

HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL July 2020

To: All Members of Hauxley Parish Council

58 Westmorland Avenue
Newbiggin by-the-Sea
Northumberland
NE64 6RN
Tel: 07588659600
06 July 2020

In accordance with Paragraphs 7 & 10(2) (b) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, I hereby summon you to attend a Meeting of **Hauxley Parish Council** to be held online on **Monday 13 July 2020** at 6.30pm.

To join the meeting:

Either click on this link <https://zoom.us/j/96885268076>

or use the Zoom App on your smartphone or desktop and input:

Meeting ID: 968 8526 8076

Password: 11864

Or you can phone dial into the meeting audio using one of these phone numbers:

+44 208 080 6592 United Kingdom

+44 330 088 5830 United Kingdom

+44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

AGENDA

C024/20 Apologies for absence

C025/20 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda and the granting of any dispensations

Members are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

C026/20 - Minutes of previous meeting

To agree as a correct record the minutes of the Annual meeting held on 11th May 2020

C027/20 – Clerks Report

To note for information a report on actions taken since the previous meeting.

C028/20 - Standing item – Report by County Councillor

To receive a report from County Councillor

C029/20 – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/20

- i. To consider and agree actions arising from the report of the Internal Auditor
- ii. To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20
- iii. To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances
- iv. To confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption for 2019/20
- v. To agree the notice of public rights as commencing on Monday 17th July to Friday 28th August

C030/20 – Finance

- i. To note receipt of bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2020
- ii. To note receipt of budget monitoring document at 30th June 2020
- iii. To authorise payments:

19/05/2020	712	Widescope	External Hard drive	£53.99
26/05/2020	713	Staintons	Planting	£314.00
13/07/2020	714	Clerk	Wages & Expenses	£264.38
13/07/2020	715	HMRC	PAYE	£56.00
13/07/2020	716	J A Ainsworth	Internal Audit	£120.00

iv. To note receipts:

08/06/2020	Barclays	Interest	£0.52
12/06/2020	HMRC	VAT	£515.69

v. Allocation of balances – deferred from May meeting

To agree the allocating of balances.

C031/20 – Planning

To report on planning decisions

To consider planning matters

C032/20 – Neighbourhood Plan

- i. To consider report from planning consultant on the ‘next steps’
- ii. To approve the Steering Group Terms of Reference
- iii. To set date for Steering Group meeting

C033/20 – Local Anti-dog fouling scheme – Cllr Howell

Deferred from the May meeting Cllr Howell will update on his proposals for a anti dog fouling scheme for consideration by the Council.

C034/20 – Purchase of IT equipment – Clerk

To consider the purchase of a laptop for Parish Council work

C035/20 – Risk Management Scheme

To adopt the Financial Risk Management Scheme for 2020/21

C036/20 –Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

To adopt the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure for 2020/21

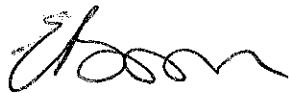
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C037/20 – Socially distanced litter pick – Cllr Brown

To consider date and arrangements for socially distanced litter pick

NEXT MEETING:

Ordinary meeting of Hauxley Parish Council Monday 14th September 2020 at 6.30pm



Elaine Brown PSLCC CiLCA

Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Hauxley Parish Council held 6.30pm on Monday 11th May 2020 via Zoom.

Present: Cllrs R Callender (Chair) W Appleby, A Brown, K Graham, D Howell and P Nichols.
The Parish Clerk Miss E Brown.

C001/20 - Election of Chairman - – RESOLVED that Cllr Callender be elected as Chair for the year 2020-21. No other nominations were forth coming, and Cllr Callender was elected unanimously. Due to social distancing restrictions the acceptance of office would be signed, later.

C002/20 - Election of Vice – Chairman –

RESOLVED that Cllr Nichols be elected as Vice Chair of the Council for the year 2020-21. No other nominations were forth coming, and Cllr Nichols was elected unanimously.

C003/20 - Apologies for Absence – None.

C004/20 - Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda and the granting of any dispensations – None.

C005/20 - Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2020 were a correct record and they would be signed by the Chairman later.

C006/20 - Standing item – Report by County Councillor

County Councillor Clark was not present.

C007/20 - Review and adoption of standing orders and financial regulations

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Council adopt the NALC Model Standing Orders (England) 2018
- ii) The Council adopt the NALC Model Financial Regulations (England) 2019

C008/20 - Adoption of the Council's complaints procedure

RESOLVED that: the Council adopt the Complaints Procedure

C009/20 - General Data Protection Regulations

RESOLVED that: the Council adopt the Privacy Policy as per the Data Protection Act 2018.

C010/20 - Adoption of Model Publication Scheme and Registration with Information Commissioner's Office

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Council adopt the ICO Model Publication Scheme
- ii) The Council register with the ICO

C011/20 - Arrangement for Annual Parish Meeting

RESOLVED that: The Annual Parish meeting be cancelled as it would contravene government legislation.

C012/20 - Arrangements for Ordinary meeting of the Council

Hauxley Parish Council generally meet on the Second Monday of the Month (bi-monthly).

RESOLVED that: Meetings commence at 6.30pm and are held in Hauxley Village Hall (subject to the removal of Covid-19 restrictions being lifted) and take place on the following dates:

2020 dates

July 13th, Sept 14th, Nov 9th

2020 dates

January 11th, March 8th, May 10th

C013/20 - Audit Update

PKF Littlejohns (PKFL) have provided guidance on the completing of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return or the Exemption Certificate which applies in our case as the authority has income of less than £25,000.

The deadline for submitting the Exemption Certificate to PKFL has been extended this year to 31 August 2020. In their email PKFL set a final date of 31 July, as this gives a little leeway to seek an extension of time. The longstop of 31 August 2020 is set in legislation and cannot be waived by PKFL.

C014/20 - Confirming of Budget for 2020-2021

The revised budget for the year was discussed.

RESOLVED that: the budget for 2020-21 increase to £5745 of which £1745 would be transferred from balances.

C015/20 - Confirming the Reserves for 2020-21

The reserves were discussed, and it was noted that an amount of £2738.74 remained in balances of which only £299.15 was allocated.

RESOLVED that: the allocating of balanced be deferred to the July meeting.

C016/20 - Finance:

a) Financial Summary at 30 April 2020 (statements not yet received)

b) Payments were agreed as follows

Date	Cheque	Payee	Reason	Amount
20/04/2020	708	NALC	Subscription	£74.17
11/05/2020	709	Clerk	Wages/expenses	£253.29
11/05/2020	710	HMRC	PAYE	£56.01
11/05/2020	711	ICO	Subscription	£40.00

c) Receipts April

06/04/2020	NCC	Precept	£2000
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It was noted that a VAT claim of £515.69 had been submitted.

C017/20 - Road repairs C109 - Cllr Brown noted his concerns about the road of Hauxley Lane to Kirkwell Cottages. Whilst patch repairs had been done, the road was crumbling at the field edges and could benefit from kerbing to retain the filling.

RESOLVED that: the Clerk make representation to NCC regarding repairs.

C018/20 - 20mph Speed limit - Cllr Brown noted the road from High Hauxley to the bend of the Nature Reserve was incredibly difficult for walkers, suggesting the clearing of overgrowth from one side of the road would provide a safe area for walkers. The Highways Officer had confirmed that NCC about to start looking at the speed limit here as the developer has to put in a 30mph limit towards the caravan park, so NCC will look at the 20mph request at the same time, as the two should complement each other (because you have to have a 30 or 40mph buffer before a 20).

It was noted that this would improve safety for walkers.

RESOLVED that: the Clerk contact Highways and County Councillor Clark regarding the clearing of overgrown to create a walkway.

C019/20 - To consider measures to deter dog fouling incidents - Cllr Howell raised concerns about an increase in dog following incidents and whilst aware of the existing NCC scheme regarding responsible dog ownership suggested that a local campaign be considered.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Cllr Howell would bring a proposal on a local anti-dog fouling scheme back to the next meeting.
- ii) The Clerk investigate the provision of a dog bag dispenser.

C020/20 - To consider the purchase of IT equipment

Following discussion

RESOVLED that:

- i) The Clerk bring some prices back to the next meeting for consideration.
- ii) The Clerks purchase of an external hard drive be agreed.

C021/20 - Exclusion of Press and Public –

RESOLVED that in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to financial and business affairs.

C022/20 - Neighbourhood Planning Consultant Tenders – The Members had considered the tender submissions that had been circulated and did not think an interview was necessary as enough detail had been supplied on the tender documents.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Council appoint Jo-Anne Garrick as Neighbourhood Planning Consultant with Cllr Howell being the primary point of contact.
- ii) The Clerk submit a funding request to Locality.

C023/20. Next meeting: Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council Monday 13th July 2020 at 6.30 pm in Hauxley Village Hall or remotely – subject to Covid-19 restrictions.

The meeting closed at 7.41pm

Actions from previous meeting for information.

C013/20 - Audit Update – The Accounts were submitted to the Internal Auditor and his work is now complete.

C017/20 - Road repairs C109 – The Highways Inspector conducted a site visit and could not find any issues. He has requested that photographs be submitted clarifying the issues. – If issue identified this could be submitted under the Local Transport Programme requests for 2021/22.

C018/20 - 20mph Speed limit – The Highways Senior Programmes Officer confirmed he is waiting for the developer to come back with a drawing for him to approve for the speed limit extension. Once he has it, he can work out the extents of the proposed 20mph section. He will run the plan past the Parish Council for comment and has confirmed that there is funding available to implement the scheme this financial year.

C019/20 - To consider measures to deter dog fouling incidents – County Councillor Clark will consider funding a dog bag dispenser depending on what funding remains in his Members Small Schemes – this may need to roll over to next financial year.

