

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Chief Officer: Chris Shaw

Council Offices, 78 Church Road, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 5PB - 01606 41510
www.northwichtowncouncil.gov.uk chrisshaw@northwichtowncouncil.gov.uk



Northwich
town council

DATE: 27th October 2025

To: The Members of Northwich Town Council

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the **Full Council** at the **Council Chamber, 78 Church Road, Northwich, CW9 5PB** to be held on **Monday 3rd November 2025 at 6.00pm**.

Yours Sincerely

Chris Shaw

Chief Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of interest

Members to declare any interest under the following categories:

*Pecuniary interest

*Outside bodies interest

*Family, friend, or close associate interest

3. Open Forum

Members of the public will be allowed to speak at the Open Forum section of this meeting on the understanding that any topics raised will have been forwarded in writing to the Chief Officer at the above address prior to the date of the meeting. Public Question Time to be a maximum of 10 minutes.

4. Signing of the Minutes

4.1. Of the Town Council meeting held on Monday 6th October 2025 (Minutes attached)

Members are required to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record.

5. Reports of Committees

5.1 To note Finance, Amenities & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 20th October 2025.

5.2 To note Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 27th October 2025

Members to note the minutes.

6. Town Mayors Communications

List of Civic Events that the Town Mayor has attended during October 2025 (attached)

Members to note the report.

- 7. Chief Officers Report**
To receive a report from the Chief Officer (attached)
[Members to note the report.](#)
- 8. Christmas & New Year Opening Times**
Report attached.
[Decision of the Council is requested.](#)
- 9. Victoria Infirmary Update**
To receive a report following the recent engagement days.
[Members to note the report.](#)
- 10. Publication Scheme**
To receive a report
[Decision of the Council is requested.](#)
- 11. Employee Handbook**
Members to approve revised Employee
[Decision of the Council is requested.](#)
- 12. Model Standing Orders**
Members to approve Model Standing Orders
[Decision of the Council is requested.](#)
- 13. Police Update**
To receive a report from Northwich Police
[Report to be given at the meeting.](#)
- 14. Outside Bodies**
To receive an update from any member attending meetings of outside bodies.
- 15. CW&C Members**
To receive an update from CW&C ward members
- 16. Date of next meeting**
The next meeting will be on Monday 5th December 2025 at 6.00pm

Part B

In accordance with Local Government Act—Public Admission to Meetings Act 1960, the following agenda items are to be considered in the absence of press and public.

- 17. Staffing**
Members to approve attached report.
[Decision of the Council is requested.](#)

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 6th OCTOBER 2025

Present:

Cllr Robert Cernik Deputy Town Mayor

Councillors:

Cllr Emma Guy	Cllr Tom Melville
Cllr Kate Cernik	Cllr Graham Emmett
Cllr Stephen Harcombe	Cllr Rachel Waterman
Cllr Andy Kent	Cllr Lee Siddall
Cllr Andy Stott	Cllr Tom Melville
Cllr Janet Illidge	Cllr Alison Gerrard
Councillor Joanna Callaghan	

Also present:

Cath Kirwan Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer

NTC 25/48 PRESENTATION OF TOWN MAYORS AWARD

Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Robert Cernik, presented the Town Mayor's Award to Rupert Adams in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the community, from promoting biodiversity to enhancing residents' wellbeing.

Councillor Rachel Waterman also spoke about Rupert's positive impact, describing him as a "force for good" and highlighting the importance he places on listening to others, fostering community cohesion, and offering support to those around him.

Rupert Adam is a key figure in the local Rotary Club, where he has served as both an active member and a past President.

He was nominated for the Town Mayor's Award by Councillor Kate Cernik.

6.10pm - Councillor Joanna Callaghan arrived.

NTC 25/49 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON NORTHWICH LIBRARY

Cheshire West and Chester Council Officer, Rachel Foster, Head of Communities, Culture and Libraries provided members with an update on the redevelopment of Northwich Library. The £4.5 million project funded in part by CWC and Arts Council England aims to create a building and library offer that is fit for future generations.

A Grade II listed building, the building requires full repair and refurbishment. Plans include the installation of a platform lift for access to the second floor, realigning internal space including an accessible community room and improving outdoor space. Sustainability is a key focus within the limitations of the heritage of the building; there will be improvements to the building's overall energy efficiency.

Members were shown concept images, and Rachel Foster explained the proposed internal layout. The upper floor will be primarily occupied by the Employment and Skills Service/ Work Zone, with rooms also available for community or business bookings where possible. At the rear of the building, the existing timber frame will be reclad, and garden access will be included. Fencing and signage around the rear of the building will also be upgraded.

Date.....

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Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Mayor

The children's library will be redesigned with improved seating and a feature wall.

The library was closed in 2022 due to emergency structural issues. Following the closure, urgent work was carried out to stabilise the building, focused on the main risk area which was the west elevation. All floorboards had to be lifted, and asbestos was discovered and removed. Original features including the roof light have been uncovered and will be restored.

A temporary library is currently operating at Weaver Hall Museum (Salt Museum), with a pop-up library also in place at Brio Leisure Centre. A wide range of activities are available at the library at Weaver Hall, noting that last year the service attracted more than 60k visitors and issued over 80k items.

The library team is eager for the library to return to its permanent location. Northwich Library, in last full operational year before Covid and then the emergency closure, attracted over 123k visitors and issued over 189k items per year and is an important footfall driver in Witton Street.

Once planning permission is hopefully approved, work is expected to begin in early 2026, with completion aimed for late 2026. Rachel Foster confirmed that more than 20 expressions of interest in an initial construction market test have been received from contractors.

Cllr Stephen Harcombe asked whether IT service needs had been considered. Rachel Foster confirmed there will be fixed computers, improved Wi-Fi, and printing services. Some other libraries are now also Resident Assistance Points to assist the public with council services, this will be explored for Northwich Library.

Cllr Harcombe also asked what would happen to the Weaver Hall Museum once the library vacates. Rachel responded that partner organisations have expressed interest in the space, which could help maintain the increased footfall and meet budget challenges.

Cllr Rachel Waterman, speaking on behalf of Leftwich residents, requested to be involved in ongoing discussions with partners. She also questioned how the Northwich Library building had deteriorated to its current state. Rachel Foster explained that maintenance had been undertaken but that budget constraints mean that pro-active maintenance must be prioritised across the council large estate. Rachel Foster confirmed that a maintenance plan will continue to be in place going forward. Cllr Waterman added that the library is an essential service and that nearby businesses have suffered during its closure.

Cllr Lee Siddall raised concerns about budget contingency. Rachel confirmed that a contingency fund is included in the project budget and expressed confidence that a significant number of surveys and the preparatory work undertaken had already derisked some areas. Given the nature of the heritage asset, it is unclear if further significant issues will arise though the full works, but the team were working to minimise risk where possible. Rachel cited her and the wider teams experience in managing similar projects.

Cllr Andy Kent asked how footfall is measured. Rachel explained that the service was exploring more digital methods however while some buildings have electronic counters, others rely on periodic manual counts (e.g., counting visitors during 15 minutes of each hour). Although not perfectly accurate, these methods are consistent across the service and sufficient for tracking usage and planning services.

Date.....

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Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Mayor

NTC 25/50 **TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM MARK BEBBINGTON FROM**
NEW ERA COMMUNITY BOXING AND SPORTS

Members received a presentation from Mark Bebbington, coach and founder of New Era

Community CIC. Established in 2011, New Era was the first boxing club in the area. Mark, a former competitive boxer, shared his journey and the development of the club, which now works extensively with a range of partners and has a significant positive impact on the local community.

When applying for funding, Mark is often asked whether there is a genuine need for boxing and outreach services in the area. His response is a resounding “yes”, citing ongoing demand and the club’s success in engaging residents.

New Era not only provides boxing training but also distributes grants, supports grassroots sport, and assists other clubs with a variety of services.

Cllr Robert Cernik asked how Northwich Town Council could support the club. Mark explained that the facility is often empty during the day, suggesting potential for daytime use and engagement.

Cllr Kate Cernik highlighted issues with anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the area, particularly during school holidays. She suggested exploring HAF (Holiday Activities and Food programme) funding and proposed linking Mark with the local PCSO to develop opportunities for youth engagement.

Cllr Emma Guy inquired whether the club works with SEND groups. Mark responded that while he has worked with some SEND-focused sessions, these are typically delivered through short-term projects. Once project funding ends, ongoing costs can become a barrier for families. He is currently running weekly sessions with Oaklands School in Winsford until Christmas.

Cllr Lee Siddall, who knows Mark personally, praised his work and confirmed that Mark is eager to connect with funders, including through SPORTED, to bring people together and build partnerships.

Cllr Rachel Waterman noted that in her Leftwich ward, young people have expressed feelings of boredom and a lack of meaningful activities.

Northwich Town Councillors agreed to inform Mark Bebbington of any local groups or organisations who may benefit from a grant distributed through New Era Community CIC. This will help further support grassroots initiatives and strengthen community ties through shared funding opportunities.

Mark’s presentation was well-received by members, who acknowledged the importance of his work and the potential for further collaboration to benefit the wider Northwich community.

NTC 25/51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Olwyn Dean, Cllr Arthur Neil, Cllr Patricia Parkes, Cllr Sam Naylor, Cllr Catherine Fox, Cllr Brian Holland and Cllr Catriona Stewart

Date.....

.....
Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Mayor

NTC 25/52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interest under the following categories:

- Pecuniary Interest
- Outside Bodies Interest
- Family, Friend or Close Associate Interest

Councillor Rachel Waterman declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Councillor Alison Gerrard declared an interest in any matters relating to Rudheath Parish Chester Council.

Town Mayor's Communications	
19 th September	LOL – Knutsford Little Theatre
20 th September	Winsford Salt Fair
20 th September	Northwich Beer Festival
26 th September	Rail 200 Walk
27 th September	Northwich Uke Club, The Salty Dog

Councillor Emma Guy declared an interest in her role as Parliamentary Office Manager for Sarah Pochin (MP, Runcorn and Helsby).

NTC 25/53 OPEN FORUM

There were no speakers.

NTC 25/54 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

- 5.1 The minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 1st September 2025 be confirmed and approved as a true and accurate record.

*Proposed by Cllr Graham Emmett and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan
All agreed.*

Minutes to be signed by the Mayor.

NTC 25/55 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- 6.1 To note Finance, Amenities & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025
6.2 To note Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025

Members noted the minutes of the meetings

NTC 25/56 POLICE UPDATE

No report given.

NTC 25/57 TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor's diary – September 2025

Date.....

.....
Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Town Mayor

Trust. Discussions took place regarding the potential to bring historic vessels to Northwich, which would enhance the town's heritage offering.

As part of this initiative, it was noted that the canal would need to be dredged to accommodate the vessels. Further updates will be provided as discussions progress.

Councillor Alison Gerrard left at 7pm.

NTC 25/58 CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

Members received the report from the Chief Officer.

*Proposed by Cllr Catherine Fox and seconded by Cllr Kate Cernik
All agreed*

Members noted the Chief Officers Report

NTC 25/59 SOLAR FARM (DISCHARGE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS)

A member of the public recorded the agenda item. The Deputy Mayor asked if there were any objections to this and none were raised.

Members received a report from Councillor Graham Emmett regarding the planning application for the proposed Solar Farm on the Wallerscote Lime Beds. The application has already been approved by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC).

Councillor Emmett informed the council of the formation of a campaign group named "Stop the HGVs", which has raised concerns about the project. A barrister involved has advised that all 41 planning conditions must be discharged before any work can commence.

Councillor Neil highlighted several conditions that are causing concern among the group.

Councillor Emmett expressed a desire for CWaC to reconsider their usual procedure, in which planning officers alone oversee the discharge of conditions. Instead, he suggested the process should allow for more formal consideration and oversight by elected councillors.

Date.....

.....
Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Town Mayor

Councillor Jo Callaghan asked about the project timeline. Councillor Emmett responded that once planning is agreed, the applicant will have six months to produce a proposal that will satisfy the discharge conditions.

Councillor Andy Kent shared concerns that CWaC planning officers may not fully understand the depth of public concern surrounding the development. He recommended that CWaC councillors be made aware of the strength of feeling in the community. A letter will be sent from the Mayor on behalf of Northwich Town Council to express these concerns.

Councillor Emma Guy suggested that the letter should include the names of all councillors to demonstrate unity and strength of opinion.

Northwich Town Council proposes that elected CWaC councillors have the right to consider the discharge of planning conditions. Whilst we understand that normal procedure for CWaC is for planning officers to have oversight of discharge of conditions, this is not written in statute.

