Farm alongside a request for a review of speed limits along Fox Hill.

Recommendation(s):

Members are requested to note the letter of the Town Council Leader to West Sussex County Council regarding the development of Hurst Farm and specifically matters relating to the proposed school and highways issues.

Background:

3. The development of Hurst Farm, included in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan 2016, which includes 375 houses, a school and community facilities for Haywards Heath Town Council in the form of a cemetery, allotments and Country Park has been approved (August 2022) subject to the sign off of the Section 106 Agreement.
4. To date the Section 106 Agreement has not been completed due to issues remaining outstanding, the Town Clerk has been informed by Mid Sussex District Council Legal Officers 03/10/24, with West Sussex County Council. This delay and the general issues facing the development of the school means that the development of the whole site has been delayed by a number of years, resulting in the Town Council being unable to take ownership of the land it will receive to provide the much-needed community facilities. This is on the grounds that there is little space for burials left at Western Road Cemetery and a growing allotment list.
5. It must be noted, The Town Council, who is not a signatory to the Section 106 agreement, has been allowed a forum to comment on the clauses that relate to the cemetery, allotments and country park, which has been signed off.
6. Furthermore, to the Section 106 Agreement, the Government is now reviewing the value of 44 schools proposed for development across the Country.
7. The attached letter, as Appendix 1, outlines the concern of the Town Council that West Sussex County Council has held up the process to develop Hurst Farm and asks whether the proposed school is one of the 44 schools being reviewed. Alongside the school matter a separate request has been made to review the speed limits along Fox

Hill with a view to the effect of the Hurst Farm development and the two new developments at Cape Road and Spring Bank south of the Fox and Hounds Public House.

Financial Implications

8. None.

Legal Implications

9. The Town Council can pursue the matter under the General Power of Competence, which the Town Council meets the criteria of as exercised and resolved at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council dated 15th May 2023 under minute 20.

Town Clerk



**HAYWARDS HEATH
TOWN COUNCIL**

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Website: www.haywardsheath.gov.uk
Email: town.clerk@haywardsheath.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Learning and Skills (Lead Member for Children)

1st November 2024

Dear Cllr Russell,

Hurst Farm Development – status of the proposed new school

I write on behalf of Haywards Heath Town Council to enquire about the status of the proposed school to be placed on the Hurst Farm Development off Hurstwood Lane, Haywards Heath.

The allocation for housing, associated community facilities and the school was included in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan, which was adopted in 2016. As a result, the Town Council has a specific interest in the overarching Hurst Farm Planning Application (planning reference DM/22/2272) on the grounds that it will receive land to provide much needed Cemetery and Allotment Space alongside a Country Park.

Planning permission was granted in August 2023 to Homes England, subject to the Section 106 legal agreement being executed. Over a year has passed since the planning application was considered and the most up to date information that the Town Council has regarding the Section 106 Agreement, as provided by the legal team at Mid Sussex District Council, is that there is a hold up is due to points still outstanding over the school.

As you are aware the Town Council agreed to include the school in the Neighbourhood Plan and at the County's preferred location in preference to the original location of the Cemetery. These concessions by the Town Council allowed the progress of the planning process managed by Mid Sussex District Council as the planning authority.

The further delays since approval bring into question whether the planning application should be heard again due to the time that has elapsed since permission was granted which was conditional on the Section 106 Agreement being concluded. Any return to consideration could have a detrimental knock-on effect on the housing delivery numbers for Mid Sussex at a crucial time as the Mid Sussex Plan is at inspection.

The continuing delay is a frustration to the Town Council which has been supportive of the of the Hurst Farm development due the critical need for a new town cemetery and the large waiting list for allotment plots.

Furthermore, it has now come to the Town Council's attention that forty-four planned mainstream free schools are in doubt after the government launched a review into whether they offer value for money. The Town Council would like to enquire if one of the schools under review is the school planned to be placed on Hurst Farm. If it is so we would like to know how long this process will take and how it would affect the planning application and what the County Council is doing to resolve matters.

Traffic Management

Whilst writing to you about Hurst Farm development, I would like to also to remind you that the Town Council has continued to raise concerns about the traffic volumes resulting from the

development of Hurst Farm especially around the junction of Hurstwood Lane with Fox Hill at the Fox and Hounds Public House, which will become the main vehicular access for developers traffic and subsequently for the new school and new housing estate Our requests for a reconfiguration of the junction have been dismissed, which is hugely disappointing.