C020/20 - To consider the purchase of IT equipment

Quotation requested for Laptop -

External Hard drive purchased.

C022/20 - Neighbourhood Planning Consultant Tenders

Jo-Anne Garrick Appointed as Neighbourhood Planning Consultant

Funding Application submitted to Locality and approved to the initial amount of £2,400

Matters dealt with out of meeting**Traffic/Parking Issues**

Following issues with traffic at Low Hauxley, with the help of County Councillor Clark, temp signage was installed stating 'local access only' – We could request this is permanently addressed through a submission under the Local Transport Programme for 2021/22.

Banking mandate updated with the change of address with the help of Councillors Callender and Graham. Investigations into transferring bank to take place but unfortunately many banks have temporarily suspended accepting new customers due to coronavirus.

Clerks Report on Agenda Items

C030/20 v - Allocation of Balances

The Council is yet to agree to allocate the balances held with the accounts. This item was deferred at the May meeting.

Balances at 31/03/2020	£3968.05
Transferred to make up shortfall in budget	-£1745.00
Balances at 01/04/2020	£2223.05
VAT reclaim received	+£515.69
TOTAL RESERVES	2738.74
ALLOCATED	£299.15 TRANSPARENCY FUND
TO BE ALLOCATED	£2439.59

Recommendations of Clerk at May meeting

Commuter hardware	£200
Village Square	£200
Allotment Footpaths	£189.59
Community Events	£150
Street Furniture	£400
Information Panels Plinths	£100
Election Costs	£100
Ground maintenance	£500
Contingency	£600
Total	£2439.59

RECOMMENDED that the Council agree the allocation of balances.

C034/20 – Purchase of IT equipment – Clerk

Quotations were not yet obtained at the time of preparing the agenda.

RECOMMENDED that: the purchase be delegated to the Clerk within the budgeted amount.

C035/20 – Risk Management Scheme

The report of the Internal Audit identified that the risk management scheme lacked sufficient detail.

RECOMMENDED that: the Council adopt the attached Risk Management Scheme for the year 2020/21

C036/20 –Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

In being a good employer, it is advised that the Council adopt a Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

RECOMMENDED that: the Council adopt the procedure.

Internal audit report to the members of Hauxley Parish Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have completed the internal audit of the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020 and I have the following recommendations to make.

1. Invoices are certified as approved for payment and have been checked for accuracy
2. Where VAT is reclaimable a VAT invoice is obtained
3. The Risk Management Policy is supported by a schedule identifying each risk, its level of threat and the counter measures in place to mitigate it
4. An adequate budget is prepared by January each year to support the levy of a precept
5. The budget is monitored with a report going to each meeting of the Council and that report is approved
6. A current Bank Reconciliation is prepared and reported to each Council meeting for approval

I have completed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. I have answered "No" at Question F as the Council does not operate a Petty Cash Account and answered "No" to question L as there was no evidence in the minutes of the Council that the required action was taken and the Clerk at that time has left the Council's employment

I am aware that the appointment of a new Clerk who is both experienced and qualified will resolve many of the recommendations above.

I would like to thank the Clerk for her assistance in completing this audit in these difficult times.

Yours faithfully

John A Ainsworth
24th June 2020

Attached: Details of the work done at the audit

Audit work done for Hauxley Parish Council 2019/20

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have set out below the Internal Control Objectives required to be met in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. I have described the work undertaken at the audit and any comments or recommendations that should be made following the work done. Any other comments are set out below the matrix box.

Date of visit:

Ref	Control Objective	Work undertaken	Comment or Recommendation	Further action at next audit
A	Appropriate Financial records have been properly kept	See B below		
B	Financial Regulations have been complied with and payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was accounted for	100% of all payments were examined for accuracy, allocation and VAT accounting and approval	2 payments had no invoice in support and 1 payment with VAT was not a VAT invoice. Certification was implied not explicit	Follow up recommendations
C	Significant risks have been assessed and reviewed and there are adequate arrangements in place to manage these	A Risk Management Policy has been approved but lacks detail Insurance is adequate	Specify risks and levels of threat and counter measures	As above
D	An adequate budget process is in place and the budget is monitored on a regular basis	No Budget was prepared and no monitoring was recorded	A Budget must be prepared to support the precept levied	As above
E	The income expected has been collected and is in accordance with the charges set by the Council. VAT on income has been properly accounted for	All income was properly recorded. There was no VAT	None	
F	Petty cash payments	The Council does	N/A	

	were properly approved and accounted as was the VAT on such payments.	not operate a Petty Cash Account		
G	Salaries and expenses to employees and allowances to members were in accordance with approved rates and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied	All payments to the Clerk were examined. There were no PAYE or NI deductions. Members do not receive allowances	None	
H	Asset and investment registers were complete , accurate and properly maintained	The Asset Register was up to date and accurate	None	
I	Periodic and year end bank account reconciliations were carried out	No Bank Reconciliations were done in the year. The year end reconciliation forms part of the final accounts	Bank Reconciliations should be presented to each meeting of the Council for their approval	Follow up recommendations
J	Accounting statements were prepared on the correct accounting basis and agreed to the cash book. An adequate audit trail exists and debtors and creditors were properly accrued	Accounts were prepared on a receipts and payments basis and agreed to the Cash Book. There is an adequate audit trail	None	

Other comments

I am aware that the appointment of an experienced and qualified Clerk in March 2020 will ensure that a lot of the recommendations made above will be, or already have been addressed

J.A.Ainsworth

Internal Auditor

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 2

To be completed only by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other smaller authorities* where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, that meet the qualifying criteria, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review

Guidance notes on completing Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

1. Every smaller authority in England where the higher of gross income **or** gross expenditure was £25,000 or less **must**, following the end of each financial year, complete Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices*, unless the authority:
 - a) does not meet the qualifying criteria for exemption; or
 - b) does not wish to certify itself as exempt
2. Smaller authorities where the higher of all gross annual income **or** gross annual expenditure **does not exceed** £25,000 and that meet the qualifying criteria as set out in the Certificate of Exemption **are able to declare themselves exempt** from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review **provided** the authority **completes**:
 - a) The **Certificate of Exemption**, page 3 and returns a copy of it to the external auditor **either** by email **or** by post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2020**. Failure to do so will result in reminder letter(s) for which the Authority will be charged £40 +VAT for each letter; and
 - b) The **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Part 2)** which is made up of:
 - **Annual Internal Audit Report (page 4)** to be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement (page 5)** to be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 2 – Accounting Statements (page 6)** to be completed and approved by the authority.**NOTE: Authorities certifying themselves as exempt SHOULD NOT send the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor.**
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement before approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and both **must** be approved and published on a website **before 1 July 2020**.

Publication Requirements

Smaller authorities **must** publish various documents on a public website as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. These include:

- **Certificate of Exemption**, page 3
- **Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20**, page 4
- **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**, page 5
- **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20**, page 6
- Analysis of variances
- Bank reconciliation
- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Limited Assurance Review

Providing the authority certifies itself as exempt, and completes and publishes the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, there is **no** requirement for the authority to have a limited assurance review.

Any smaller authority may, however, request a limited assurance review. In these circumstances the authority should **not certify itself as exempt, and not complete the** Certificate of Exemption, but complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 and return it to the external auditor for review together with the supporting documentation requested by the external auditor.

The cost to the smaller authority for the review will be **£200 +VAT**.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

Guidance notes on completing Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20, Sections 1 and 2

- An authority that wishes to declare itself exempt from the requirement for a limited assurance review must do so at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2020. It should not submit its Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor. However, as part of a more proportionate regime, the authority **must** comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- The Certificate of Exemption must be returned to the external auditor no later than 30 June 2020. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT for each letter.
- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return and the Certificate of Exemption. Proper Practices are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making amendments to the completed annual return. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness at the meeting at which it is signed off.
- **You should inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- The authority must publish numerical and narrative explanations for significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 6**. Guidance is provided in the *Practitioners' Guide** which may assist.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2019) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2020).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2020**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes been completed?		
	Have the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights been published?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation available for publication?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?		
	Is an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 available, should a question be raised by a local elector and/or an interested party?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? (<i>Local Councils only</i>)		

* *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2019/20 Part 2

To be completed by smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2020, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015

There is no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor, **provided** that the authority has certified itself as exempt at a meeting of the authority after 31 March 2020 and a completed Certificate of Exemption is submitted no later than 30 June 2020 notifying the external auditor.

HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

certifies that during the financial year 2019/20, the higher of the authority's total gross income for the year or total gross annual expenditure, for the year did not exceed **£25,000**

Total annual gross income for the authority 2019/20:

4093

Total annual gross expenditure for the authority 2019/20:

7405

There are certain circumstances in which an authority will be **unable to certify itself as exempt**, so that a limited assurance review will still be required. If an authority **is unable to confirm the statements below then it cannot certify itself as exempt** and it **must** submit the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return Part 3 to the external auditor to undertake a limited assurance review for which a fee of **£200 +VAT** will be payable.

By signing this **Certificate of Exemption** you are confirming that:

- The authority was in existence on 1st April 2016
- In relation to the preceding financial year (2018/19), the external auditor **has not**:
 - issued a public interest report in respect of the authority or any entity connected with it
 - made a statutory recommendation to the authority, relating to the authority or any entity connected with it
 - issued an advisory notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act"), and has not withdrawn the notice
 - commenced judicial review proceedings under section 31(1) of the Act
 - made an application under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, and the application has not been withdrawn nor has the court refused to make the declaration
- The court has not declared an item of account unlawful after a person made an appeal under section 28(3) of the Act.

If you are able to confirm that the above statements apply and that the authority neither received gross income, nor incurred gross expenditure, exceeding £25,000, then the Certificate of Exemption can be signed and a copy submitted to the external auditor **either** by email **or** by post (not both).

The Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements, an analysis of variances and the bank reconciliation plus the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 including the period for the exercise of public rights still need to be fully completed and, along with a copy of this certificate, published on a public website* before 1 July 2020. **By signing this certificate you are also confirming that you are aware of this requirement.**

Signed by the Responsible Financial Officer Date



06/07/2020

I confirm that this Certificate of Exemption was approved by this authority on this date:

Signed by Chairman

Date

as recorded in minute reference:

Email of Authority

hauxleypc@gmail.com

Telephone number

07588659600

*Published web address

ONLY this Certificate of Exemption should be returned EITHER by email OR by post (not both) as soon as possible after certification to your external auditor, but no later than 30 June 2020. Reminder letters incur a charge of £40 +VAT

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation **during** the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.		✓	
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")	✓		
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.		✓	
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

24/06/2020 25/06/2020 (AT HOME)

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

JOHN A AINSWORTH

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

25/06/2020

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed). *See Audit Report.*

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

Hauxley Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that this authority:
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

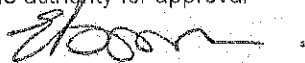


Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

~~HA~~ HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	6241	7034	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	4000	4000	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	3	100	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	1371	1721	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	1839	5445	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	7034	3968	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	7034	3968	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6912	7442	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council as a body corporate acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.
		X	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.
Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

03/07/20

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: **East Dorset District Council**
 County area (local councils and unitary authorities): **Dorset**

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all Blue highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input. DO NOT OVERTWRITE THESE BOXES	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	6,241	7,040				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	4,000	4,000	0	0.00%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	3	94	91	3033.33%	1 YES	Explanation not required, difference less than £200	VAT reclaim (£90)
4 Staff Costs	1,371	1,720	349	25.46%	1 YES		Salary adjustment due to backdating an underpayment £349
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	1,833	5,646	3,813	197.11%	1 YES		Purchase of new bins (£659), repair of info display panel (£589), early payment of insurance (£239), new planting scheme (£1382), Village Square ground works (£746)
7 Balances Carried Forward	7,040	3,968			NO		
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	7,040	3,968					
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	6,912	7,442	530	7.67%	0 NO		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	0 NO		

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL 31/03/2020

ASSET REGISTER

DESCRIPTION	PURCHASE DATE	CURRENT VALUE	NET BOOK VALUE
Bus shelter Low Hauxley	TRANSFERRED FROM ADC 2009	£1,000	
Bus shelter High Hauxley	TRANSFERRED FROM ADC 2009	1,000	
Info board & Plynth x 2	2011	3,170	
Notice board High Hauxley	Sep-13	515	
Notice board Low Hauxley	2005	75	
Planters	TRANSFERRED FROM ADC 2009	750	
<u>Seats</u>			
Seats	TRANSFERRED FROM ADC 2009	£200	
Bins		£0	Disposed
New bins	May-19	£659	
Lamp post bin	Mar-16	£69	
<u>Others</u>			
Village square			£1
Community Garden			£1
		<u>£7,438</u>	<u>£7,440</u>
			<u>£7,442</u>

**HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL
NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION
OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY
RETURN (EXEMPT AUTHORITY)**

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

**Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 25, 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/404)

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement Monday 6 July 2020(a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The AGAR has been published with this notice. It will not be reviewed by the appointed auditor, since the smaller authority has certified itself as exempt from the appointed auditor's review. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the AGAR, the accounting records for the financial year to which it relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2020, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) Elaine Brown – Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Email: acklingtonpc@gmail.com Tel: 07588659600</p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>Monday 13 July 2020</u></p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>Friday 28 August 2020</u></p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and • The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority. <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is only subject to review by the appointed auditor if questions or objections raised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 lead to the involvement of the auditor. The appointed auditor is:</p> <p>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 15 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD (sba@pkf-littlejohn.com)</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Elaine Brown – Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer</p>	<p>(a) insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must start on or before 1 September 2020.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>



JO-ANNE GARRICK LTD
Chartered Town Planner

Hauxley Neighbourhood Plan

Advice on next steps

July 2020

Company no: 10237123
Registered Office:
23 Mead Court, Forest Hall,
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE12 9RF
07802588437
info@jo-annegarrick.co.uk



RTPI

Chartered Town Planner

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Report prepared by: Jo-Anne Garrick BSc(Hons) MTP(UC) MRTPI
Director

Date: 07 July 2020

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 In January 2019 Hauxley Parish Council (HPC) held a consultation day with residents to discuss issues that could be included within a neighbourhood plan for the area. Following the early engagement, Hauxley Parish was designated as a neighbourhood area for the purposes of neighbourhood planning on 25 March 2019. HPC is in the process of establishing a steering group.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to:
- provide some background to the neighbourhood planning process;
 - provide feedback on the work undertaken to date, including identifying a draft vision, objectives, planning policy themes and issues for potential community actions;
 - highlight the need for additional evidence work to support the development of the neighbourhood plan, depending on its scope;
 - identify a possible timescale for the preparation of the plan; and
 - provide guidance on the next stages in the development of the neighbourhood plan.

2. Overview of neighbourhood planning

What is a neighbourhood plan?

- 2.1 The neighbourhood planning process enables local communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work. Neighbourhood plans form part of the development plan alongside the local plan prepared by the local planning authority. It has the same legal status as the local plan once it has been supported at referendum.
- 2.2 Planning law requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies contained within the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunities for communities to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop over the next 15-20 years in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people.

What can neighbourhood plans do and what can't they do?

- 2.4 A neighbourhood plan should support the delivery of strategic policies set out in the local plan. It is for the parish council, in consultation with the local community, to determine the scope of the plan, it does not need to seek to address all of the matters included in the local plan.
- 2.5 Plans must include planning policies. These policies can only relate to matters that require planning permission, so they could not for example cover the provision of public transport or deal with matters such as dog fouling. Wider community aspirations that do not relate to the development and use of land can be included. However, it must be made clear that these do not form part of the statutory development plan.

What are the key stages in preparing a neighbourhood plan?

2.6 National planning practice guidance has identified seven key stages in producing a neighbourhood plan:

Step 1: designating a neighbourhood area (parish council and local planning authority)

- Parish council submits an application to the local planning authority to designate a neighbourhood area;
- Local planning authority publicises and consults on the area application for minimum six weeks;
- Local planning authority designates a neighbourhood area within the statutory timescales.

Step 2: preparing a draft neighbourhood plan (parish council)

- Gather baseline information and evidence;
- Engage and consult those living and working in the neighbourhood area and those with an interest in or affected by the proposals (eg service providers);
- Talk to landowners and the development industry identify and assess options;
- Determine whether a plan or an Order is likely to have significant environmental effect;
- Start to prepare proposals documents.

Step 3: pre-submission publicity and consultation (parish council)

- Publicises the draft plan for at least 6 weeks and invites comments;
- Consults the statutory consultation bodies (NCC, Natural England, Historic England etc);
- Where there is a requirement for an appropriate assessment (under the habitats regulations) and/or strategic environmental assessment (SEA), there is a need to comply with relevant publicity and consultation requirements;
- Considers consultation responses and amends the draft plan if appropriate;
- Prepares consultation statement and other relevant documents.

Step 4: submission of a neighbourhood plan to the local planning authority (parish council and local planning authority)

- Parish council submits the plan the local planning authority;
- Local planning authority checks that submitted proposal complies with all relevant legislation;
- If the local planning authority finds that the plan or order meets the legal requirements it:
 - publicises the proposal for minimum 6 weeks and invites representations;
 - notifies consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement; and
 - appoints an independent examiner (with the agreement of the parish council).

Step 5: independent examination (local planning authority)

- Local planning authority sends plan and representation to the independent examiner;
- Independent examiner undertakes examination;

- Independent examiner issues a report to the local planning authority and parish council;
- Local planning authority publishes report;
- Local planning authority considers report and reaches own view as to whether the legal requirements have been met;
- Local planning authority takes the decision on whether to send the plan to referendum

Steps 6 and 7: referendum and bringing the neighbourhood plan into force (local planning authority)

- Local planning authority publishes information statement and notice of referendum;
- Polling takes place;
- Results declared;
- Should more than half of those voting vote in favour of the neighbourhood plan, the plan comes into force as part of the statutory development plan for the area;
- There are narrow circumstances where the local planning authority is not required to make the neighbourhood plan. These are where it considers that the making of the neighbourhood plan or Order would breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any EU or human rights obligations.

What are the legal tests, or 'basic conditions' that a draft plan must meet?

- 2.7 Only a draft neighbourhood plan that meets all of the basic conditions, which are set out in the Town and County Planning Act (1990), can be put to referendum and be made. The basic conditions are that the plan:
- a. has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - b. contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - c. is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
 - d. does not breach and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Further guidance

- 2.8 National planning practice guidance provides an explanation of the neighbourhood planning system <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>. In addition, Locality has published a number of guidance documents and toolkits <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/>

3. Review of work undertaken to date

Introduction

- 3.1 Work on the neighbourhood plan is at an early stage. The engagement event which took place in January 2019 does however provide a helpful starting point in identifying the scope of the plan and will inform its vision, objectives and themes.