Where a development has serious health, safety and environmental implications, CWaC

councillors should be involved in the discharge of conditions.

In relation to the Winnington Solar Farm planning application, we request that discharge application relating to the following (but not limited to) conditions be considered by councillors rather than officers.

- 11 Emergency Response Plan
- 15 BESS Design and Drainage Scheme
- 16 Contaminated Land
- 19 Unexpected Contamination Protocol
- 20 Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)

Proposed by Cllr Andy Stott and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan.

All agreed

NTC 25/60 **NORTHWICH INFIRMARY CAR PARK PRESS RELEASE**

Members received a report from the Chief Officer regarding Northwich Infirmary Car Park Press Release.

Noted

All agreed

NTC 25/61 **CHRISTMAS LIGHT TENDER**

Members received a report from Chief Officer on the Christmas Lights Tenders.

Members to approve Finance Committee recommendation to award LITE the contract to supply the Festive Lighting in Northwich for a five year period.at a total cost of £30,005 per annum.

Proposed by Cllr Graham Emmett and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan

All agreed

Date.....

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Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Town Mayor

NTC 25/62 **OUTSIDE BODIES**

Councillor Graham Emmett reported that he recently attended the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management) Awards alongside a member of Northwich Town Council (NTC) staff. He expressed his thanks to all NTC staff for their hard work and commitment, which led to achieving the Gold Award.

Members of the Council joined in offering their appreciation, and it was formally noted that NTC Councillors wish to extend their sincere thanks to the Cemetery Staff for their dedication and excellent service.

NTC 25/63 **CWaC MEMBERS**

Councillor Rachel Waterman informed members about the installation of a new AED in Rose Meadow. The AED has been jointly funded by Rotary, Councillor Waterman's Member Budget, and Northwich Town Council (NTC). The Council noted its appreciation for the collaboration that made this possible.

Councillor Waterman also reported that Leftwich Care Home will soon begin work on a new Brain Unit, which is expected to create 50–70 new jobs in the local area. This development

has been confirmed and is anticipated to begin shortly.

NTC 25/64 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Council meeting will be Monday 3rd November 2025 at 6.00 pm

Meeting closed at 7.35pm

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Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Town Mayor

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 6th OCTOBER 2025

Present:

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Councillors:

Cllr Emma Guy	Cllr Tom Melville
Cllr Kate Cernik	Cllr Graham Emmett
Cllr Stephen Harcombe	Cllr Rachel Waterman
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Also present:

Cath Kirwan Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer

NTC 25/48 PRESENTATION OF TOWN MAYORS AWARD

Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Robert Cernik, presented the Town Mayor's Award to Rupert Adams in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the community, from promoting biodiversity to enhancing residents' wellbeing.

Councillor Rachel Waterman also spoke about Rupert's positive impact, describing him as a "force for good" and highlighting the importance he places on listening to others, fostering community cohesion, and offering support to those around him.

Rupert Adam is a key figure in the local Rotary Club, where he has served as both an active member and a past President.

He was nominated for the Town Mayor's Award by Councillor Kate Cernik.

6.10pm - Councillor Joanna Callaghan arrived.

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Members were shown concept images, and Rachel Foster explained the proposed internal layout. The upper floor will be primarily occupied by the Employment and Skills Service/ Work Zone, with rooms also available for community or business bookings where possible. At the rear of the building, the existing timber frame will be reclad, and garden access will be included. Fencing and signage around the rear of the building will also be upgraded.

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Cllr Robert Cernik
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Cllr Robert Cernik asked how Northwich Town Council could support the club. Mark explained that the facility is often empty during the day, suggesting potential for daytime use and engagement.

Cllr Kate Cernik highlighted issues with anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the area, particularly during school holidays. She suggested exploring HAF (Holiday Activities and Food programme) funding and proposed linking Mark with the local PCSO to develop opportunities for youth engagement.

Cllr Emma Guy inquired whether the club works with SEND groups. Mark responded that while he has worked with some SEND-focused sessions, these are typically delivered through short-term projects. Once project funding ends, ongoing costs can become a barrier for families. He is currently running weekly sessions with Oaklands School in Winsford until Christmas.

Cllr Lee Siddall, who knows Mark personally, praised his work and confirmed that Mark is eager to connect with funders, including through SPORTED, to bring people together and build partnerships.

Cllr Rachel Waterman noted that in her Leftwich ward, young people have expressed feelings of boredom and a lack of meaningful activities.

Northwich Town Councillors agreed to inform Mark Bebbington of any local groups or organisations who may benefit from a grant distributed through New Era Community CIC. This will help further support grassroots initiatives and strengthen community ties through shared funding opportunities.

Mark’s presentation was well-received by members, who acknowledged the importance of his work and the potential for further collaboration to benefit the wider Northwich community.

NTC 25/51 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Olwyn Dean, Cllr Arthur Neil, Cllr Patricia Parkes, Cllr Sam Naylor, Cllr Catherine Fox, Cllr Brian Holland and Cllr Catriona Stewart

Date.....

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NTC 25/52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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Councillor Alison Gerrard declared an interest in any matters relating to Rudheath Parish Chester Council.

Councillor Emma Guy declared an interest in her role as Parliamentary Office Manager for Sarah Pochin (MP, Runcorn and Helsby).

NTC 25/53 OPEN FORUM

There were no speakers.

NTC 25/54 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

- 5.1 The minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 1st September 2025 be confirmed and approved as a true and accurate record.

*Proposed by Cllr Graham Emmett and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan
All agreed.*

Minutes to be signed by the Mayor.

NTC 25/55 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- 6.1 To note Finance, Amenities & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025
- 6.2 To note Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025

Members noted the minutes of the meetings

NTC 25/56 POLICE UPDATE

No report given.

NTC 25/57 TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor's diary – September 2025

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Town Mayor's Communications	
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26 th September	Rail 200 Walk
27 th September	Northwich Uke Club, The Salty Dog

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Robert Cernik, reported on a recent visit with the Canal and River Trust. Discussions took place regarding the potential to bring historic vessels to Northwich, which would enhance the town's heritage offering.

As part of this initiative, it was noted that the canal would need to be dredged to accommodate the vessels. Further updates will be provided as discussions progress.

Councillor Alison Gerrard left at 7pm.

NTC 25/58 CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

Members received the report from the Chief Officer.

*Proposed by Cllr Catherine Fox and seconded by Cllr Kate Cernik
All agreed*

Members noted the Chief Officers Report

NTC 25/59 SOLAR FARM (DISCHARGE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS)

A member of the public recorded the agenda item. The Deputy Mayor asked if there were any objections to this and none were raised.

Members received a report from Councillor Graham Emmett regarding the planning application for the proposed Solar Farm on the Wallerscote Lime Beds. The application has already been approved by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC).

Councillor Emmett informed the council of the formation of a campaign group named "Stop the HGVs", which has raised concerns about the project. A barrister involved has advised that all 41 planning conditions must be discharged before any work can commence.

Councillor Neil highlighted several conditions that are causing concern among the group.

Councillor Emmett expressed a desire for CWaC to reconsider their usual procedure, in which planning officers alone oversee the discharge of conditions. Instead, he suggested the process should allow for more formal consideration and oversight by elected councillors.

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Deputy Town Mayor

Councillor Jo Callaghan asked about the project timeline. Councillor Emmett responded that once planning is agreed, the applicant will have six months to produce a proposal that will satisfy the discharge conditions.

Councillor Andy Kent shared concerns that CWaC planning officers may not fully understand the depth of public concern surrounding the development. He recommended that CWaC councillors be made aware of the strength of feeling in the community. A letter will be sent from the Mayor on behalf of Northwich Town Council to express these concerns.

Councillor Emma Guy suggested that the letter should include the names of all councillors to demonstrate unity and strength of opinion.

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- 16 Contaminated Land
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- 20 Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)

*Proposed by Cllr Andy Stott and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan.
All agreed*

NTC 25/60 **NORTHWICH INFIRMARY CAR PARK PRESS RELEASE**

Members received a report from the Chief Officer regarding Northwich Infirmary Car Park Press Release.

*Noted
All agreed*

NTC 25/61 **CHRISTMAS LIGHT TENDER**

Members received a report from Chief Officer on the Christmas Lights Tenders.

Members to approve Finance Committee recommendation to award LITE the contract to supply the Festive Lighting in Northwich for a five year period at a total cost of £30,005 per annum.

*Proposed by Cllr Graham Emmett and seconded by Cllr Jo Callaghan
All agreed*

Date.....

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Deputy Town Mayor**

NTC 25/62 OUTSIDE BODIES

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NTC 25/64 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Council meeting will be Monday 3rd November 2025 at 6.00 pm

Meeting closed at 7.35pm

Date.....

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Cllr Robert Cernik
Deputy Town Mayor

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, AMENITIES AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20th OCTOBER 2025 at 6.00pm

Members Present : Cllr R Cernik
Cllr J Macdonald
Cllr K Cernik
Cllr A Kent
Cllr C Stewart
Cllr C Fox

Also Present : Chris Shaw – Chief Officer
Cath Kirwan – Deputy Chief Officer/RFO

FIN26/45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE OR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr L Siddall, Cllr T Melville, Cllr S Naylor and Cllr R Waterman.

FIN 26/46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Macdonald declared an interest in any matters relating to Northwich Metals.

FIN 26/47 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

Minutes of the Finance, Amenities and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16th September 2025 and to be noted at Full Council meeting on Monday 6th October 2025.

Proposed Cllr C Stewart, seconded Cllr J Macdonald, all agreed

FIN 26/48 DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE BY BUDGET

RFO answered various members questions relating to budget headings.

Proposed Cllr C Stewart, seconded Cllr J Macdonald, all agreed

FIN 26/49 BACS DUE FOR PAYMENT

Bacs payments and direct debit figure approved £142,999.14.

Proposed Cllr J Macdonald, seconded Cllr C Stewart, all agreed

.....

Date

.....

**Cllr Kate Cernik
Chair**

FIN 26/50 FINANCE COMMITTEE TO CHECK PAYMENTS

Members chose two payments from both September 2025 payments. DCO/RFO provided the evidence for:

JDH Business - £726.00
Northwich Tree Surgery - £600.00

FIN 26/51 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of the next meeting Monday 17th November 2025 at 6.00pm.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 6.40pm

.....

Date

.....

**Cllr Kate Cernik
Chair**

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 27th OCTOBER 2025

Members Present Cllr Andy Stott
 Cllr Emma Guy
 Cllr Patricia Parkes
 Cllr Catherine Fox
 Cllr Stephen Harcombe

Also present Liza Clansey - Cemetery Registrar & Wellbeing Manager

PL 26/28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, OR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Graham Emmett, Cllr Jo Callaghan, Cllr Janet Illidge, Cllr Bob Cernik and Cllr Olwyn Dean

PL 26/29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Catherine Fox declared an interest in neighbouring property planning application.

PL 26/30 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025 and noted at the Full Council Meeting on Monday 6th October 2025 be confirmed and approved as a true and accurate with one amendment, Cllr Stephen Harcombe had attended the meeting and had been missed off the members present list.

Proposed by Cllr Stephen Harcombe and seconded by Cllr Emma Guy

PL 26/31 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1 Site Address: 256 London Road Northwich CW9 8AJ

Proposal: Single storey side extension with rooflight. - variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning application 24/03618/LBC - to remove the velux window from roof of extension and increase the size of the window on the rear elevation of the extension.

Reference Number: 25/02879/S19

No comment

2 Site Address: 201 - 203 Middlewich Road Northwich CW9 7DN

Proposal: Change of use from a tool hire shop to a hand car wash and valet business with storage/staff facilities and rear building to motor vehicle workshop (Retrospective) and erection of plastic screening.

Reference Number: 24/01101/FUL

Members maintained their original comments, concerns about traffic and residential amenity

Date **Cllr Andy Stott.....**
 Chair

3 Site Address: Land South West of Gadbrook Park Northwich Cheshire

Proposal: Hybrid planning application for full planning application for highway junction improvements to the A556, construction of an electricity primary sub-station and other associated works including internal access road, drainage infrastructure and landscaping; and outline planning application (all matters reserved except for main vehicular and pedestrian access into the Site) for phased commercial industrial/ logistics development (Use Class B2 / B8) with ancillary office accommodation (Use Class E(g)i); car, HGV and cycle parking; land set aside for a future railway station; landscaping and green infrastructure, and other associated works.

Reference Number: 25/02940/OUT

Members would like to see more consideration given to walking, cycling, and sustainable transport.

This will involve major works to the highway and vehicle access priorities.