There is however, a related issue, of immediate concern which we would like to see urgent action on, which is the current speed of traffic south of the Hurstwood Lane junction on Lunce's Hill. At present the national speed limit applies soon after the junction and we would propose that the speed limits are reduced to 30 MPH from the County border. The Town's built line has moved south with the completion of the housing at Cape Road and the new homes south at Spring Bank.

I look forward to your early response on these matters.

Yours sincerely

Paul Lucraft

**Cllr Paul Lucraft
Leader of Haywards Heath Town Council**

Committee Meeting: Policy and Finance

Report of: Town Clerk
Date: 18th November 2024
Subject: Government Consultation – Remote Meetings and Proxy Voting

Purpose of Report:

14. The purpose of this report is to consider a national consultation.

Summary:

15. Due to the recent announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister that the Government is reviewing the allowance of Town/Parish Council to hold remote meeting that would allow for Councillors to legally vote virtually, a snap consultation has been issued. The following report asks for Members consideration of the consultation to understand the implication and allow a response to be made.

Recommendation(s):

To consider the consultation and make comment so that the Town Clerk can make a representation on behalf of the Town Council.

Background:

16. Members will be aware the ability to hold Council meeting legally online with decisions able to be made was removed after pandemic. Unlike Council in Wales presently Councillor must be physically in the room to vote and make decisions. The previous Government voted not to reinstate the rule on remote meetings.
17. At the recent Local Government Association conference, the Deputy Prime Minister announced that the matter was again up for review. As a result, a consultation is now open.
18. Please note that the consultation is aimed at individuals, but the Government have made allowance for responses from Councils and other third party bodies. Members views will also allow the Town Clerk to understand how Members would prepare for any introduction of legislation to accommodate remote meetings and develop policy in line with any approved legislation.
19. The consultation is as follows, please note that there is also reference to the possibility of proxy voting, which would be an interesting concept.

Topic of this consultation

This short consultation seeks views on the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England.

Scope of this consultation

Government is consulting on introducing powers for local authority members to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and vote by

proxy in certain circumstances. If any changes to legislation are made as a result of this consultation, they would apply to England only local authorities meaning:

Question 1 = answer Town Council

The proposal for remote attendance

The government intends to legislate to give local authorities the flexibility to allow elected members to attend formal council meetings remotely. We believe that this modernising measure of providing broad flexibility to enable remote attendance will have the dual positive impacts of diversifying the representation of those willing and able to stand for elected office and enhance the resilience of local authorities in the face of local or national emergencies.

The intent is that this legislative change would give local authorities the flexibility to allow members to attend remotely.

Question 2

Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Yes/No

If you answered No to the above question please go directly to question 4.

Question 3

If you answered Yes to the above question, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance.
- b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies.
- c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.

Question 4

If you are an elected member can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?

- Yes
- No
- I am not an elected member

Question 4a

If you answered No please use the free text below

Question 4b

If you answered Yes, could you indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely

- Very occasionally
- From time to time
- Regularly but not always
- All the time

Question 5

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- Less than 10%
- More than 10% but less than 50%
- More than 50% but less than 90%
- Most of them 90% to 100%

Question 6

The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a twelve-month calendar period.
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances.
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence.

Question 7

Do you think there are any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Please tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.
- b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.
- c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.

Question 8

Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

Should be considered because

Should not be considered because

It is a positive modernising measure.

Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.

It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils.

Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.

It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

Should be considered because**Should not be considered because**

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Question 9

In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics, for example those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

Please tick an option below:

- It would benefit members
- It would disadvantage members
- Neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

Proxy voting

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence.

It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

Question 10

In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Question 11

If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?

Please select all that apply:

- Physical or medical conditions
- Caring responsibilities
- Parental leave or other responsibilities
- Other [Free text box]

Question 12

Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?

Question 13

If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?

Financial Implications

20. None.

Legal Implications

- 21.** None - a Government consultation. Only such will be applied if legislation is approved and any policies and procedure will be reported to the Committee for consideration.

Town Clerk