Community feedback

- 3.2 The feedback report¹ that is available on HPC website highlights the value that the local community place on the natural environment and tranquillity of the parish, as well as the strong sense of community that exists.
- 3.3 Thinking about the next 20 years, the majority of residents highlighted concern over inappropriate new development, the importance of environmental protection and sustainability. Specific comments were:
- Protection of wildlife;
 - Active management of the local environment for biodiversity e.g. wildflowers in the verges and hedgerows for flowers and berries;
 - Designated green spaces and settlement boundary;
 - Community composting;
 - Prevent further development;
 - Small development of affordable housing with covenant not to be used as holiday homes/ lets;
 - Maintain/ protect the dune/ coastal zone;
 - A curb on clause s106 biased planning decisions, 1100 homes will heavily impact the village, destroying quality of life;
 - A bowling green;
 - A balance between existing residents, holiday homes and affordable housing for young families;
 - Keep it as a hamlet – peace and quiet;
 - Any planning for new houses needs to consider materials used and type of dwelling and parking provision;
 - Any houses built in Low Hauxley to be built in style of current cottages;
 - Protect the area of Kirkwell Cottages from building;
 - Protection of the greenbelt around Hauxley so that it doesn't become a suburb of Amble;
 - In 2034 Hauxley should be protected.
- 3.4 The majority of concerns/ areas for improvement identified by the local community related to highways and traffic issues, housing and the need for environmental protection. Specific comments highlighted:
- Concern regarding the increase of traffic from A1068 through the village, especially from large vehicles ie, motorhomes and tourers;

¹ <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/sites/default/files/parish-councils/documents/2020/April/Hauxley%20Parish%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20Report%201.pdf>

-
- Access to beach, both slipway and dunes path;
 - Speeding between High and Low Hauxley;
 - Drainage around Kirkwell Cottages;
 - Safety for pedestrians walking from High and Low Hauxley;
 - Provide public transport for students, a daily bus service to Alnwick and Amble would be welcome;
 - Protect wildlife. “I do not agree with putting house building before the environment”;
 - Junction onto A1068 from Hauxley Lane needs improving, difficult to get out during the summer due to more traffic to the coast;
 - Hauxley Lane road to Kirkwell Cottages, this part of the road was not resurface along with the rest of Hauxley Lane earlier in 2018;
 - Public footpath between Kirkwell Cottages and Percy Drive;
 - Parking on road by the slipway. Prevent parking by putting in yellow lines for no parking;
 - Recycling inc glass;
 - Enforced speed limits Hauxley Lane – 5mph-30mph A1068(Radcliffe) – 40mph;
 - Concerned about housing developments and impact on environment and character of the hamlet;
Parking, especially holiday cottages – no more than one car;
 - Nature and environment should be the focus of the area: improve access to nature e.g. footpaths with dog waste bins, wildlife corridors and improved habitats;
 - Steps down to the beach;
Joined up thinking in building eco friendly, sustainable new communities with a mix of housing and access to services, not endless 3/4 bed ugly developments tacked onto villages;
 - Concerned about the urban spiral, very little space between Hauxley and Amble due to new builds;
 - Current work is destroying wildlife habitats;
 - Concerned about houses spreading from Amble;
 - Allow dogs (on leads) into nature reserve.

Conclusion and recommendation

- 3.5 The initial engagement has provided the parish council with an overview of important issues for the neighbourhood plan to seek to address, it is considered that these can be grouped into a number of important areas:
- Sustainable and cohesive rural community, separated from the town of Amble;
 - Importance of the natural environment;
 - Distinctive built environment.
- 3.6 As explained in section 2, the regulations that govern the preparation of neighbourhood plans only require one formal round of consultation on a draft plan. However, in order to ensure the draft plan reflects the views of the local community it is considered that further early engagement would be beneficial.
- 3.7 A number of neighbourhood planning groups undertake an early engagement exercise on the vision, objectives and themes for planning policies and community actions. This is something that HPC should consider. An example of a leaflet that could be sent to all

households within the parish is included at appendix 1. The consultation could be promoted through a newsletter and in the local press. If a drop in event cannot be held then social media could be used to ask specific questions of the local community to obtain feedback e.g. are there any sites or areas you feel should be protected through the neighbourhood plan, if so, why do you feel these should be protected?

Recommendation 1: Consider undertaking a further early engagement exercise to obtain feedback on a draft vision, objectives and themes for planning policies and community actions.

4. Draft vision, objectives and themes

Introduction

4.1 In order to assist the parish council with the preparation of a vision, objectives and themes for planning policies and community actions for the plan, a draft has been developed informed by the feedback from the community in 2019. This is set out below for discussion.

Draft vision

4.2 The draft vision sets out what the Hauxley Neighbourhood Plan intends to achieve over the plan period to 2036, it will inform all of the draft policies and community actions that will be set out within the emerging plan.

Draft vision

Our vision for the parish of Hauxley in 2036 is that its rural community remains sustainable and cohesive. The close and important links with the neighbouring town of Amble are maintained and the two areas continue to be visually distinct and separate.

The distinctive and rich natural, built and historic environmental character of the parish will have been conserved and enhanced for future generations by ensuring new developments are appropriately located and their scale and design fully reflects the local area.

Draft objectives

4.3 To deliver the vision three draft objectives have been developed. The objectives clearly relate to the issues identified through early engagement. The draft planning policies and community actions contained within the plan will deliver the objectives.

Draft objectives

Objective 1: Rich natural environment
Conserving and enhancing the tranquil and valued nature of the coastal environment of the parish.

Objective 2: Distinctive built and historic environment

Ensuring new development maintains and enhances local distinctiveness and contributes positively to the built and historic environment of the plan area.

Objective 3: Sustainable and cohesive community

Ensuring new development is sustainable and supports the delivery of development needed by the local community.

Draft planning policy themes

- 4.4 Areas for potential planning policies have been identified under each of the relevant objectives below.

Objective 1 - rich natural environment

- 4.5 Based on the issues identified by the local community, policy themes which could be relevant to this objective include: **green infrastructure and biodiversity; green spaces; and the coast.**
- 4.6 The approach to green infrastructure and biodiversity, could include both policies and allocations, for example separate policies to ensure important biodiversity and green infrastructure networks are protected as part of the planning process. In addition, the policies map accompanying the draft plan could identify important wildlife sites and green infrastructure networks.
- 4.7 With regard to green spaces, national policy allows the identification of both local green spaces and protected open spaces. Local green spaces must be demonstrably special to the local community and meet key tests set out in national policy. Local green space designation provides the same protection as Green Belt, so there must be very special circumstances demonstrated, if an allocated site is to be lost to development. Protected open spaces could be spaces such as football pitches or playgrounds, which, whilst important, could be provided in a different location within the parish.
- 4.8 The county council has powers to carry out coast protection works, and the Environment Agency have powers regarding the prevention and mitigation of coastal flooding. National planning policy is clear that the planning system should reduce the risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or adding to the impacts of physical changes to the coast. The emerging Northumberland Local Plan contains a policy on coastal erosion and coastal change management, it should therefore be considered whether the neighbourhood plan could add any further relevant local detail to be used in the determination of planning applications.
- Objective 2 - distinctive built and historic environment
- 4.9 Feedback from the local community highlighted the importance of **good design** in future development and the need to **conserve and enhance heritage assets.**
- 4.10 The approach to ensuring good design could take different forms in the neighbourhood plan. A general policy on design could be included within the plan to identify the matters that need to be considered when assessing a planning application such as scale, massing,

materials and appearance. If the design and appearance of future development is a key issue for the plan, HPC could consider applying, through Locality, for the design technical support package. This work would provide more detailed evidence on the design requirements for the parish and could include guidance for specific site or a parish wide design code.

Objective 3 – sustainable and cohesive community

- 4.11 This objective could cover the policy themes of: the management of the **location of new development**; supporting the provision of **housing that is needed** in the parish; and mechanisms to restrict the occupation of any new residential development to be **permanently occupied**.
- 4.12 The neighbourhood plan could identify a settlement boundary (or boundaries) to restrict development outside the boundary to that which meets specific criteria e.g. development for agriculture, forestry or other rural industries and the reuse of redundant buildings.
- 4.13 The housing needs assessment work that has been commissioned by HPC should help inform the need for future housing over the plan period, for example whether there is a need to allocate specific sites for the delivery of affordable housing.
- 4.14 If it is identified that there is a growing number of properties being lost to second and holiday homes, the plan could consider the introduction of a restriction to ensure that any new residential properties were ‘principal residences’. This would prevent them being used as second or holiday homes.

Draft community action themes

- 4.15 If the plan includes community actions these will not be assessed by the examiner. It is for the parish council to identify if it wants to include actions within the plan and if so, what actions are included. The following potential themes for community actions have been identified, informed by the community feedback:
- Rich natural environment:
 - Work with the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service to explore projects to protect the natural environment of the plan area from negative impacts cause by visitors to the area;
 - Identification of projects to improve the local environment, such as the planting of wildflowers on verges and in hedgerows;
 - Distinctive built and historic environment:
 - Develop community projects to celebrate the heritage of the area;
 - Sustainable and cohesive community:
 - Work with the county council and public transport providers to seek to improving access to public transport and pedestrian accessibility across the parish; and
 - Work with the county council to implement measures to reduce traffic levels, speeds and unauthorised parking.

Recommendation 2: Consider and provide comments on the draft vision, objectives and themes for planning policies and community actions.

5. Additional evidence

- 5.1 It is understood that to date, the only additional piece of evidence work that has been commissioned by HPC is a housing needs assessment via Locality. The level of additional evidence required to support the policies within the plan will depend on its scope.
- 5.2 From the information available and the suggested policy themes, there could be some areas where there is a need for further supporting evidence. This section of the report identifies possible additional evidence under each plan objective, it also provides some background on the potential need for an appropriate assessment under the habitats regulations, as well as strategic environmental assessment.

Objective 1 – rich natural environment

- 5.3 International, national and local environmental designations within the plan area form an important part of the character of the area. There are risks to these designations through both new development in the plan area and increasing visitor numbers. Given the importance of the designations, they are protected by national policies and regulations.
- 5.4 If HPC want to include a policy or policies on the natural environment, as well as specific allocations, the plan and/ or its evidence base will need to include details of the existing designations, important habitats and species, as well as wildlife and green infrastructure networks. Most of this information is available online. It would therefore be important that as part of the preparation of the plan a review is undertaken of the current designations. If any new designations, such as green infrastructure networks are proposed there may be a need for additional supporting evidence to justify this.