It was also noted that the Davenham and Whatcroft area should be taken into consideration for their Neighbourhood Plan.

4 Site Address: 12 Dobells Road Northwich CW9 8EA

Proposal: Demolition of existing rear conservatory and detached garage to side of dwelling, erection of two storey side and single storey rear extensions

Reference Number: 25/02691/FUL

No comment

5 Site Address: Roebuck Apartments Albion Road Northwich

Proposal: Erection of a 3 storey apartment block comprising of 14 no. apartments with associated landscaping.

Reference Number: 25/01666/FUL

No comment

6 Site Address: 136 - 140 Witton Street Northwich CW9 5NP

Proposal: Replacement shopfront

Reference Number: 25/03010/FUL

No comment

7 Site Address: 43 Hollybank Close Northwich CW8 4GS

Proposal: Single storey rear extension

Reference Number: 25/02811/FUL

No comment

PL 26/31 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 24th November 2025 at 5.00pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.30pm.

Date

**Cllr Andy Stott.....
Chair**

Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 7

Prepared By : Cath Kirwan

Subject : Town Mayor's Communications



Town Mayor's Communications	
3 rd October	Bingo with the Mayor of Knutsford
7 th October	Cheshire Constabulary AFVBC/Breakfast Club
16 th October	The Joshua Tree
18 th October	50 th Charter Dinner, Vale Royal Lions
22 nd October	Theatre Production from 'Come from Away'
25 th October	The Cheshire and Northwich Wales Poppy Appeal Launch

Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 7

Prepared By : Chris Shaw

Subject : Chief Officers Report



Remembrance Sunday 9th November 2025

Remembrance Sunday will take place as usual on Sunday 9th November, we have been working with local organisations, local churches businesses to ensure this year's event is again well organised and fitting for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Running Order

- 9.30 am Parade to form at Victoria Car Park (Crum Hill)
- 9.45 am Parade to set off and march to St Helens Church
- 10.00 am Church Service led by Canon Diane Cookson
- 10.45 am Gather at the Cenotaph for the Act of Remembrance
- 11.00 am 2 Minutes silence.
- 11.05 am Wreath Laying
- 11.30 am Parade to reform and parade to Memorial Court for refreshments.

Christmas Extravaganza Saturday 29th November

The Christmas Extravaganza will once again take place on Saturday 29th November in Northwich Town Centre.

The event will start around 12.00 noon with the following attractions.

- Fairground including Ferris Wheel, Snow Globe and bumper cars.
- Crazy golf
- Cookery demonstrations
- Characters
- Games
- Giant deckchair
- Grotto
- Ice Rink (Saturday & Sunday)
- And much more

The parade will start from Waitrose carpark at 4.45 pm and will include lanterns made by local school children, puppets, characters, giant snow queen and cast from the panto.

The light switch on will take place in Barons Square at approximately 5.30 pm and this will be followed by a fantastic firework display at 6.00 pm.

Floral Displays

All our floral displays are now installed throughout the town and surrounding parishes and will give a wonderful display in the Spring.

Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 8

Prepared By : Chris Shaw

Subject : Christmas & New Year 2025/26



Proposed Christmas & New Year Opening/ & Closing Times

Wednesday 24th December Christmas Eve – Office closed.

Thursday 25th December Christmas Day – Office closed.

Friday 26th December Boxing Day - Office closed.

Monday 29th December - Office closed.

Tuesday 30th December - Office closed.

Wednesday 31st December– Office closed.

Thursday 1st January – New Years Day Office closed

Friday 2nd January – Office closed.

Staff will be in over the Christmas period to carry out daily duties such as litterbin emptying, feeding of animals in Vickersway Park and daily inspections.

All funerals and funeral enquiries will be covered by the Chief Officer over the Christmas Period to ensure our bereavement services continue to be delivered.

Emergency mobile numbers will be added to the answerphone machine.

Vickersway Park & Church Walk Play Area will be open throughout the Christmas period including Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day.

Members to agree the above office closing times for 2025/26.

Decision of the Council is requested.

Chris Shaw

Chief Officer

Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 9

Prepared By : Chris Shaw

Subject : Victoria Infirmary Update



Background

Northwich Town Council were approached by Mid Cheshire Hospitals to use some of Verdin Park for staff parking last year following the building of the new surgical hub at Victoria Infirmary, the car park would be used for staff in the week and the Community at weekend making the park more accessible for all.

From the start of this process members were adamant that Verdin Park was the last resort for parking and initially we refused the first proposal which would see trees removed. We asked the trust to look at every other alternative that was potentially available to them and come back to us with reasons that these could not be used which they did.

We looked at using areas that were already tarmac or hard standing so we took the least amount of greenspace as possible but still ensuring no trees were removed or could potentially be damaged. We have told the trust that if this proposal is agreed that this will be the only land that we will consider leasing to them and there will never be anymore. The land would not be sold to the trust but leased so that it will always be in the Town Council's ownership.

We are still looking at alternative designs to reduce the amount of green space taken and we are hoping to have these produced in the coming weeks.

Engagement Days

Once we had an image to show the public, we organised two engagement days to show the community how the carpark could potentially look if this went ahead. Around 50 people attended the event at the Council Chamber and at the VIN. The community voiced their concerns, and this will be fed into the feedback forms and these questions answered in future press releases and updated FAQ's.

We also had support for the proposal and again these comments will be fed into the overall feedback responses.

Thank you to all that attended the engagement days and gave us valuable feedback on the proposal.

Next steps

The trust will now look at the feedback and what comments they received from the engagement days and work with Northwich Town Council to address these concerns and endeavour to come up with suitable solutions.

Once a final plan is produced, this will be presented to members for consideration prior to any full planning application being submitted.

Members are conscious that this will be a hard decision to make but have to consider the long-term future of the VIN with its additional services now available to our community and also trying to make Verdin Park accessible to all.

Chris Shaw

Chief Officer





Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 10

Prepared By : Chris Shaw

Subject : Publication Scheme



Background

The current Publication Scheme is from 2018 and requires updating.

Proposal

Members are requested to review the proposed document and confirm their approval for implementation of the updated version.

Decision of the Council is requested.

Chris Shaw

Chief Officer



Northwich
town council

Publication Scheme

INFORMATION TO BE PUBLISHED	HOW THE INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED	COST
Class 1 – Who we are and what we do		
Where to find us-Location and map	Web Site	Nil
Committee Structure-current only	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.10
About the Town Council- Background to the Mayor & chain of office How the Council operates How decisions are made Citizens' Rights Role and functions of councillors, Mayor & Leader	Web Site	£1
Council and Committee Membership	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.30
Contact details for councillors	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.10
Officer Management Structure	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.10
Contact details for Chief Officer and Managers	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.10
Ward details	Hard Copy	£0.10
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it		
Financial Regulations-current only	Hard Copy	£0.50
Standing Orders	Hard Copy	£0.50
Approved Budget (including balances & Precept)-current and previous 3 years	Hard Copy	£1
Approved Budget & Precept-one page summary	Hard Copy	Nil
Grants & Funding Policy-current only	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.20

Mayor's Allowance Scheme-current only	Hard Copy	£0.20
Medium Term Financial Strategy-current only	Hard Copy	£0.50
Annual return form and report by auditor-latest or previous 3 years	Hard Copy	£1
Annual Accounts-most recent and previous 3 years	Hard Copy	£1
Financial Management Report-most recent only	Hard Copy	£1
Borrowing Approval Letters-within last 3 years	Hard Copy	£0.10
Grants received	Hard Copy	£2
Grants given – list for current financial year and 3 previous years	Hard Copy	£2
Grants given-last full year	Hard Copy	Nil

List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard Copy	£5
Members' allowances and expenses (No allowances are paid to Councillors other than Mayor & Deputy Mayor)	Hard Copy	£1
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing		
Neighbourhood plan	Hard Copy Web Site	£5
Annual Report-Current and Previous 3 years	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.50
External Audit Report-latest or previous 3 years	Hard Copy	£0.50
Internal Report-Final or Interim (latest or previous 3 years)	Hard Copy	£1
Class 4 – How we make decisions		
Information & Data Protection Policy	Hard Copy	£0.50
Minutes of Annual Town Meeting-latest and previous year	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.30
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/working group meetings and parish meetings) current & last year	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.40
Agendas of meetings	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.20
Minutes of meetings	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.20
Class 5 – Our Policies and Procedures		
Standing Orders	Hard Copy Web Site	£1
Terms of Reference of Committees & Delegation Scheme	Hard Copy	£2
Communications & Social Policy	Hard Copy	£0.20
Members Code of Conduct	Hard Copy	£5
Officers Code of Conduct	Hard Copy	£2
ICT Policy	Hard Copy	£0.30
Community & Social Policy	Hard Copy	£0.20
Child & Vulnerable Adult Policy	Hard Copy	£0.20
Equality policy	Hard Copy	£0.50
Health and Safety Policy	Hard Copy	£8
Current employment vacancies	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil
Job Descriptions & Person Specifications of current posts	Hard Copy on Web Site for vacancies	£0.40
Publication Scheme & Information Guide	Hard Copy	£1
Complaints Code & Procedure	Hard Copy	Nil
Information & Data Protection Policy	Hard Copy Web Site	£0.30
Schedule of charges for Northwich Town Council	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil

Class 6 – List and Registers		
Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Hard Copy	£0.10
Candidates at last election	Hard Copy	£1
Assets Register-current and previous 3 years	Hard copy	£1
Register of members' interests	Hard Copy	£1
Class 7 – The services we offer		
Northwich Town Council Ancient Records	Available for inspection by appointment	Nil
Allotments	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil
Paddling Pool	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil
Cemetery	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil
Vickersway Park	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil
Verdin Park	Hard Copy Web Site	Nil

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement Cost	Photocopy @ 10.p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost*
	Photocopying @ 20 p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class

Please note, document charges are base on photocopy costs, however these may be varied where documents have to be compiled specially. In some cases, where a small number of documents only are requested, we may decide not to charge if the administrative cost of raising the charge is disproportionate.

Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 11

Prepared By : Chris Shaw

Subject : Employee Handbook Review



Background

Wirehouse Consultants manage all our HR matters and provide guidance on legal updates or amendments required for our policies.

Following a recent review of the Employee Handbook with them, they have identified several legal updates that need to be incorporated along with the Council's green book.

Please find the amended document attached for your review.

Proposal

Members are kindly requested to review the proposed amendments and confirm their approval for implementation of the updated version.

Decision of the Council is requested.

Chris Shaw

Chief Officer



NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Northwich Town Council. We hope you will be very happy as part of our team.

To do so, it is essential that we maintain a positive working environment which enables all of our employees to work to their full potential. We hope you will assist us in achieving this aim by observing our rules, policies and procedures.

It is your responsibility to study the contents of this handbook. By doing so, you will gain useful information about our culture and values. You will also find out what you can expect from us as an employer and what we will expect of you as an employee.

Together with your Statement of Particulars of Employment, the contents of this handbook, where suitable for incorporation as contractual terms, form part of your contract of employment. In the event of any conflict between the terms of this handbook and your Statement of Particulars of Employment, the terms of the latter document will prevail.

We reserve the right to make reasonable modifications to the content of the handbook from time to time. Minor changes of detail, or changes required to comply with current legislation, will be notified to you by general notice. Any significant alterations will only be implemented following full consultation with the relevant employees.

This Handbook and your Statement of Particulars of Employment are supplemented by policies relevant to your employment. Such policies are not contractual but they are important documents and you are required to be aware of their contents. Our policies will be reviewed and updated from time to time.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Northwich Town Council has specific responsibilities and duties which are as follows:

Parks, Gardens and Cemeteries
Sports and Leisure
General Office and Tourism
Powers to Give Grants
Events
Outside Contract Services

There are 21 elected Members, headed by the Town Mayor and they meet monthly to discuss matters relating to the town i.e. planning, finance, amenities, grants and issues submitted to the Chief Officer or Member of the Council. The Town Mayor is elected each May at the Annual General Meeting.

There are 14 full time Members of staff headed by Mr Chris Shaw - Chief Officer

The staff employed at the Town Council have a variety of duties ranging from gardeners, grave diggers, drivers, park and pool attendants, clerical, security and domestic.

Information on training as well as in-house help, advice and support is available from the Chief Officer.

STAFFING STRUCTURE

Chris Shaw
Chief Officer

Cath Kirwan
Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer

Peter Stanway
Public Realm Officer

Stephanie Astbury
Public Realm Officer

Ian Clarke
Public Realm Officer

Grounds Maintenance Operatives

Simon Ashbrook
Kevin Spruce
Chris Rowe
Andrew Holmes
Aiden Herrett
Jordon Clark
Matt Gannon

Parks and Cemetery Department

The Town Council is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance to the majority of the parks, cemeteries, recreation grounds, sports fields, playgrounds and other open spaces, within the town.