<p>Recommendation 3: The existing environmental designations within the plan area should be mapped and HPC should consider whether there is a need for the allocation of additional sites/ areas/ networks. Any new allocation would need to be supported by evidence.</p>

- 5.5 Reference is made within the consultation report to the importance of green spaces within the parish. The neighbourhood plan could designate areas of local green space and protected open space. Local green space offers very strong protection, with the same status as Green Belt. As a result of the level of protection, there must be evidence to support the designation of sites. The NPPF requires the local green space designation only to be used where the space is:
- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife; and
 - local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 5.6 Local green space is therefore something that has particular significance that if it were lost, could not be provided somewhere else e.g. a site with an important historical connection. Protected open space, whilst having a strong level of protection, is open space that could be re-provided elsewhere e.g. a football pitch or play area.

- 5.7 In order to justify the allocation of areas of local green space or protected open space, it is recommended that a background paper should be prepared². This work is not available as a technical support package and most groups use the grant funding to employ a planning consultant to prepare the evidence to justify the allocation.
- 5.8 Should HPC decide that it would like to include local green space and/ or protected open space within the plan, it could highlight this as part of the additional early engagement exercise with the local community i.e. asking for sites to be suggested for protection and why they feel a specific space or spaces should be designated.

Recommendation 4: Consider the identification of local green space and/ or protected open space within the neighbourhood plan. If HPC decide to include this within the plan, it would be beneficial to undertake early engagement (this could be part of the consultation on the vision and objectives) to identify sites that are important to the local community and prepare a background paper to justify any proposed designations.

Objective 2 – distinctive built and historic environment

- 5.9 As explained in section 4, a design codes technical support package is available for neighbourhood planning groups. Design codes can be used in two different ways, firstly to establish design principles for a particular site or sites and/ or to support the preparation of a design policy or policies within a plan. Through the design code work an assessment is undertaken of the character of the area. This work has been very useful to other groups preparing plans.

Recommendation 5: Consider applying for the design codes technical support package to inform design policy (or policies) within the plan.

Objective 3 – sustainable and cohesive community

- 5.10 If HPC decide that it would be appropriate to identify a settlement boundary (or boundaries), this would need to be supported by evidence. A background paper could be prepared which would establish the methodology and the consideration of matters such as: the current and emerging development plan allocations; the Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment; the Northumberland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment; a review of current planning applications/ permissions; aerial mapping; and the outcomes of site visits. Currently there is no technical support package for this type of work, however, it is something that I could prepare for the parish council, funded by the grant from Locality.
- 5.11 Should the housing needs assessment suggest there is a requirement to identify sites for development, a site assessment process would need to be undertaken. This could be included within a background paper and could be combined with a review of settlement

² Example background paper available here <https://www.cramlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Cramlington-LGS-and-POS-Background-Paper-January-2019-1.pdf>

boundaries. There is a technical support package available for site options assessment. Experience on working on other neighbourhood plans suggests that this package offers little more than the information already available in the evidence base produced by Northumberland County Council. If the technical support package is not applied for, I could prepare a background paper, again funded by the grant from Locality.

- 5.12 The feedback from early engagement suggests there is a potential issue regarding an increasing number of second and holiday homes in the plan area. If HPC consider it appropriate to include a policy to restrict the use of new dwellings within the plan area to principal residences and/ or include a local needs restriction, this would need to be supported by evidence. Again, there is no technical support grant available to undertake this type of work, however it could be a piece of work that I could undertake. I would recommend waiting for the outcome of the housing needs assessment before deciding if this is required.

Recommendation 6: Consider commissioning the following additional evidence work to support objective 3, following the outcomes of the housing needs assessment work:

- Site assessment/ settlement boundary background paper; and
- Background paper on second and holiday homes.

Habitat regulations assessment and strategic environmental assessment

- 5.13 As explained in section 2, neighbourhood plans must be compatible with EU obligations, specifically with regard to strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and habitats regulations assessment (HRA). SEA is a way of ensuring that the environmental implications of policies are taken into account before plans are brought into force. The main purpose of the HRA process is to ensure that the plan will not result in significant damage to internationally important nature conservation sites.
- 5.14 In order to establish whether a SEA or HRA is required, a screening opinion should be requested from the county council. Given the relationship and proximity of the plan area to internationally important nature conservation sites, if the plan encourages any development, for example by identifying a settlement envelope and/ or identifying sites, it is likely that the plan will require an HRA. The requirement for an HRA would then automatically trigger the need for a SEA.
- 5.15 Northumberland County Council are currently leading the HRA work for other town and parish councils within Northumberland. If the Hauxley Neighbourhood Plan either proposed to allocate land for development or incorporate design codes, then HPC will be eligible for the SEA technical support package via Locality.

6. Timetable and funding

Timetable

- 6.1 The indicative project plan that was included within the fee proposal for the neighbourhood plan identifies the key tasks involved in the preparation of the plan. Until the scope and evidence requirements are agreed, it is difficult to provide a more detailed timetable/ project plan. For ease of reference, the submitted timetable is included at appendix 2. This will be updated when the scope of the plan and evidence requirements are agreed by HPC.

Funding

- 6.2 The fee proposal identified two phases of the neighbourhood plan process to assist HPC to submission of the neighbourhood plan for examination, an extract from the proposal is set out below.

Phase 1 – preparation of the pre-submission neighbourhood plan

Activity	Time allocated
Stage 1: Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception meeting, including agreement of project plan; • Evidence/ engagement review; • Preparation of draft vision, objectives and policy themes – discussion and agreement at steering group meeting; • Advice on engagement on vision and attendance at drop in event; • Liaison with Northumberland County Council; • Identify the need for additional evidence requirements and input to briefs for consultants, such as design code and housing needs assessment (if required). Note: the time identified does not include time to prepare additional evidence documents. A fee quote can be provided if additional work is necessary; • Attendance at steering group meeting to provide feedback on stage 1 and agree next steps. 	2 days
Stage 2: Developing a draft plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input to the preparation of any additional evidence base documents under preparation by other consultants; • Preparation of pre-submission plan; • Liaison with NCC including requesting SEA/ HRA screening opinions and preparation of policies map; • Attendance at steering group meeting to agree draft plan; • Guidance on engagement and attendance at an engagement event. 	3 days
Total time	5 days (37.5 hrs)
Project fee	£2,250

Phase 2 – preparation of the submission neighbourhood plan

Activity	Time allocated
Stage 1: Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review written representations made to the pre-submission plan and preparation of draft responses; • Advice on additional evidence required; • Recommendations on revisions to the plan; • Liaison with Northumberland County Council; • Attendance at steering group meeting to agree next steps; 	1.5 days
Stage 2: Preparation of submission neighbourhood plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to draft plan; 	

Activity	Time allocated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with Northumberland County Council; Attendance at steering group meeting to agree final submission plan; 	1.5 days
Stage 3: Preparation of associated documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of the consultation statement; and Preparation of the basic conditions report. 	2 days
Stage 4: Input to examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in compiling responses to questions from the appointed examiner. 	1 day
Total time	6 days (45 hrs)
Project fee	£2,700

6.3 Given the uncertainty regarding the scope of the plan, the proposal explained that the proposal did not include time to prepare additional evidence document. Based on this review, it is considered the following additional evidence work could be undertaken, depending on the scope of the plan:

- Local green space and protected open space background paper;
- Site assessment/ settlement boundary background paper;
- Background paper on second and holiday homes.

6.4 If HPC wanted to progress this work, it is estimated that, to complete all three elements would require an additional two days of my time (£900). Should HPC decide to progress with either site allocations or design codes then it will be eligible to apply for a further £8,000 (additional to the basic grant funding of £10,000).

7. Conclusions and next steps

7.1 All of the recommendations identified within the report are listed below for ease of reference.

7.2 The details of the next steps will very much depend on the proposed scope of the neighbourhood plan. Therefore, an important next step is for HPC to agree the proposed scope of the plan. This could be informed by early engagement with the local community on the vision, objectives and draft themes for planning policies and community actions.

Recommendations

- Consider undertaking a further early engagement exercise to obtain feedback on a draft vision, objectives and themes for planning policies and community actions;
- Consider and provide comments on the draft vision, objectives and themes for planning policies and community actions;
- The existing environmental designations within the plan area should be mapped and HPC should consider whether there is a need for the allocation of additional sites/ areas/ networks. Any new allocation would need to be supported by evidence;
- Consider the identification of local green space and/ or protected open space within the neighbourhood plan. If HPC decide to include this within the plan, it would be beneficial to undertake early engagement (this could be part of the consultation on the vision and

-
- objectives) to identify sites that are important to the local community and prepare a background paper to justify any proposed designations;
5. Consider applying for the design codes technical support package to inform design policy (or policies) within the plan;
 6. Consider commissioning the following additional evidence work to support objective 3, following the outcomes of the housing needs assessment work:
 - a. Site assessment/ settlement boundary background paper; and
 - b. Background paper on second and holiday homes.

HAUXLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose of the Steering Group

1.1 Hauxley Parish Council is the qualifying body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan for their civil parish area. Parish Council has established a Steering Group to facilitate the delivery of this plan.

1.2 The Group will:

- provide a locally accountable and representative lead for plan-making;
- agree a project timetable and endeavour to secure compliance;
- agree a project communication, consultation and engagement strategy;
- agree the initial scope of the Plan prior to early public engagement;
- confirm, subject to consultation with the Parish Council, the scope of the Plan following analysis of early and subsequent community engagement;
- approve all background and evidence based reports prior to publication;
- agree all consultation documents prior to publication;
- agree, subject to ratification by the Parish Council, a final submission version of the Hauxley Neighbourhood Development Plan; and
- actively support and promote the preparation of the Hauxley Neighbourhood Development Plan throughout the duration of the project.