Vickersway Park, just south of the town centre, contains rockeries, smooth lawns and fine floral displays. There is an aviary with a variety of birds, a shop selling confectionery and a children's playground, as well as facilities for bowls, crazy golf, putting, skittles, outside gym and tennis.

The main open space overlooking the town to the west is Verdin Park and is an ornamental park with flowerbeds, lawns, rockeries, and shrubberies. It is located behind the Northwich Victoria Infirmary, off Winnington Street, and the main entrance, fitted with fine ornamental gates, is located on Castle Street.

The Council is also responsible for the town's cemeteries and churchyards. The main and by far the largest cemetery is Witton Cemetery, which is situated on Church Road Northwich, opened in 1891 with over 21000 interments to date.

St Helens Churchyard is located next to Witton Cemetery on the same road and is the churchyard to the main parish church in the Northwich area. This churchyard, which was closed in 2002, is a closed churchyard for burials and has now become the responsibility of the Town Council.

Danebridge Cemetery is also a closed churchyard and was laid out with lawns, flowerbeds, and shrubberies in 1966 and has been maintained by the Town Council since that time.

Danevalley Cemetery is a new cemetery on Shipbrook Road Northwich. This tranquil and peaceful burial ground was opened in 1995 and there have been approximately 450 interments.

The Parks and Cemetery Department are also responsible for ground maintenance for other parish Council's in the area.

Administration and Bereavement Section

The Council is responsible for all the administration and financial matters in connection to the smooth running of the Council's day to day business and provide a bereavement service to the public, by keeping excellent records in all the registers appertaining to all the cemeteries under their control.

Contact Numbers for Staff at Northwich Town Council

Mr Chris Shaw – Chief Officer

Tel No: 01606 41510

Mobile No: 07957 562548

Paul Davis – Public Realm & Contracts Manger

Tel No: 01606 41510

Mobile No: 07947 314056

Cath Kirwan – Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer

Tel No: 01606 41510

Mobile No: 07376 903225

Liza Brander – Cemetery Registrar & Wellbeing Manager

Tel No: 01606 41510

Mobile No: 07836 729711

Stephanie Astbury – Public Realm Officer

Tel No: 01606 41510

Mobile No:07376 903233

Ian Clarke – Public Realm Officer

Tel: 01606 41510

Mobile No: 07376 903234

Mr Peter Stanway – Public Realm Officer

Tel: 01606 41510

Mobile No: 07785 296771

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

PERSONNEL FILE

On the commencement of your employment, we shall create a personnel file containing documents, letters, etc. relating to your employment with us.

We hold personal data to ensure compliance with our record keeping obligations and for the purpose of personnel administration. All personal data will be retained by us in a manual or computerised form and will be processed by us and or/our representatives in accordance with the current statutory requirements. If your personal data is to be shared with any third party outside of the organisation, this will be in compliance with the GDPR.

We may use the information we hold to contact you when required. Such contact may require to be made outside your normal working hours.

In accordance with data protection legislation, we shall maintain our records as accurately as possible. We require to be advised of any change in your personal circumstances or details, e.g. telephone number, change of address, change of next of kin.

You have the right to access, on request, certain information held by us on file about you.

We shall usually provide you with a copy of the requested information within 1 month of a valid request. We may on occasion, when your request is made via an unrecognised email address, for example, ask for evidence of verification that the request is from yourself. In exceptional circumstances where the deadline cannot be reached, we will write to you within 1 month of the verification of your request to advise of when the information will be provided.

IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION

Your employment is conditional on you having the right to work in the UK in the role in which you have been employed.

Before starting work with us, you must provide documentation proving your entitlement to work in the UK. Should there be any time limit on your right to live and work in the UK, you must provide evidence of your continued right to live and work in the UK on or before the expiry date of your current permission.

Alternatively, we may ask the Home Office to check your right to work status and provide us with a Positive Verification Notice if: -

- you are unable to show your documents because of an outstanding appeal, review or application with the Home Office; or
- you have an Application Registration Card; or
- you have a Certificate of Application that is less than 6 months old; or
- you are a Commonwealth citizen who started living in the UK before 1988.

You are required to advise us of any changes to your immigration status that may affect your right to work in the UK.

We are required to check and to satisfy ourselves that you are the rightful holder of any document/s that you provide to us. All documents will be checked for the likeness of photographs, dates of birth being consistent with your appearance, expiry dates, stamps, endorsements, and names. Photocopies of the document/relevant parts of the document will be kept on your personnel file.

Depending on the particular documentation with which you have provided us prior to commencing your employment, we may require to undertake follow-up checks of your documentation on an annual basis.

Should you fail to provide evidence of your right to work or continuing right to work or if your right to work is revoked, we reserve the right to terminate your contract of employment.

VETTING, BARRING AND REFERRALS

Due to the nature of our business, we comply fully with the requirements of the vetting and barring checks administered by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Accordingly, if you have been recruited or transferred to work in a 'regulated' activity in terms of the relevant legislation, we shall require you to undertake an enhanced criminal record check.

Unsatisfactory checks may require us to terminate your employment.

In terms of vetting and barring, we shall comply with our duty to refer to the DBS any relevant information concerning any employee working with children or vulnerable adults in a regulated or controlled activity where that employee has allegedly caused harm or poses a risk of harm to children and/or vulnerable adults.

Arrangements in respect of the reimbursements of the costs incurred in obtaining enhanced criminal record disclosures and registering with the DBS will be agreed with you in advance of the application.

JOB DESCRIPTION

We will issue you with a Job Description for your role with us. This will describe the main tasks and responsibilities of your job so that there is a proper understanding of the requirements of your job.

To reflect the changing needs of the organisation, adjustments to your Job Description may be necessary from time to time. (You will be consulted before any change.)

Any job description provided to you will not form part of your contract of employment unless specified otherwise.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Your first three months of employment with us will be a probationary period allowing us to monitor your capability, suitability, and conduct.

Your employment may require to be terminated during, or at the conclusion of, your probationary period if we consider you to be unsuitable for your particular role. Alternatively, we may decide to extend your probationary period to allow us further time to assess your suitability.

Any authorised leave taken during the probationary period will normally result in an equivalent extension of the duration of the probationary period.

INDUCTION

We shall attempt to ensure that you are introduced to your job in a manner appropriate to the work to be undertaken by you. You will be trained, where necessary, in order that you are aware of our culture and our practices and can operate safely and to the required standard.

When you are issued with documentation as part of your induction and sign to acknowledge receipt of the same, we understand from your signature that you have read and understood that documentation.

If, following your induction, you are confused about any aspect of our procedures or practice, or you have any concerns regarding your ability to operate safely and to the required standard, you should contact the Chief Officer.

OUR RULES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

TIMEKEEPING

Our productivity, efficiency and effectiveness depend on the regular and punctual attendance of all employees.

Your Statement of Particulars of Employment specifies the minimum hours that you are contractually required to work, including your start and finish times and any designated rest breaks.

If you are likely to be late for work at the start of your working day/shift, you must telephone the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer as soon as possible to explain the situation and give an indication of when you expect to arrive at work.

If, on review, we consider that your timekeeping record has been unsatisfactory, we may invoke our disciplinary procedure.

You are required to comply with the time recording rules and procedures applicable to your position. Failure to comply with our rules, without a satisfactory reason, could result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

APPEARANCE AND DRESS

Your appearance must be professional at all times both within the workplace and when representing our organisation elsewhere. You should also maintain a good standard of personal hygiene.

If you are required to wear a uniform you must ensure that you do so during all working hours. Uniforms must always be clean and worn in a presentable fashion. Uniforms issued to you may not be altered in any way without our permission. Uniforms must not be worn outside of working hours unless you are representing Northwich Town Council.

Uniforms issued by us remain our property. You must take responsibility to ensure that good care is taken of any uniform issued to you, and return any uniforms issued to you on the termination of employment. Payment of any final sums due to you upon termination of your employment will be delayed until all items of our uniform in your possession have been returned in good condition.

If your role requires protective clothing, you are required to wear this clothing while carrying out your duties whenever required by law or our rules.

If you disregard these rules, you will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious cases, where your appearance and/or hygiene is unacceptable, you will be required to return home to change/remedy your personal hygiene. In these circumstances, you will not be paid for the duration of your absence from work.

GENERAL CONDUCT AT WORK

During working hours, you are required to devote all your time and energies to the service of the organisation.

We expect you to conduct yourself in a reasonable and appropriate manner towards all those with whom you come into contact during the course of your employment with us.

You have an obligation to ensure that you do not act in a manner, which could be considered to be discriminatory conduct, harassment, or bullying.

You are expected to achieve and maintain a good standard of work and to demonstrate a conscientious approach to your role.

You are expected to show the skill or aptitude required for the job, especially where such skills are claimed or implied at the time your employment commenced.

You are expected to read and observe all authorised notices that are displayed by us.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We expect you to observe our Health and Safety Policy and any related rules and procedures.

You must not take any action that may threaten your own health and safety or that of your colleagues or of any third parties.

You should report any health and safety concerns without delay.

Your manager should be advised of any accidents that take place on our premises or that occur during working hours. Every accident should be reported, no matter how minor. We will require your co-operation into any subsequent investigations carried out by us.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

We have a zero-tolerance policy on the misuse of all drugs and alcohol while at work. This policy is a fundamental part of our strategy to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all our employees. We ask all our staff to play their part.

Drugs and alcohol can have an impact on the workplace. Misuse can lead to accidents at work, reduced efficiency, poor decision making, lost productivity, absenteeism, etc, not only for the individual but also for others.

We expressly prohibit the use of “illicit substances” which we define as including any illegal drugs (Class A, B or C), any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed to you and any psychoactive substances or legal highs.

Whilst we do not want to dictate how you spend your time outside of work, you should be mindful to ensure that any consumption of an illicit substance or alcohol the night before/preceding your shift, does not render you unfit to drive or over the relevant legal limit, if you need to drive; nor should you be under the influence or unfit to work the following day/ shift.

If you are required to drive as part of your duties, you should not consume alcohol before arriving on duty or whilst on duty. It is an absolute requirement for a driver to be under the relevant legal drink-drive limit. It is illegal for any person to drive or attempt to drive a motor vehicle while unfit to drive through the use of alcohol or an illicit substance.

Suspension

When there is reasonable belief that you are under the influence of alcohol or any illicit substance on reporting for work or during the course of work, you will be sent home immediately.

It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute any illegal drugs. If we suspect you have committed any such offences during the course of your employment, the alleged offence will be investigated by us. This may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal and the matter being reported to the Police.

You must not:

- report, or endeavour to report, for duty having consumed an illicit substance, or alcohol likely to render you unfit and/or unsafe for work;
- consume or be under the influence of an illicit substance or alcohol while on duty, including during authorised breaks;

- consume or be under the influence of an illicit substance or alcohol while on our premises or any premises on which we may operate;
- be in possession of, or store any illicit substance or alcohol on your person, in personal areas such as lockers and desk drawers;
- attempt to sell or give an illicit substance to any other employee or other person during the course of your employment;
- attempt to sell or give alcohol to any other employee or other person during the course of your employment.

This also includes business functions where you are representing us.

Any breach of our rules on the misuse of illicit substances or alcohol may lead to serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Additional rules

Special rules may apply in relation to alcohol, where we may sponsor an event for employees (e.g., Christmas or farewell events). In these circumstances any variation to the no-alcohol policy will be communicated in advance of the event.

In addition to our zero tolerance rules above, there may be other instances of misconduct at work, or absence from work, caused as a result of excessive drinking or drug taking outside of the workplace, such as lateness, absences relating to a hangover or attending work visibly hungover or smelling of alcohol. Any instances of this nature may fall short of the zero tolerance rules above, however, will still be dealt with under the normal disciplinary rules.

Prescription drugs

You should inform us of any prescribed medication that may have an effect on your ability to carry out your work properly. Prescription drugs that cause drowsiness must not be used while at work. Failure to disclose this information will be dealt with as a disciplinary offence.

Drugs/ alcohol dependency

Drug and alcohol dependency problems could arise for a variety of reasons and over a prolonged period of time.

If you are suffering from a drug or alcohol dependency you should advise a member of senior management of your own choosing.

We will seek to provide reasonable assistance by treating absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation as sickness absence.

If you do not finish a programme of treatment, or your recovery and return to work does not go as planned, we will meet with you to decide what further action, if any, should be taken.

However, if you are found in breach of the workplace rules as set out in this policy, you may still be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

SMOKING

We do not permit smoking anywhere on our premises (or within any of our vehicles). Any smoking must be done away from the premises outside and only during your authorised break. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes ("e-cigarettes") and vapourisers. Any breach of our rules on smoking may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

If you are involved in a close personal relationship with a colleague, contractor, client, customer or supplier you should inform the Chief Officer immediately. The information declared will be recorded on the personal files of both employees and treated in strict confidence.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

While we recognise your right to hold political opinions and to take part in political activity in your own time, you are not permitted to take part in any type of political activity while you are at work.

CONTACT WITH FRIENDS OR RELATIVES

We discourage friends and relatives from contacting you at work except in the case of emergency.

TELEPHONE OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Our devices are intended for business use. We prohibit excessive personal use of our devices. If you breach these rules you will be responsible for the cost and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Safety/security

If you are issued with one of our devices, you must take proper care of it and ensure its security at all times. For example, devices should not be left unattended in parked cars.

If, as a result of your carelessness or negligence, any of our devices are lost or damaged, we reserve the right to take appropriate disciplinary action against you and deduct the cost of replacement or repair from your salary or wage.

OUR PROPERTY

You should use our property only for the purpose for which it is intended. Our property must not be removed from our premises without our prior written approval.

If you become aware of any loss of, or damage to, our property you should report the matter to the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer immediately.

MINIMUM WASTE

We endeavour to run our operations in a cost-effective and efficient manner. This is necessary to protect the future of our organisation and minimise the environmental effect of our operations. Accordingly, you should take care during the performance of your duties to avoid any unnecessary use of services, energy etc.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Items of personal property, including motor cars and other vehicles, are brought onto, and left on our premises at your own risk. We do not accept responsibility for loss of, or damage to, any such property.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

You are not permitted to undertake any other employment, or hold any office, without our express written permission. This does not apply to zero-hour employees.

We will not permit you to have any interest in any organisation or undertaking or to engage in any other activities that might interfere with the performance of your duties or create a conflict of interest.

If you wish to be engaged in any other employment or to have any outside organisation interest, whether financial or otherwise, you must first seek the written permission of the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS

We do not wish to intrude on your interests/activities outside normal working hours. However, you should not become involved in activities which prevent you from fulfilling your duties or which result in adverse publicity to the organisation, which brings the organisation into disrepute, or which harms our commercial relationships. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement involves the appropriate use of social networking sites which are in the public domain.

In order to foster team spirit and good working relationships, we may offer you the opportunity to attend social events from time to time. We may also organise work-related social events to which clients, as well as staff, are invited.

Although such social events usually take place away from the workplace and outside of normal working hours, our standard code of conduct applies to such events. While we do not wish to affect your enjoyment of such social events, certain rules of conduct are necessary for the protection and comfort of all those attending.

Accordingly, if you attend a work-related social event, you must observe the following rules and principles:

- Alcohol should be consumed only in moderation.
- The use of illegal drugs, including cannabis, is forbidden.
- Our policy on dignity at work should be observed.
- Do not behave in a way that could offend, intimidate, embarrass, or upset any other person, whether as a joke or not.
- Do not swear or use intemperate language.
- Do not behave in any way that could bring our name into disrepute.

Any breach of the above rules may result in disciplinary action being taken against you under our disciplinary procedure which could result in your dismissal.

DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Criminal charges, or convictions, for sexual offences or for offence 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 [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the Chief Officer](#) immediately. Such charges, or convictions, may result in disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal.

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.

A charge or conviction for any other type of offence during the period of your employment should also be reported to the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy](#)

[Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer. 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

- affects your suitability for your role;
- impairs our reputation;
- seriously undermine the trust and confidence that we have in you.

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.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

If you are offered a gift, or hospitality of any kind, from an existing or potential organisation contact you must disclose the fact of the gift or hospitality, its nature, and the identity of the other party to the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer.

If the gift/hospitality is anything other than a small token of appreciation having no substantial financial value, you will be required to return the gift/refuse the hospitality and send a note to the other party explaining it is our policy that employees should not receive gifts or hospitality.

These rules do not apply to promotional gifts e.g. items such as stationery or pens that bear the logo or council name of another organisation provided that these items have no significant value.

COLLECTIONS

We do not wish to stop appropriate collections taking place. However, when money is passing between colleagues, it is important to ensure that the reasons are appropriate, and that the money is recorded and managed correctly.

If you wish to carry out a collection you should obtain permission from the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer prior to starting the collection.

GAMBLING

You are not permitted to gamble, bet, run sweep stakes on our premises without the prior written permission of the [Public Realm and Contracts Manager, Deputy Chief Officer/Responsible Finance Officer or the](#) Chief Officer.

BUYING/SELLING GOODS

Buying and/or selling of goods, whether on your own account, or on behalf of any other party is not

Permitted on our premises.

STAFF FACILITIES

All staff employed by the Northwich Town Council are entitled to use the following staff facilities whilst working for the Council: -

Witton Cemetery

- *Main Office and Registrars Office.*
- *Staff Mess Room, Showers, and Toilets.*
- *Council Chamber, Cemetery Chapels.*
- *Main Garages, Workshop, Stores and Sheds.*

Vickersway Park

- *Staff Room, Shop.*
- *Public Toilets.*
- *Store.*

Chuchwalk Playground

- *Staff Officeshop.*
- *Public Toilet.*

All Council staff and their immediate family are entitled to use all the amenities in Vickersway Park free of charge at any time. Proof of identity may be requested at the time of the visit.

PAY AND EXPENSES

RATE OF PAY

Your Statement of Particulars of Employment will specify the rate, frequency and method of payments of your wage/salary. This document will also specify whether you are entitled to payment for working additional hours.

The basic pay of each employee will consist of either a point or points on the local government pay spine. The pay spines and all allowances from 1997 onwards are included in our Pay Spine Document.

If a common system for all employees is not adopted locally, there needs to be objective justification for any distinction between those jobs paid on scales and those which are paid on single pay points. Please contact your manager for further guidance on the equal pay aspects of local grading structures.

An employee dissatisfied with the grading of their job is entitled to appeal for a reconsideration of the grading. Procedures will be agreed locally to deal with such appeals.

PAY STATEMENT

An itemised pay statement will be sent to you on your normal pay date. This will show how the total amount of your pay has been calculated for the relevant pay period including any deductions that have been made such as PAYE and NI Contributions.

PAY ADMINISTRATION

It will be your responsibility to ensure we have been provided with a note of your bank/building society account name and number and sort code number, and to keep us advised of any changes to this account.

If you are overpaid for any reason, the excess will normally be deducted in full from your next payment. However, if this would result in hardship to you we may consider making a number of smaller deductions over a longer period.

TAX YEAR DETAILS

At the end of each tax year, you shall receive a Form P60 detailing the total pay you have received during that year and the amount of any deductions made in respect of income tax and national insurance contributions.

We may also provide you with a P11D form detailing any benefits that you have received during that tax year.

Duplicates of these documents cannot be provided.

ANNUAL LEAVE

HOLIDAY YEAR

Our holiday year begins on the 1st of April and ends on the 31st of March each year.

HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

Your Statement of Particulars of Employment details your annual holiday entitlement including any public/bank holidays, or substitute days, which are part of that annual holiday entitlement. You will be notified of any changes to your entitlement by letter or general notice.

During your first year of service

If you join us part way through a holiday year, you will be entitled to the proportion of your holiday entitlement based on the period of your employment during that holiday year.

Entitlement during your first year of service is calculated monthly at the rate of one-twelfth of the full year's entitlement.

During sick leave

If you are absent on sick leave, you will continue to accrue your full statutory holiday entitlement (currently 5.6 working weeks). However, any contractual holiday entitlement over and above the minimum statutory holiday entitlement will not accrue during any paid or unpaid period of sick leave once you have been continuously absent for a period of one month.

CARRYING FORWARD ANNUAL LEAVE

If you are absent on sick leave, you will continue to accrue your full statutory holiday entitlement (currently 5.6 working weeks). Any contractual holiday entitlement over and above the minimum statutory holiday entitlement will not accrue during any paid or unpaid period of sick leave once you have been continuously absent for a period of one month.

If you are absent on a period of sick leave which spans two separate holiday years, you may carry over unused holiday to the following leave year. For the avoidance of doubt, carry over will be restricted to one ~~four~~ weeks holiday per year, less any leave already taken during the holiday year that has just ended.

Accordingly, if you have taken four weeks' holiday by the end of the current holiday year, you will not be allowed to carry over any leave. If you have taken less than four weeks' holiday, the remainder may be carried over under this rule.

Any such carried over holiday that is not taken within 18 months of the end of the holiday year in which it accrued will be lost.

PAYMENT IN LIEU

We do not make payments in lieu of untaken holiday entitlement.

HOLIDAY REQUESTS

We will seek to be as flexible as possible when dealing with your requests for annual leave. However, in order that we can manage staffing levels we require at least four weeks' notice of holidays lasting more than one week, and one weeks' notice of single days.

Requests will be processed by us in the order in which they have been received. All holiday requests must be made using our holiday request forms and submitted to the Public Realm/Contracts Manager or Chief Officer

Holidays may not be booked unless you have received authorisation from the Public Realm/Contracts Manager. Should you book a holiday prior to receiving the necessary authorisation from us, we will not accept liability for any financial loss resulting from the subsequent cancellation of the holiday.

We may need to refuse your request or vary the dates that you have requested in accordance with our staffing requirements. After your holiday dates have been confirmed you will not be entitled to change them without receiving the authorisation of the Chief Officer.

SICKNESS DURING HOLIDAY

If you fall sick or are injured while on holiday, we will allow you to transfer to sick leave and take replacement holiday at a later time. This entitlement is subject to the following strict conditions:

- The total period of incapacity must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner (where it exceeds seven days).
- You must contact us by telephone as soon as you know that there will be a period of incapacity during your holiday.
- You must submit a written request no later than 5 days after returning to work setting out how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that you wish to take at another time.

If you are ill or injured before the start of a period of planned holiday, we will consent to you postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time. Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance our rules on sickness absence. You must submit a written request to postpone the planned holiday, and this must be accompanied by a letter from your doctor confirming that you are unfit, or is still likely to be unfit, to take the holiday.

Your request to take any replacement holiday must be in accordance with our rules on holiday requests above. We may require you to take all or part of your replacement holiday on particular days and in such circumstances, we will provide reasonable notice.

HOLIDAY PAY

The normal basis of calculation of your holiday pay is detailed in your Statement of Particulars document.

UNAUTHORISED ANNUAL LEAVE

If you have been refused a request for annual leave but fail to attend work (either saying that you are sick or by making no contact), we shall investigate this as a potential unauthorised absence.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT DURING THE HOLIDAY YEAR

If you leave our employment during a holiday year, you will be entitled to be paid for any accrued annual leave for that holiday year that you have not taken by the date of termination. We may require you to take any outstanding holiday entitlement during any period of notice, whether that period of notice has been given by you or by us.

If, on your date of termination, you have taken paid holiday leave in excess of your accrued entitlement for that holiday year, you shall be required to reimburse us in respect of this excess. We reserve the right to deduct the appropriate sum from your pay.

In the event that you are summarily dismissed, leave our employment without giving proper notice under your contract of employment or leave before your contractual notice period has expired, your entitlement to pay in lieu of outstanding holiday entitlement will be restricted to the statutory entitlement and you will not be entitled to pay in lieu of any contractual holiday over and above the statutory minimum entitlement.

SICKNESS ABSENCE

SHORT-TERM ABSENCES

PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

While appreciating that there will inevitably be some short-term sickness absence amongst our employees, the efficiency of the Council's operational and business needs is of vital importance.

Repeated, regular or persistent absence can have a detrimental impact on productivity as well as placing an extra burden on the team.

Accordingly, where you have high levels of short-term sickness absence, this will be assessed and reviewed periodically, and the following absence management procedure may be invoked. This process could ultimately result in the termination of your employment.

Our absence management procedure is non-contractual and there may be situations in which it is not appropriate to follow the procedure set out below. In particular, we reserve the right not to follow the full procedure if your absence levels are excessively high and are having a significant impact on the business or where you have under 24 months' continuous service.

If we suspect there to be misconduct, our Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure will apply. For example, we may take disciplinary action if there is evidence that:

- your absence is not genuine or not for the reason provided;
- you take absence for some other reason not related to your own incapacity to work, that has not been pre-authorised;
- you are undertaking inappropriate activities while off sick, such as carrying out work for another organisation; or
- the correct sickness absence notification and evidence procedure has not been followed.