1.3 The Steering Group will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Steering Group will remain active until the independent examiners report is published.

2. Steering Group Objective

2.1 The objective of the Steering Group is to produce a sound Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish of Hauxley, that defines the spatial planning policy priorities identified by

the community taking into account all representations made during the plan-making process and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence. The Plan will include or be supported by an appropriate delivery plan setting out, where relevant, the means by which these policy priorities may be implemented.

3. Steering Group Membership

3.1 The Steering Group will comprise the following members:

- Northumberland County Council Ward Member;
- Chair of Hauxley Parish Council;
- Three additional Members of Hauxley Parish Council; and
- other groups/organisations

3.2 Membership will be reviewed and twice annually by the Parish Council.

4. Reporting and Communication

4.1 The Steering Group is established having full delegated authority from the Parish Council to deliver its plan-making functions up to and including publication of a Preferred Options Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Group will report bi-monthly to the Parish Council setting out progress on its work. The Parish Council will approve the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prior to publication for consultation and independent examination.

4.2 The plan-making process remains in the control of the Parish Council as local authority and qualifying body. All publications, consultation and community engagement exercises will be undertaken by or on behalf of Hauxley Parish Council with appropriate recognition of the Parish Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

5. Meetings

5.1 Steering Group meetings will take place monthly/bi-monthly, normally to commence at 6.00pm on a Monday fourteen days prior to the Parish Council meeting. All meetings should

take place in Hauxley Parish of by virtual means. The Parish Council will arrange appropriate venues for the meetings.

5.2 The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from its membership and both persons shall remain in that position following their election until completion of the project. Clause 3.2 of the Terms of Reference does not apply to these positions

5.3 Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A minimum of four members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair shall have one casting vote.

6. Support

6.1 The County Council have a duty to support parish councils who decide to prepare neighbourhood plans or orders. They will:

- provide advice to ensure neighbourhood plans and orders meet the legal requirements; and
- allocate a planning officer to provide support and technical advice throughout the production of the neighbourhood plan

6.2 The Parish Clerk will provide support and administration with delegated powers where provided by the Parish Council.

7. Conduct

7.1 The Steering Group will follow the code of conduct set out by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life. Whilst Members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organisations, the Steering Group as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations. The Steering Group will achieve this through applying the following principles: • Work with mutual trust and respect, and combine their expertise; • Be clear when their individual roles or interests are in conflict; • Provide feedback from Steering Group meetings to their parent organisation; • Assist their parent organisation to bring appropriate ideas and concerns to the attention of the Steering Group; • Inform the Steering Group when they are unable to deliver agreed actions; • Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual

orientation, ethnicity, ability, or religion and belief; and • Actively promote equality of access and opportunity

HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEME

Introduction

This document sets out the framework on which risk management processes at Hauxley Parish Council are based. This framework should assist in ensuring that a consistent approach is taken across the Council for the identification, assessment and evaluation of risks, and for ensuring that actions are proportionate to identified risks, thereby efficiently and effectively utilising resources and maintaining a balance between risks and controls. Risk management will strengthen the ability of the Council to achieve its objectives and enhance the value of services provided.

Risk Management

Risk – ‘Risk is the combination of the probability of an event and its consequence. Consequences can range from positive to negative’.

Risk Management – ‘Process which aims to help organisations understand, evaluate and take action on all their risks with a view to increasing the probability of success and reducing the likelihood of failure.’ [Institute of Risk Management (IRM)]
Risk management is an essential feature of good management and applies to all aspects of the Council’s business.

There is an Audit requirement under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 s.3 to establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework and process for managing risk. Risks and their control will be collated in a Risk Register. A statement about the system of internal control and the management of risk will be included as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts and summarised in the Council’s Business Plan.

Implementing the Strategy involves identifying, analysing/prioritising, managing and monitoring risks.

Risks Types

Strategic Risk – long-term adverse impacts from poor decision-making or poor implementation. Risks causing damage to the reputation of the Council, loss of public confidence, or in a worse case statutory intervention.

Compliance Risk – failure to comply with legislation or laid down procedures or the lack of documentation to prove compliance. Risks exposure to prosecution, judicial review, employment tribunals, inability to enforce contracts etc.

Financial Risk – fraud and corruption, waste, excess demand for services, bad debts. Risk of additional audit investigation, objection to accounts, reduced service delivery, dramatically increased Council tax precept levels/impact on Council reserves.

Operating Risk – failure to deliver services effectively, malfunctioning equipment, hazards to service users, the general public or staff, damage to property. Risk of insurance claims, higher insurance premiums, lengthy recovery processes.

Not all these risks are insurable and for some the premiums may not be cost-effective. Even where insurance is available, money may not be an adequate recompense. The emphasis should always be on eliminating or minimising risk. Risk can be connected to opportunities as well as potential threats.

Risk Identification – Identifying and understanding the hazards and risks facing the Council is crucial if informed decisions are to be made about policies or service delivery methods. The risks associated with these decisions can then be effectively managed.

Risk Analysis – Identified risks need to be systematically and accurately assessed using proven techniques. Analysis should make full use of any available data on the potential frequency of events and their consequences.

Risk Prioritisation – An assessment should be undertaken of the impact and likelihood of risks occurring, with impact and likelihood being scored Low (L), Medium (M) and High (H). The scores for both impact and likelihood are scored in this manner. Risks scoring High will be subject to detailed consideration and preparation of a contingency/action plan to appropriately control the risk.

Risk Control – Risk control is the process of taking action to minimise the likelihood of the risk event occurring and/or reducing the severity of the consequences should it occur. Typically, risk control requires the identification and implementation of revised operating procedures, but in exceptional cases more drastic action will be required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Options for control include:

Tolerate – documenting a conscious decision after assessment of areas where the Council accepts or tolerates risk.

Treat – loss control measures are implemented to reduce the impact/ likelihood of the risk occurring;

Transfer – the financial impact is passed to a third party or by way of insurance. This is good for mitigating financial risks or risks to assets;

Terminate – the circumstances from which the risk arises are ceased so that the risk no longer exists;

Risk Register –Details on the impact and likelihood matrix are included below.

Risk Monitoring – The risk management process does not finish with putting any risk control procedures in place. Their effectiveness in controlling risk must be monitored and reviewed. It is also important to assess whether the nature of any risk has changed over time.

The information generated from applying the risk management process will help to ensure that risks can be avoided or minimised in the future. It will also inform judgements on the nature and extent of insurance cover and the balance to be reached between self-insurance and external protection.

Roles and Responsibilities -

Councillors – risk management is seen as a key part of the councillors' stewardship role and there is an expectation that Elected Members will lead and monitor the approach adopted. This will include:
Approval of the Risk Management Strategy;

Parish Clerk – will ensure that Risk Management is an integral part of any service review process, ensure that recommendations for risk control are detailed in service review reports and will lead in developing and monitoring Performance Indicators for Risk Management.

Employees – will undertake their job within risk management guidelines ensuring that the skills and knowledge passed to them are used effectively.

Role of Internal Audit – the Internal Auditor provides an important scrutiny role carrying out audits to provide independent assurance to the Council. Internal Audit assists the Council in identifying both its financial and operational risks and seeks to assist the Council in developing and implementing proper arrangements to manage them, including adequate and effective systems of internal control to reduce or eliminate the likelihood of errors or fraud.

Training – Risk Management training will be provided to key staff. Councillors will receive appropriate briefings.

Risk Assessment and Management (Financial & Business) for the Period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021
L (Low) M (Medium) H (High)

Financial: Income

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Risk Identified</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Financial Impact</u>	<u>Management of Risk</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
Precept	Not Submitted	L	H	Council Minute	Diary	Annual	Clerk
	Not Paid by Principal Authority	L	H	Check and Report	Diary/Bank Statement	6 monthly	Clerk
	Adequacy of Precept	H	H	Bi- monthly Review of budget to actual	9month budget review	Ongoing	Clerk Council
Charges	Invoices not paid	L	M	Register to invoice Issue of Receipt Segregation of duties	Reconciliation	Annual	Clerk
Investment Income	Surplus funds	L	M	Review annually at year end		Annual	Councillors Clerk

Financial: Expenditure

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Risk Identified</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Financial Impact</u>	<u>Management of Risk</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
Salaries	Wrong salary paid	L	L	Payroll calculation available for checking by Council	Payroll Check	On review	Clerk Council
	Wrong hours paid	L	L				
	Wrong Rate of pay	L	L				
	Wrong deductions - NI/Tax	L	M			6 monthly	Clerk
Direct Costs and Overhead expenses	Goods not supplied	M	M	Order system	Approval check App. Check	Monthly	Clerk
	Invoice incorrectly calculated	M	L	Check arithmetic		Monthly	Accounts Councillors
	Cheque payable to wrong party	M	M	Invoice initialled by signatories			
Grants	Power to Pay	M	M	Minute power			Councillors
	Agreement of Council to pay	L	L	Minute			Councillors
	Cheque	L	L	Signatory signed (3)			Councillors

Election Costs	Invoice at agreed rate	L	L	Accrue annually	Budget review	Annual	Councillors
Vat irrecoverable	Vat Analysis	M	L	All items in cash book	Verify	Quarterly	Accounts
Reserves General	Adequacy	L	M	Consider at budget setting	RFO	Annual	Councillors
Reserves Earmarked	Adequacy	L	M	Consider at budget setting and year end	RFO	Annual	Councillors
Assets	Loss, damage etc.	M	H	Regular inspections, update insurance and register			Clerk Councillors.
	Risk to third party	M	M	Review adequacy of public liability insurance	Diary	Annual	Councillors
Staff	Loss of key personnel Fraud by staff	L L	H L	Hours, health, stress etc. Fidelity guarantee insurance	Committee Council	Annual	Councillors Councillors
Loss	Consequential loss due to critical damage or third party performance	L	M	Insurance cover review adequacy		Annual	Councillors

Topic	Risk Identified	Likelihood	Financial Impact	Management of Risk	Action	Frequency	Ownership
Cash	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	L	No cash handling in place	Council	Annual	Councillors
Maintenance	Poor perf. of assets or amenities	L	M	Regular maintenance inspections		Ongoing	Clerk
Borrowing	Adequacy of finances to repay loans	M	M	Financial review and cash flow forecasting			Accounts Councillors

Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payment	L	L	Education of members as to their legal powers			Councillors Clerk
Financial Records	Inadequate Records	L	L	Regular internal audit and year end health check	Internal Auditor Accountant	6 monthly	Accounts Clerk
Medium Term Financial Plan	Need to plan for longer term	M	H	Prepare and maintain MTFS	Review	Annual	Councillors Clerk

Strategic

Topic	Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Management of Risk	Action	Frequency	Ownership
Grants	Need to review Grant Scheme and link to strategic priorities	M	M	Target priorities	Review Scheme	annually	Clerk
Village Plan	Unable to take forward key priorities	L	M	Include in Strategy & Business Plan	Review	annually	Clerk
Additional recreation/ sports land	Possible acquisition under s106 Prepare for costs and operation	L	M	Included in Budget Prepare for operations and future maintenance		Prior to event	Clerk
Corporate Strategy	Lack of clear direction	H	M	Prepare priorities & objectives	Follow Strategy	4 years	Clerk Councillors
Business Plan	Unable to implement Strategy	H	M	Follow to deliver Strategy	Follow and update	annually	Clerk Councillors
Future Services	Unable to afford or deliver	L	H	Need to be in accordance with Strategy & be included in Business Plan		Ongoing	Clerk

Operational

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Risk Identified</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Management of Risk</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
Insurance Cover for Council	Risk to finances, staff and third parties if inadequate cover	L	H	Buildings & Land Allotments Contents Equipment Fidelity Theft Personal Injury (Members/Officers) Public Liability Slander/Libel Employer Liability External Events	Monitor Cover and update as necessary	Ongoing	Clerk
Workplace Security	Risk to staff, damage to building/contents & data	M	H	Maintain security of building, alarms, back up files onsite, fire safety, password protect computer data	Monitor and maintain	Ongoing	Clerk
Regular maintenance of assets	Risk to staff & third parties also of loss or damage	M	M	Annual Business Risk Assessments completed Adequate legislative safety checks of assets	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Asset Register	Risk if assets not properly recorded & valued	L	M	Accurate & timely	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Newspace	Threats to preparation/delivery	L	L	Ensure slot booked with The Ambler	Early preparation	Bi-Monthly	Clerk
Council Liability	Lone person working compliance with law	L	M	Introduce Lone Working Policy	Monitor & review	Ongoing	Clerk
	Contract of Employment	L	L	For all staff	Monitor & review	Ongoing	Clerk
	Duty of Care to visitors, staff and councillors	M	H	Adequate insurance, risk assessments and action plans	Monitor & review	Ongoing	Clerk
	Other Employment Conditions compliance with legislation	L	M	Review terms & conditions, contracts, development reviews & insurance	Monitor & review	Ongoing	Clerk

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Risk Identified</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Management of Risk</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
	Loss of Key Staff	L	H	Need contingency arrangements and succession planning	Monitor & review	Ongoing	Clerk
	Councillors- must be adequately advised of their responsibilities and culpability.	L	M	Induction & refresher training	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Health and Safety	Responsible for Members, Employees, Public & Contractors	M	H	Need regular Safety risk assessments both general and specialist, safety policy and safe working procedures.	Need review of risk assessments & SWP	Ongoing	Clerk
Town & Country Planning	Adverse effect on community amenities if fail to respond to Planning applications or Local Plan consultations	L	M	Need for Council to respond. Need guidance and processes	Review & follow processes	Ongoing	Clerk
Training	Essential for councillors & staff if to reach potential	M	M	Need annual training plans & to implement them	Prepare and monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Freedom of information	Need to respond to requests	L	H	Procedure to be accurate and timely	Monitor & report	Ongoing	Clerk
Governance Documents	Interrupt operations if not current & following best practice	L	M	Keep up to date and in line with best practice	Review	2 years	Clerk
Press releases	Comply with publicity code	L	M	Review & monitor	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Data Protection	Need to keep data secure	L	M	Need operational procedures	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Byelaws	Reference to models when adopting	L	L	Not currently applicable			
Archiving documents	Security and statutory retention periods	L	M	Needs to be in accordance with a document retention policy	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Public Access	Public need to be able to access services according to need & safety	L	M	Services available at stated times. Subject to safety inspections	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Administration	Needs to be effective	M	M	Review & introduce procedures	Review & monitor	Ongoing	Clerk

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Risk Identified</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Management of Risk</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
Contracts	Compliance with legislation/ governance documents when letting	L	H	Prepare specification, determine on price and quality	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
	Risk to performance and cost if not properly monitored	L	H	Monitor against specification and price	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk

Compliance

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Risk Identified</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Financial</u>	<u>Management of Risk</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
Minutes	Accurate and Legal	L	L	Approved at following meeting			
Confidential Matters	Accurate and Legal	M	H	Need to be on agenda and minutes need to be public	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Members Interests	Conflict of Interest	M	L	Update declarations of interest Recording on minutes of declarations		Annual Monthly	Councillors Clerk
Councillor Declarations	Accurate and Legal	H	M	Need copy on Website or link to Central Beds.	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Dispensations	Not compliance with legislation	H	H	Require individual applications and approvals	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Budget & Precept	In accordance with legislation	L	H	Compliance, advice by accountant	follow process	Annual	Clerk Accountant
Accounts & Annual Return	In accordance with Regulations	L	H	Compliance with Regulations	follow process	Annual	Clerk RFO
Audit process	Internal or external not following Regulations	L	H	Compliance with Regulations	follow process	Annual	Clerk RFO
Website	Not compliant with Transparency Code	L	M	Review in line with Code	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Code of Conduct	Compliant with legislation & best practice	M	M	Code & procedures kept current	Renew or add guide	Annual	Clerk Accountant
Agendas and Notices	Not complying with legislation	L	H	Follow legislation. Use term "Summon"	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Freedom of Information	Legal	M	M	Follow legislation, allow request by letter/email	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Publication Scheme	Legal	H	M	Use latest model	Review & follow process	Ongoing	Clerk
Data Protection	Legal	L	H	Ensure registration & follow guide	Monitor	Ongoing	Clerk
Newsletter	Compliance with Publicity Code	L	L	Check content against Code	Monitor	Monthly	Clerk
Charitable Trust	Understanding responsibilities			No trusts operated by Council			

Statutory Governance Documents	Not compliant with legislation or current	L	H	Regular Reviews	Monitor	Annual	Clerk
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INTRODUCTION

This policy provides a framework for dealing fairly and consistently with:

- a) Issues where a clerk is alleged to have breached our standards of conduct and behaviour (Disciplinary)
- b) Current Clerks grievances (Grievance)
- c) Clerks where their performance or attendance falls below the required standards (Competency)

This policy applies to all Clerks regardless of status or length of status. This does not apply to cases involving genuine sickness absence or proposed redundancy.

GENERAL RULES

1.1 At all times Clerks must:

- a) Behave with integrity
- b) Treat councillors with respect and fairness
- c) Help create a working environment which supports and enables councillors to do their role
- d) Comply with all Council work practices, policies and procedures
- e) Work to the highest standards of governance and risk management
- f) Ensure maximum efficiency in their work
- g) Act wholeheartedly in the interests of the Council at all times

1.2 The telephone and postal service must not be used for non-council purposes without prior permission. Reasonable use of IT equipment is permitted.

1.3 Must not perform, arrange, or carry out any work or activity which could be considered to be in competition with or which adversely affect in any way the Council's interests

1.4 An orderly and courteous manner must be maintained with members of the public.

DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

1.1 Criminal charges, or convictions, for offences of dishonesty or violence committed during the period of your employment with us, whether committed during or outside normal working hours should be reported to the Chairman immediately.

1.2 Such charges, or convictions, may result in disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal.

1.3 Failure to disclose such criminal proceedings/convictions that arise during the period of your employment could also result in disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal.

1.4 A charge or conviction for any other type of offence during the period of your employment should also be reported to the Chairman. Such charges or convictions may result in disciplinary proceedings being taken against you, up to and including dismissal, where, in our opinion, the charge or conviction: a. affects your suitability for your role b. impairs our business reputation c. seriously undermines the trust and confidence that we have in you.

GROSS MISCONDUCT

2.1: The following list provides examples of conduct that will normally be regarded by the council as Gross Misconduct. This list is not exhaustive:

- a) Refusal or repeated failure to carry out his or her duties.
- b) Falsification of documents or information (including expense claims).
- c) Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.
- d) Assault, physical violence or bullying whilst acting or purporting to act on behalf of the Council.

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- e) Insulting, indecent or offensive behaviour towards a fellow clerk or any other person whilst acting or purporting to act on behalf of the council.
- f) Serious or repeated harassment (including sexual and racial harassment).
- g) Bringing the organisation into serious disrepute.
- h) Incapacity at work due to the influence of alcohol, unprescribed drugs or any other substance.
- i) Wilful damage to Council property.
- j) Theft, unauthorised use or possession of council property or fraud.
- k) Serious insubordination.
- l) Serious breach of health and safety rules.
- m) Any other conduct that from time to time is defined by the Council as amounting to gross misconduct.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

3.1 Misconduct is when ones has failed to follow the Council's rules, practices, policies or procedures, including any team policies, or has breached any applicable law or regulations.