UNACCEPTABLE REASON/INTENTIONAL ABSENCE

- You must obtain permission for any absence from your supervisor. Absence from work without permission is a disciplinary matter.
- It is acknowledged that on occasions, unforeseeable emergencies arise that require time off work. If this happens it is important to let your supervisor know as soon as possible.
- Persistent lateness is disruptive and unfair to your colleagues. Arriving at work late, taking extended breaks and leaving work early can cause the same serious

problems as missing work altogether, and will be treated as a disciplinary matter, unless there are extenuating circumstances which make it unavoidable. If you have difficulties, you are encouraged to discuss these in advance with your supervisor to see if anything can be done to help you.

- You are encouraged to keep us informed if you are experiencing problems which may result in an absence. Your supervisor or manager is always available to discuss work-related problems and can also arrange for you to see the Authority's Medical Adviser. Absences without good cause could result in disciplinary action taken which we are keen to avoid.

In the context of this policy, we distinguish short-term and long-term absences as follows:

Short-term/intermittent sickness absence is defined as an episode or occasion of sickness absence of up to 4 weeks.

Long-term sickness absence is defined as any episode or occasion of sickness absence which lasts or is expected to last 4 weeks or more.

All cases of absence will be assessed on an individual basis in order to offer the fairest approach to an employee's circumstances, taking into account the reason for the absences.

PREGNANCY-RELATED ABSENCES

If you are pregnant and are off work because of pregnancy-related ill health, you must abide by our absence reporting procedure. You will still be subject to the usual notification and evidence requirements, and we can ask you to attend a return-to-work meeting when returning to work.

However, any sickness absence for a pregnancy-related reason will not be included when establishing if the need for formal action under our absence management procedure has been triggered.

DISABILITIES

Consideration will be given to whether absences may be related to a disability and, if so, whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to your working arrangements, including changing your duties or to the management of your absences under this procedure. Any medical condition considered relevant by you should be raised with us.

The Authority's policy for people with disabilities states that if employees become disabled whilst in the Authority's employ, every effort will be made to continue their employment in their post or in another suitable post if one is available. The employee

will continue to be paid at their current rates of pay and the Council will make finance available to cover for any additional hours or staffing needed as a result. In particular circumstances, if the Medical Adviser considers it to be essential, the Authority will make extra finance available for such employees to be retained on a supernumerary basis until a suitable established post becomes available.

The Council will provide the necessary training/retraining to meet this policy and will make reasonable finance available for necessary modification to the workplace so that people with disabilities can be retained.

DOCTOR AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Employees are expected to make up any time during which they are attending appointments with doctors and dentists that occur within working time. Such absence is then excluded from their reported absences. If you do not want such absences to be recorded you must agree with your supervisor (when you ask for time off for the appointment) how you will make up the time. The time off will then not be recorded in the absence records.

Necessary paid time off will be granted for the purpose of cancer screenings.

EMPLOYEE OBLIGATIONS

You are required to:

- Notify the Public Realm & Contracts Manager or in their absence the Chief Officer before the start of your shift if you are ill or unable to attend work for any other reason. Notification should be made personally by telephone. Text messaging or emails are not acceptable.
- Notification must be given to the Public Realm & Contracts Manager or in their absence the Chief Officer of your intended return to work date.
- Attend a return-to-work interview with your line manager to discuss your absence. This discussion will include the reasons for your absence, personal circumstances which may be affecting your attendance record, failure to follow notification procedures, fitness to resume your normal duties and your general attendance record.
- Submit a self-certification form on your return to work for sickness absence lasting up to 7 calendar days. If your period of sickness lasts beyond 7 calendar days, your absence must be covered by a Statement of Fitness for Work ("Fit Note"). Your first Fit Note should be submitted on the 8th calendar day of your absence, and you must submit any further certificates on the day on which your previous certificate expires.
- Agree on request to be interviewed and/or examined by an independent Medical or Occupational Health Professional nominated by us and to authorise the release to us of any medical report instructed by us. We will meet all costs associated with any such examination and/or medical report.

- Cooperate with the implementation of adjustments to duties, hours or working conditions, resulting from recommendations made by your doctor. The advice on a Fit Note or Medical/Occupational Health Report is not binding on us and whilst we respect such advice and will consider it carefully, we reserve the right not to follow it.

PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING ABSENCE

You will be provided 48 hours' notice in writing of the requirement for you to attend a formal absence review meeting. It will be confirmed that the purpose of the meeting is to review your unsatisfactory attendance levels in addition to any potential outcome.

During an absence review meeting, we will:

- Discuss the reasons for absence.
- Discuss the effect your absence has on the business.
- Discuss whether the absence record indicates pattern of absence.
- Determine the likelihood of further absences.
- Consider whether medical advice is required.
- Consider what, if any, measures may improve your health and/or attendance.

You may bring a companion with you who may be either a trade union representative or a colleague. If you or your companion cannot attend the meeting, we will arrange an alternative time within 5 working days. Failure to attend without good reason may be treated as misconduct in itself and a decision made be taken based on the available evidence.

The absence review meeting will normally be held by your line manager. Your companion may make representations, ask questions and sum up your case, but will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf.

A meeting may be adjourned if we need to gather any further information or give consideration to matters discussed at the review meeting. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained. You will be informed in writing of the decision and the reasons for it.

STAGE 1 OF THE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Within a rolling twelve-month period, employees who have had ten working days absence or three separate occasions of absences (excluding doctor/dental

appointments and emergency time off for dependents) will be interviewed by their manager. Their absence record will be discussed, and they will be informed of the negative impact of their absence on the Council's services and that their attendance will be monitored over the next twelve months.

An outcome from this meeting may result in an informal letter of concern being issued. They must improve their individual attendance record and any further absences within 12 months may result in a stage 2 absence review meeting.

STAGE 2 OF THE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

If an employee's attendance does not improve following a letter of concern being issued in Stage 1, then a further absence review meeting will be arranged by his/her manager.

An outcome from this meeting may result in a 12-month written warning being issued which will confirm to the employee the details of the interview. They must improve their individual employee's attendance record and any further absences within 12 months may result in a stage 3 absence review meeting.

STAGE 3 OF THE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

No employee will reach this stage unless:

- a) they have had a period of absence monitoring where they have been informed of the need to improve their absence because of the negative impact of their poor attendance on the Council's services.
- b) they have received a written warning at Stage 2 of the absence procedure.
- c) they have failed to improve their attendance record procedure.

When an employee reaches this stage of the procedure, they will again be given the opportunity to discuss and explain the circumstances surrounding their continuing failure to meet the attendance standards required by the Council.

If, after considering all the circumstances there has been insufficient improvement in their attendance, the employee may receive a 12-month final written warning. This letter will explain that failure to improve their attendance may result in dismissal.

STAGE 4 OF THE ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

If following a Final Written Warning an employee fails to improve their attendance, then a further absence review meeting will be arranged to consider dismissal. The manager considering the dismissal will ensure that:

- 1) there was a fair and consistent review of the employee's absence record and the reasons for it;
- 2) that medical advice was sought if necessary;
- 3) that appropriate warnings were given after the employee had been given the opportunity to explain their situation and to achieve an improvement in their attendance.

During this meeting, we will:

- Review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you.
- Consider any further matters you wish to raise.
- Consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.
- Consider the effects of your absence on the business.

If the employee has failed to make the required standard of attendance and after considering all the circumstances, the manager may decide that dismissal is justified. Termination will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

APPEALS

You have the right to appeal against the formal outcome of any absence review meeting at each stage of the process. The appeal must be in writing addressed to the Council's Appeal Panel and received within five working days of the decision being communicated to you.

An appeal meeting will then be arranged within a reasonable timescale of receiving your formal appeal. Depending on the nature of the appeal, further investigations might be necessary which could delay the meeting. We will make every effort to arrange a meeting which is suitable for both you and your companion, keeping you informed of any delays.

A hearing may be adjourned if the person chairing the appeal needs to gather any further information or consider matters discussed at the hearing. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before a decision is made.

Following the appeal meeting, you will be informed of the outcome in writing. There will be no further right of appeal.

If an appeal against dismissal is successful, you will be reinstated with no loss of continuity or pay.

TRADE UNION ASSISTANCE

Some trade unions have practical schemes to provide welfare and medical help for their members. You may also find it helpful to seek advice from your trade union representative if your absences are causing problems at work. Your manager will tell your trade union representative when your absence record is causing problems, unless, when contacted, you tell ~~them~~him/her not to. If you are not a member of a trade union, you can bring another representative with you to any meetings arranged to discuss your absence record.

LONG TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE

PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

We will deal with long term absences sympathetically and sensitively. We recognise that circumstances will vary from short but recurring periods of ill-health to continuous periods of long-term absence with a number of different causes, whether this is an injury, a recurring condition, or a serious illness requiring ongoing treatment.

Our long-term sickness absence procedure is non-contractual and there may be situations in which it is not appropriate to follow the procedure set out below.

Struggling to work whilst unwell and not being able to fulfil all of your duties, or fulfil them to the required standards, is detrimental to your health and also to the delivery of our service. Therefore, you are encouraged to speak to your line manager in confidence at the earliest opportunity if you have any concerns about your health so we can offer appropriate support.

Our underlying principles are to balance our needs against your circumstances to try to support you whilst you are taking time off work but also consider how we need to support the organisation during your absence.

We have set out a process for managing situations of long-term absence below. The process for dealing with long term absence will very much depend on your individual circumstances. Accordingly, during any long-term absence, we will assess and review periodically with you, your capability to carry out your normal job, and the following absence procedure may be invoked. This process could ultimately result in the termination of your employment if suitable alternatives cannot be found.

Long term sickness absence is ordinarily where you are absent for a period of 4 weeks or more. If you are unable to return after 4 weeks, your line manager will arrange a review meeting with you to discuss your long-term sickness absence and the support we can offer to help you return to and remain at work. We will work with

you throughout your absence and will implement reasonable adjustments, where possible and where deemed necessary.

We may also revert to this long-term absence policy and procedure in the event that we deem any short-term absences sufficiently linked to an ongoing health issue or disability.

We reserve the right to deviate from this process and timescales below, to convene additional meetings or to reduce the number of meetings depending on your individual circumstances.

PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING LONG-TERM ABSENCE

1. During your period of long-term absence, your line manager will endeavour to contact you to ascertain how you are feeling and enquire if anything may be done to provide you with support. We also ask that you utilise this contact as an opportunity to inform us of your current position, the possibility, or timescale, of you returning to work and to agree a preferred method of contact during your continued period of absence. Any contact with you may be recorded in writing and placed on your personnel file.
2. Following a period of long-term absence and usually within the first four to eight weeks of your absence, or before if the circumstances warrant it, you will be invited to an informal welfare meeting by your line manager. A home visit can be offered but it is recognised that you may be uncomfortable with us visiting you at your home, therefore alternative arrangements, such as meeting at an impartial location, a remote meeting, or telephone consultation may be offered.

Reasonable notice will be given of the meeting. As well as getting an update on your health and wellbeing, the following may be discussed at the meeting:

- the reasons for and impact of your continuing absence.
- what improvements or further deteriorations in your health, if any, have been experienced.
- any insight you have been given from your doctor or other medical professional as to your current state of health.
- any background to your condition (how long have you had it, what the symptoms are).
- how long your absence may be likely to last.
- any measures that can be implemented at home or within the workplace which might improve your health and/or attendance.
- what medication you may be taking.
- if a medical report has not yet been requested, permission may be sought for us to request this, or we may refer you to Occupational Health.
- a plan for a way forward, any action that will be taken on both sides and a timescale for review and/or a further meeting.
- updates on developments and events within the workplace.

It is recognised that long-term sickness absence can often be due to a disability, and if so, consideration will be given to any reasonable adjustments that could be made to a job or working arrangements to provide support at work/assist with a return to work.

Notes of the meeting and any plan or referral discussed, will be made and added to your personnel file.

3. Depending on the matters discussed and agreed at the first welfare meeting, or, after a further amount of time it becomes clear that you are not expected to return imminently, your line manager may convene a further welfare meeting. This meeting will take the same format as the first welfare meeting. As well as getting a further update on your health and wellbeing, the following may be discussed at the meeting:

- the reasons for and impact of the continuing absence.
- what improvements/ progress towards a return to work have been experienced/made.
- how long your absence may be likely to last.
- updates on developments and events within the workplace.
- if a medical report has not yet been requested, permission may be sought for us to request this, or further information, or we may refer you to/back to Occupational Health.
- the contents of a medical report or Occupational Health report already received.
- review of any measures already taken or any other adjustments that could be taken to enable a return to work.
- your ability to return to or remain in the role in view of your capabilities, and the needs of the organisation.
- whether there are any temporary or permanent redeployment opportunities.
- a plan for a way forward, any action that will be taken on both sides and a timescale for review and/or a further meeting. This may, depending on steps we have already taken, include warning you that you are at risk of dismissal.

Notes of the meeting and any plan or referral discussed, will be made and added to your personnel file.

4. If, after having followed our processes outlined above, holding welfare conversations with you and reviewing relevant medical opinion, it appears unlikely that a return to work will be made within a reasonable timescale, then we

may need to consider terminating your employment on the grounds of ill health capability.

Before making any decisions on your continued employment, you will be invited to a formal capability meeting. Arrangements for this meeting will follow the same procedures set, however you will also be advised of the right to be accompanied, by either a trade union representative or a colleague.

The purposes of the meeting will be to:

- review the meetings and discussions that have already taken place in relation to your health.
- consider whether there have been any changes in your health since the last meeting which would enable a possible return to work or redeployment.
 - (a) consider whether there have been any operational changes since the last meeting which has given rise to other redeployment opportunities.
 - (b) consider any further medical opinions/evidence that may have been received.
 - (c) consider your views and any matters you may wish to raise, including any ideas you have about changes to your role to enable a return to work.
 - (d) consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of a return to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.
 - (e) consider whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be made to enable a return to work, where deemed necessary to do so.
 - (f) consider the operational difficulties that are being experienced due to your continued absence from work.
 - (g) consider whether the organisation is able to sustain any further period of absence from work and what the impact of this may be.
 - (h) consider a possible termination of employment.

If termination of employment on the grounds of ill health is confirmed, this will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

APPEAL

You have the right of appeal against your dismissal.

The appeal must be in writing, addressed to the Council's Appeal Panel and received within five working days of the decision being communicated to you.

You will be offered the right to be accompanied by either a trade union representative or a colleague to any appeal meeting. This meeting will be arranged within a

reasonable timescale of receiving your formal appeal. Depending on the nature of the appeal, further investigations might be necessary which would delay the meeting. We will make every effort to arrange a meeting which is suitable for both you and your companion, keeping you informed of any delays.

A hearing may be adjourned if the person chairing the appeals needs to gather any further information or give consideration to matters discussed at the hearing. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before a decision is made.

Following the appeal meeting, you will be informed of the outcome in writing. There will be no further right of appeal.

If an appeal against dismissal is successful, you will be reinstated with no loss of continuity or pay (subject to any continued entitlement to SSP or other sick pay).

SICK PAY

If you are absent from work due to sickness or injury for four days or more, we will pay statutory sick pay provided you are eligible in terms of the current SSP regulations and have complied with all relevant rules relating to sickness absence and notification.

In addition to our obligation to make payment of SSP, we operate a contractual sick pay scheme as specified in your individual Statement of Particulars document.

RECOVERY OF SICK PAY PAYMENTS

All non-statutory payments paid to you during your absence due to sickness or injury will be treated as a loan from us to you.

If compensation is subsequently recovered by you from a third party (including private insurance) in respect of your absence, any non-statutory payments made by us should be repaid in full by you. We reserve the right to deduct from your pay the amount of any monies paid to you by us and subsequently recovered from a third party.

The amount of any repayment to us in such circumstances will not exceed the actual compensation recovered or the part of your compensation identified as loss of earnings. We shall not seek repayment of the loan if no compensation is recovered.

FAMILY FRIENDLY ENTITLEMENTS

MATERNITY RIGHTS

Your maternity rights will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements can be found in our Maternity Policy.

PATERNITY RIGHTS

Your paternity rights will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements can be found in our Paternity Policy.

ADOPTION RIGHTS

Your adoption rights will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements can be found in our Adoption Policy.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Your rights in respect of parental leave will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements can be found in our Parental Leave Policy.

NEONATAL CARE LEAVE

Your rights in respect of neonatal care leave and pay will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations, Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements can be found in our Neonatal Care Leave Policy.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Your right to request flexible working will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed can be found in our Flexible Working Policy.

SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

Your rights to shared parental leave will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Any paid shared parental leave for which you are eligible will be paid at the statutory minimum rate. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements can be found in our Shared Parental Leave Policy.

TIME OFF WORK

DEPENDANT INCIDENT LEAVE

You are entitled to take a reasonable amount of paid time off during working hours in order to take action:

- to provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted;
- to make arrangements for the provision of care for an ill or injured dependant;
- in consequence of the death of a dependant;
- because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant;
- to deal with an incident that involves your child and occurs unexpectedly while the child is at school/other educational establishments.

You must inform us of the reason for your absence and how long you expect to be absent as soon as is reasonably practicable. Time off work under this right is envisaged as being no more than one or two days in most cases.

A dependant is defined as your spouse, civil partner, child, parent, a person who lives with you other than as your employee, tenant, lodger or boarder, any other person who would reasonably rely on you for assistance if they fell ill or were injured or assaulted, or who would rely on you to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury; or in relation to the disruption or termination of care for a dependant, any other person who reasonably relies on you to make arrangements for the provision of their care.

CARER'S LEAVE

You are entitled to take one week's unpaid leave to provide or arrange care for a dependant (see above for definition of a dependant). This is the maximum you can take in a single rolling period of 12 months. Part-time employees will receive a pro-rata entitlement.

You may take the leave in either individual days or half days, up to a block of one week.

You should notify your line manager in advance of the day(s) that you are looking to take off. You are required to give notice by either twice the length of leave requested, or three days, whichever is the longest. We may waive this notice requirement where the other eligibility criteria of the regulations have been met.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

Should you suffer the loss of a child under the age of 18 (including a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy) and meet the definition of a bereaved parent in terms of the relevant statutory regulations you will be entitled to 2 weeks' parental bereavement leave.

Should you have 26 weeks' continuous service with us, and your weekly average earnings are over the lower earnings limit, you will be entitled to two weeks' paid bereavement leave at the relevant statutory rate (or 90% of earnings if lower). If you do not meet these criteria you will be entitled to 2 weeks' unpaid leave.

You will be able to take the leave as either a single block of 2 weeks, or as 2 separate blocks of one week each taken at different times in the first 56 weeks after your loss.

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

If you suffer a bereavement we will endeavour to be sympathetic to your needs. Management will discuss the situation with you and agree upon a suitable period of leave of absence and advise whether payment will be made during this leave of absence.

Requests for compassionate leave will also be considered in the case of serious illness of immediate family. Immediate family is defined as your spouse, civil partner, parent, child or sibling.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Subject to the required notice of the holiday dates requested being given to us in the usual way you will normally be able to use your holiday entitlement to observe special religious holidays.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

We recognise that you may need, from time to time, to attend medical, hospital, dental, optometry and other similar appointments. You are required to try to arrange such appointments in your own time. If this is not possible, you should try to arrange such appointments at the very beginning or very end of the working day in order to minimise the inconvenience of your absence.

If you require time off to attend a medical or similar appointment, you will be given reasonable time off with pay on the proviso that you have given your manager reasonable notice of the date and time of an appointment. You may be required to make up for the time off by working extra time on another occasion.

You must obtain approval from your manager in advance of any appointment. We reserve the right to ask you to reschedule an appointment if its timing would cause

disruption to the organisation. We may also ask you to produce evidence of your appointment.

If you are pregnant, you have a statutory right to reasonable time off work with pay for antenatal appointments on medical advice. Paid time off in such circumstances will automatically be granted, although we will still have the right to request evidence of your appointment. If you have a qualifying relationship with a pregnant woman, you will be entitled to take unpaid time off to accompany the pregnant woman on up to two antenatal appointments.

If you are adopting a child alone, you have a statutory right to take paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments. If you are part of a couple jointly adopting a child, you can elect for one of you to take paid time off to attend up to five adoption appointments and the other can elect to take unpaid time off to attend up to two adoption appointments.

JURY SERVICE

Paid leave of absence will be granted for employees undertaking jury service or serving on public bodies or undertaking public duties. Where an allowance is claimable for loss of earnings, you should claim and pay the allowance to the Company.

If you are called up for jury service or cited as a witness in a court case, you should contact the Chief Officer to request time off work. In requesting time off, you must provide a copy of the court summons/witness citation. ~~You will be given time off without pay and you should submit a claim to the court for loss of earnings.~~

You should provide details of when you will be absent from work. On return to work you should also provide the date and time of your release from your jury /witness duties.

If on any day your services are not required at the court, you shall return to work for that day.

PUBLIC DUTIES

If you hold a public office or public position, we will grant a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work so you can perform the duties associated with that position.

If, the amount of time off that you require for public duties becomes excessive, or begins to cause operational difficulties, we may refuse you further time off in the immediate future. Alternatively, you may be permitted to take time off out of your annual leave entitlement for this purpose.

You should provide written notification to the Chief Officer of any dates on which you wish to take time off work for public duties, stating the expected length of your absence. This notification should be provided as far in advance as possible.

SEVERE WEATHER/ PUBLIC TRANSPORT DISRUPTIONS

You should use your best endeavours to attend work in all circumstances.

If you are unable to attend work or are delayed by the weather conditions or disruptions to public transport, you should contact your manager as soon as possible.

If you are delayed, you will have the opportunity to make up this time at a later date. If lateness amounts to half the time of your normal working day, we shall make a decision as to whether you will

- be allowed to work from home;
- take the time as annual leave; or
- make up for the time at a later date.

PERFORMANCE AND TRAINING

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

We monitor performance on an ongoing basis. We believe this allows minor issues to be identified at an early stage in order that they can be remedied by either informal counselling or training.

We hope such an approach will resolve most problems. Regrettably, if we continue to have concerns about your performance, we may need to conduct further investigations. We shall consider whether further training or assistance will resolve any difficulties identified but we reserve the right to take disciplinary action if we believe it is appropriate to do so.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Appraisals will take place on an annual basis.

The objective of your appraisal meeting will be to review the previous year's achievements and difficulties and to discuss any relevant future training, development, and career planning.

The outcome of the discussion should be a clear plan for both parties in terms of the action necessary to ensure that you can achieve your full potential in the work that you carry out for us.

If you feel that your appraisal was unsatisfactory or unfair, you may request that it is reviewed by the Personnel Committee.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRAINING

We appreciate that each of our employees is an asset to our organisation with the opportunity to develop if given suitable training opportunities.

You may be offered a range of training and development opportunities during the course of your employment. Providing training involves an investment of time and/or resources on our part. As a consequence, the offering of opportunities will always be considered in accordance with both your development and our organisation needs.

A failure to attend mandatory training could result in disciplinary action.

We may offer, or provide support for, the following types of training:

- **Skills Enhancement** – Your skills may be improved by on-the-job training given by recently trained and/or more experienced colleagues. On occasions, we may organise

such training for you during the course of your employment. However, if on-the-job training cannot be arranged, or is inappropriate, we may decide to organise internal training events or to arrange for you to attend suitable external training. We shall also consider any specific requests made by you to attend external training which you believe will enhance your skills.

- **Programmes leading to professional/academic qualifications** - We encourage you to pursue continuous professional development and where appropriate to gain further qualifications.
- **Health and Safety Training** - You may be considered for courses dealing with health and safety issues including manual handling, risk assessment, fire safety, first aid, and food and hygiene regulations.
- **Equal Opportunities Training** - We may, from time to time, provide training in equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

We may also choose to provide you, new employees and others engaged to work within our organisation with training and awareness in helping them understand their rights and responsibilities under the Dignity at Work Policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

We may also provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

EVALUATION OF TRAINING

On your completion of any internal or external course, you will be required to complete a course evaluation form and return this to your manager. We shall examine all evaluation forms gathered and use the information obtained as part of our overall evaluation of the training and development which we offer.

TRAINING COSTS

Training offered, or supported, by us will often have significant cost implications. Prior to commencing specific training courses, we may require you to sign our 'Training Costs Agreement'. This is necessary to protect our investment in your training if you leave our employment within the 12-month period immediately following the completion of the relevant course.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of your employment with us, you may come into possession of confidential information.