3.2 For instances of minor misconduct the Chairman may speak to the Clerk informally before implementing the formal disciplinary procedure (Annex A).

3.3 Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- a. Failure to follow Council policies, procedures and protocols
- b. Neglect of duties
- c. Unsatisfactory timekeeping or absenteeism
- d. Regular or persistent lateness or unauthorised absence without an acceptable reason
- e. Behaviours which do not support the Council's values
- f. Any other conduct that from time to time is designed by the Council as amounting to misconduct or breach of Council general rules

3.4 Disciplinary matters will be dealt with by the Chairman

3.5 Disciplinary matters will be dealt with in a timely and professional manner

3.6 Disciplinary matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure

3.7 The Council's Disciplinary procedure shall have 4 distinct stages; Investigation, Disciplinary Meeting, Outcome and Appeal

3.8 Where disciplinary proceedings are initiated against the Clerk, Verbal and Written Warnings will be given by the Council. Any investigations and any meetings will be carried out by a specially convened Personnel Committee comprising three members appointed by the Council.

3.9 Dismissal of the Clerk must be ratified by Council. Any disciplinary appeal meeting will be conducted by three members of the Council who do not sit on the Personnel Committee.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

4.1 Where there is a grievance relating to any aspect of employment the Clerk should follow the grievance procedure (Annex B)

4.2 Decisions made following a grievance must be confirmed in writing.

4.3 Grievances will be dealt with and investigated promptly

4.4 Clerks have a right to be accompanied at meetings as detailed in the procedure

4.5 Where a Personnel Committee is established to investigate a grievance it shall consist of three members of the Council with terms of reference to follow the procedure and determine an outcome on behalf of the Council.

**ANNEX A: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE
INVESTIGATION**

1. An investigation into any matter which is suspected to contravene any of the Council's rules, policies, procedures, instruction or applicable law/regulation, or which otherwise may be a disciplinary matter will be carried out as soon as reasonably practical.
2. The purpose of investigation is to establish the facts of the case and whether there is a case to answer.
3. Investigations will be carried out a Personnel Committee.
4. The Clerk may take a companion to the investigation meeting; this may be a friend or a union representative. The companion's role is to support the Clerk but they cannot take part in the procedure itself.
5. After consideration of the evidence found during the investigation, the committee will decide whether there is a case to answer; if it is decided that there is no further action to be taken the case will be closed. If it is decided the matter should progress a disciplinary meeting shall be convened.

DISCIPLINARY MEETING

1. The Clerk will receive a written invitation to the meeting which will:
 - a. Set out the allegations
 - b. Include the time, date and place of the meeting
 - c. Include the evidence from the investigation which will be relied on
 - d. Explain the clerk's role in the meeting
 - e. Explain the clerk's right to be accompanied at the meeting.
2. The Clerk will be given sufficient time to prepare for the meeting which will vary dependent upon the complexity of the case but never be less than 7 working days.
3. If the Clerk or their companion is unable to attend the Clerk must notify the committee as soon as possible. The meeting will be rearranged for as soon as is reasonably practical. Where the Clerk is persistently unable or unwilling to attend without good cause, the meeting can be held in their absence and a decision made using the evidence available.
4. The Clerk may take a companion to the meeting who will be a friend or union representative. The companion may assist them through the procedure however the companion cannot answer questions on behalf of The Clerk
5. Disciplinary meetings can be adjourned to enable further investigation, to seek further advice or to consider a decision.

OUTCOME

1. If it is deemed there is no case to answer no further action will be taken and this will be confirmed to the Clerk in writing.
2. If the committee determines there has been an act(s) of misconduct there is a range of formal actions and sanctions which may be imposed. Informal action (e.g. training) may also be recommended. The decision on appropriate sanction will be made considering the Clerk's explanation and any mitigating factors.
3. The decision will be communicated in writing as soon as practical and where possible the Clerk will also be informed in person.
4. There are three levels of sanction and any one may be used depending on the circumstances of the case:
 - a. First Written Warning: for acts of misconduct a first written warning may be issued unless there is a current warning on file or the case is sufficiently serious.
 - b. Final Written Warning: for further acts of misconduct following a written warning or in serious cases which fall short of gross misconduct.

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- c. Dismissal: A decision to dismiss with notice may be taken where a previous written warning has already been issued but further misconduct has occurred, or the matter is so serious that it is no longer appropriate for employment to continue.
5. Warnings are given in writing and will:
 - a. Set out the nature of the misconduct that must not reoccur
 - b. State the period of time the warning will remain live for
 - c. Inform the Clerk that further misconduct is likely to result in further disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
 - d. State that the warning may be taken into account when considering the clerk's performance reviews
 - e. State the Clerk may appeal against the warning.
6. Warnings will normally remain live for 12 months.
7. Dismissal of the Clerk must be approved by Council.
8. Where gross misconduct has occurred the Council is entitled to dismiss a Clerk without contractual notice period or payment in lieu of notice being given.
9. Following dismissal the Clerk will receive a letter confirming the reasons for the dismissal, confirmation of the effective date of termination and outlining the right of appeal.

APPEAL

1. The Clerk has the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision
2. The appeal will be heard by a Personnel Committee comprised members not involved in the original decision.
3. An appeal should be submitted in writing within 10 working days after the receipt of the disciplinary decision and must clearly set out the grounds for the appeal.
4. The Clerk will receive an invitation to an appeal meeting confirming the date, time and location and informing the clerk they have a right to be accompanied at the meeting.
6. The meeting shall be convened as soon as is reasonably practical and normally within 20 working days. If the Clerk or their companion is unable to attend the Clerk must notify the committee as soon as possible. The meeting will be rearranged for as soon as is reasonably practical. Where the Clerk is persistently unable or unwilling to attend without good cause, the meeting can be held in their absence and a decision made using the evidence available.
5. The appeal meeting is intended to provide an opportunity for the Clerk to present any new evidence or explain why they believe the original disciplinary decision was incorrect. The appeal is not a re-hearing of the original issue.
6. Appeal meetings may be adjourned to enable the committee to investigate any matters further, to seek further advice or consider their decision.
7. The committee will reach one of the following decisions: a. To uphold the original disciplinary action taken b. To reduce the level of sanction issued c. To overturn the original decision
8. The decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

ANNEX B: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE **INFORMAL STAGE**

1. The Clerk should always discuss day-to-day concerns with the Chairman. In the event that an issue cannot be resolved informally or is so serious that it would be inappropriate to attempt to resolve the issue informally, the Clerk can have the matter investigated under the formal stages of the grievance procedure.
2. The formal stages should only be invoked if informal means have been unsuccessful or are not appropriate.

FORMAL STAGE

1. A formal grievance should be submitted in writing to the Chairman; or if about the Chairman, to the Deputy Chairman.
2. The letter should set out what attempts if any have been made to resolve the grievance so far and what the Clerk thinks is a realistic and achievable outcome. If Clerk chooses to raise a grievance they should do so as soon as possible. The Parish Council reserves the right not to hear a grievance if undue delay in raising the issue, for example, prevents thorough investigation.

GRIEVANCE MEETING

1. The Personnel Committee will invite the Clerk to a meeting as soon as is reasonably practical and normally within 20 working days. An update of progress will be made within 10 working days.
2. The Clerk will be given the opportunity explain their issue and will be asked questions to help understand the issues, discuss what attempts have been made to resolve them, review any evidence and discuss the desired outcome. There will be a note taker at the meeting.
3. The scope of the investigation will be appropriate to address the issues raised. This may involve holding investigation meetings, gathering statements and reviewing any appropriate documents. The grievance will be dealt with sensitively and in a timely manner.
4. The Clerk may take a companion to the grievance meeting who will be a friend or union representative. The companion may assist them through the procedure however they will not be able to answer questions on behalf of the Clerk.

If the Clerk or their companion is unable to attend the meeting they must notify the committee as soon as possible and the meeting will be rearranged for as soon as is reasonably practical without causing unreasonable delay. If the Clerk is persistently unwilling or unable to attend the meeting the Council reserves the right to conduct an investigation and make a decision on the evidence available.

OUTCOME

1. The Clerk will be updated at least every 10 working days on the progress of the investigation and in normal circumstances it should be completed within 20 working days following the grievance meeting.
2. Once complete committee will provide a response in writing to the Clerk explaining the outcome of the review, the reason for their decision and details of who they should write to if they wish to appeal the decision.
3. The Clerk can withdraw their grievance at any stage of this procedure. In the event of withdrawal, the council reserves the right to continue to investigate and deal with any issues arising from that investigation.

APPEAL

1. If the Clerk is not satisfied with the outcome of the grievance, they have the right to appeal.
2. The appeal will be heard by a Personnel Committee comprising different members to the original committee.
3. An appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of the grievance decision and must clearly set out the main issues of concern and in particular why the Clerk feels that the initial stage did not resolve their grievance.
4. The Clerk will receive an invitation to an appeal meeting confirming the date, time and location and informing them they have the right to be accompanied. This will be normally held within 20 working days of the receipt of an appeal.

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5. If the Clerk or their companion is unable to attend the meeting they must notify the committee as soon as possible and the meeting will be rearranged for a soon as is reasonably practical without causing unreasonable delay. Where the Clerk is unable or unwilling to attend an appeal meeting without good cause the appeal meeting can be held in their absence and a decision will be made using the evidence available.
6. The appeal meeting is to provide an opportunity for the Clerk to explain why they believe the original decision was incorrect or remains unresolved and allow the committee to review any new evidence, ask questions and ensure they fully understand the grounds of the appeal.
7. Appeal meetings can be adjourned to allow the committee to investigate any matters further, to seek further advice or to consider their decision.
8. After the committee has completed a full review they may meet with the Clerk to advise them of the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for their decision, this will always be confirmed in writing.
9. The decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

For consideration of the Council July 2020

For review July 2021