Confidential information is any information of a confidential nature relating to our organisation and may include:

- our organisation plans, organisation strategy and marketing plans;
- financial information relating to us, our financial results and financial forecasts;
- details regarding our employees and officers including the remuneration and other benefits paid to them;
- incidents and investigations relating to our operations or organisation;
- information relating to any pitches and tenders contemplated, offered or undertaken by us or on our behalf;
- confidential reports or research commissioned by or provided to us;
- any of our trade secrets including know-how and confidential transactions;
- details of any project on software development or any information relating to any type of replicated digital data medium including magnetic media tape, CD ROM or data designed to be circulated on the internet or any information relating to the methods, tools and techniques used by us in the course of our organisation;
- information relating to research activities, undertaken by us or on our behalf;
- details of any transaction, contract or dealings with any person or body in respect of which we owe an obligation of confidence to a third party;
- any information which you have been told is confidential and any information which has been given to you in confidence by clients, suppliers or other persons.

This list is not exhaustive.

Unless acting in the proper performance of your duties, or required by law, you must not disclose to any person or body, or use, any confidential information that you obtain during the course of your employment. These restrictions apply to disclosure of confidential information to work colleagues apart from certain named individuals. These restrictions shall continue after your employment has been terminated but shall cease to apply to any information or knowledge that subsequently comes into the public domain, other than as a result of unauthorised disclosure by you.

Confidential information, in whatever format made or received by you during the course of your employment is our property.

You must return to us, on our request or upon termination of your employment, any confidential information which belongs to us and is in your possession or under your control. You must delete, on our request, all confidential information in your

possession and destroy any other documents and/or items which are in your possession or under your control and which contain or refer to any confidential information.

You must not retain any copy/copies of any confidential information belonging to us. At any time during your employment, or following termination of your employment, we may require you to provide a written undertaking that you have returned all property belonging to us including confidential information and that you have not retained any copy/copies of confidential information belonging to us

DATA PROTECTION

You understand the need for the collection, storage and processing by us, or by any associated Company, or by our third party representatives of any personal data, including special categories of personal data, relating to you as necessary as part of this employment relationship for various reasons. We will keep a record of our processing activities in respect of personal data in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Special categories of personal data relating to you, as an example, may include but is not limited to self-certificates, doctors' certificates, medical reports or other health data, financial information and, details of trade union membership.

We shall review any personal data held by us on a regular basis to ensure that it is accurate, relevant and up to date.

MEDIA STATEMENTS

On behalf of the Council, delegated powers are granted to the Chief Officer and the Public Realm Contracts Manager to make authorised statements to the media where such matters are not detrimental to the Council.

RANDOM AND SPECIFIC CHECKS

We may require you to submit to a personal search and/or a search of all your baggage, personal items, lockers, car, etc. We may do so at any time while you are on our premises or engaged on our organisation.

Searches may be required to protect both the organisation and our employees from illegal activities such as:

- any theft of our property or property belonging to another employee or third party; and
- the possession or supply of illegal substances.

A request to carry out a search does not indicate any suspicion of wrongdoing; searches will normally be carried out at random. However, we also reserve the right to stop and search you when we reasonably suspect that you may have committed an illegal act.

Suspension will never be imposed as a knee-jerk reaction. We will always seriously consider alternative options, where appropriate. Suspension will always be a last resort option. However, there will be situations in which suspension will be necessary.

Depending upon the progression of the investigation, we will ensure that we communicate with you during any period of suspension.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

RESIGNATION

If you wish to terminate your employment you are required to give your notice in writing to your manager or Chief Officer. Your letter should provide clear reasons for your decision. The notice given should be in accordance with the period of notice detailed in your Statement of Particulars of Employment.

We may require you to attend an exit interview prior to your departure.

NOTICE OF TERMINATION

Should you fail to give us proper notice of termination or fail to work your full contractual notice without our prior agreement, we may withhold or deduct from any owed to you a sum equal to any loss suffered by us in consequence of your failure.

The sum deducted/withheld may be in part satisfaction of our claim only. Accordingly, we reserve the right to claim damages from you in excess of the sum deducted or withheld.

By mutual agreement, these notice periods may be waived or varied.

PAYMENT IN LIEU OF NOTICE

We reserve the right, at our absolute discretion, to make a payment in lieu of notice for all or any part of your notice period upon the termination of your employment (rather than you working out your notice period). This provision applies whether notice to terminate the contract is given by you or given by us.

GARDEN LEAVE

If you have resigned with notice, or you have been given notice of termination of your employment by us, we reserve the right, at our absolute discretion, to require you not to attend your place of work for all or part of the notice period.

In these circumstances, your contract of employment will continue in force until the end of your notice period and you will continue to receive full pay and any contractual benefits to which you are entitled in the normal way. You will also remain bound by all the obligations and restrictions set out in your contract of employment, save the duty to attend work. You must remain available to be contacted by us during this period.

You are not permitted to take up employment elsewhere during the notice period.

LOSS OF DRIVING LICENCE

Certain roles within our organisation require the job-holder to be able to drive. If so, as confirmed within your Statement of Particulars, it is a condition of your employment that you hold, and continue to hold, a current driving licence. In the event that you are disqualified from driving, have your right to drive suspended, restricted or revoked (either temporarily or permanently) for any reason whatsoever, we reserve the right to review the impact this has on your ongoing employment, and this could lead to the termination of your employment.

SHORT TIME WORKING AND LAY OFF

If due to a temporary shortage of work, we require to lay you off without pay or to place you on short-time working we shall do so in accordance with current legislation and make statutory guarantee payments as appropriate.

REDUNDANCY

We may face circumstances when factors such as changes in our market, changes in technology or changes in our organisational requirements may result in a potential redundancy situation.

We shall take all possible steps to avoid redundancies.

We will ensure that potentially affected employees are notified at the earliest possible opportunity whenever it appears that a redundancy situation may exist. Full consultation over any proposals involving possible redundancies will take place as soon as reasonably practicable and no final decision will be taken without full consideration of any suggested alternatives.

RETIREMENT

We do not operate a compulsory retirement age for our employees

We believe that you should, wherever possible, be permitted to continue working for as long as you wish to do so however, we operate a flexible retirement policy, and you may voluntarily retire at any time.

If you wish to retire voluntarily, you should inform the Chief Officer or the Public Realm Contracts Manager in writing as far in advance as possible and, in any event, in accordance with your notice period as set out in your Statement of Particulars of Employment document. This will assist us with our succession planning.

We will then write to you acknowledging your notice to retire and arrange a meeting with you to discuss arrangements for retirement, including the intended retirement date, succession and handover plans, pension details and phased retirement, if applicable.

You should consider any pension provision you hold, and ensure you take independent financial advice before making any decision in relation to your retirement.

RETURN OF OUR PROPERTY

Prior to your official leaving date you must return to us all documents (including copies or summaries and whether in eye readable or machine-readable form), software, hardware, books, office equipment, keys, uniform, security passes, credit or charge cards, vehicle and any other property belonging to us.

We reserve the right to specify an earlier date for the return of such property. You must also return to us any property that may come into your possession or control after the termination of your employment.

If you fail to return our property by your leaving date, or by any other specified date, we shall be entitled to withhold the whole or any part of any wages due from us to you up to the current market value of the property not returned. We also reserve the right to issue civil proceedings against you and claim compensation to the extent that any outstanding pay fails to cover the current market value of the property not returned.

APPENDIX 1

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Northwich Town Council is constantly trying to improve the service it delivers to you, the customer. Our wish is to provide you with an efficient and courteous service.

We will:

- treat you politely and with respect
- listen to you and take your views, wishes and needs seriously
- use plain language and not use jargon
- not discriminate against you.

When answering the telephone, we will:

- greet you politely and clearly
- tell you who you are speaking to
- take a message or try to give you the correct number to phone if your call is not for us
- return your answerphone messages within one working day.

When dealing with your letters and faxes, we will:

- provide an acknowledgement where requested
- respond to your enquiry within five working days.

When dealing with your emails or web requests we will:

- provide an acknowledgement when requested
- respond to your enquiry within five working days.

When you visit the Town Council Office, we will:

- ensure you are greeted within three minutes of arriving.

When we meet you away from the Town Council offices, we will:

- always endeavour to be on time
- wear name badges or carry official identification
- carry a diary to arrange future meetings
- provide a business card with contact details, where appropriate.

With regards to our cemeteries, play areas and open spaces, we will:

- arrange for the grass to be cut every two weeks during the growing season
- carry out weekly visual checks on all playground equipment and facilities to ensure that they are safe to use
- collect and dispose of litter at least twice weekly.

When dealing with complaints, comments, and compliments, we will:

- provide you with information about how to report a complaint, comment, or compliment
- record complaints, comments and compliments and use them to review and improve our services
- respond to all complaints within 10 working days
- treat complaints confidentially, while making sure we are fair to everyone concerned
- inform you how you can take your complaint further if you are not satisfied with our response
- apologise when we are at fault and do our very best to put things right.

We will keep customers informed and involved by:

- producing information about the Town Council and services that is accurate and up to date, using our website www.northwichtowncouncil.gov.uk; also noticeboards and newsletters.
- making this information accessible if you are a disabled person
- publishing regularly how well we are meeting our Customer Service Standards
- reviewing these Customer Standards every year
- using your feedback to help us make decisions.

Our employees have a right to:

- work in a safe environment, free from aggressive or threatening behaviour
- be treated politely

Help us to help you by letting us know:

- in good time if you need to cancel or rearrange an appointment
- immediately if you are unhappy with the service you have received
- if you are pleased with the service you have received.

Chris Shaw

Chief Officer

Report to : Full Council

Meeting Date : 3rd November 2025

Agenda Item : 12

Prepared By : Chris Shaw

Subject : Model Standing Orders 2025 update (England)



Background

This is an update to Model Standing Orders 14 and 18.

How to use the model standing orders - Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

The model standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of NALC.

Drafting notes - **Model** standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. Model standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. It is NALC's view that all model standing orders will generally be suitable for councils.

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights. Model standing orders use gender-neutral language (e.g. "Chair").

A model standing order that includes brackets like this '()' requires information to be inserted by a council. A model standing order that includes brackets like this '[]' and the term 'OR' provides alternative options for a council to choose from when determining standing orders.

I have inserted information from the last approved standing orders where applicable, some areas are left with brackets that need completing and have been highlighted in **RED**, other areas in **RED** are reworded or new information from our last approved standing orders.

Proposal - Members are kindly requested to review the Standing Orders and confirm any additional information for implementation of the updated version for approval.

Decision of the Council is requested.

Chris Shaw
Chief Officer



Northwich
town council

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1. **RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS**

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

the debate on a motion except:

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

2. **DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

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

3. **MEETINGS GENERALLY**

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice** OR [The minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting].
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

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

- rights present and voting.
- r The Mayor at the meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.
-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

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

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

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

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

legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);

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

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

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

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

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

8. **VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

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

9. **MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

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

10. **MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Chief Officer:

- i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
- ii. to move to a vote;
- iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

11. **MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

See also standing order 20.

a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements**

shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.

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

12. DRAFT MINUTES

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

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

“The chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the (.....) held on [date] in respect of (.....) were a correct record but this view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a
-

- **website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**

- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

See also standing order 3(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Chief Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Chief Officer OR [by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required] and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered [by the Chief Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at

the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].

h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:

- i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
- ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
- iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. **PROPER OFFICER**

- a The Proper Officer shall be the Chief Officer or **(ii) other staff member(s)** nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:

- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
- **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least three days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Mayor of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;

- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(*see also standing order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Mayor or in their absence the Deputy Mayor of the Council OR Chair or in their absence Vice-Chair of the sub Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council OR sub committee;
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(*see also standing order 23*).

16. **RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. **ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as

practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:

- i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
- ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
- iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

- i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
- ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. **FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT**

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;

- iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below [50,000] due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Chief Officer;
 - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Chief Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19. **HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of [Council] OR [the Personnel Panel] is subject to standing order 11.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Mayor of [the Personnel panel], if they are not available, the Deputy Mayor) of [the Personnel panel of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to [the Policy and Operations committee at its next meeting.
- c The Mayor of the Council OR [the Personnel panel in their absence, the Deputy Mayor shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of [the Chief Officer]. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by [the Personnel panel.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the Mayor of the Council OR the Personnel Panel or in their absence, the Deputy Mayor in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of [the Personnel panel.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by Chief Officer relates to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor the Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Personnel Panel, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Personnel Panel.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

See also standing order 21.

- a In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall

publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.

- b. *[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000]* **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

OR

[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000] **The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

21. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**
(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

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

22. **RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

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

23. **EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

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

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **[Subject to standing order 23(a), the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.]**

The above is applicable to a Council with a common seal.

OR

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

The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.

24. **COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

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

25. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

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

26. **STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least four councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.