



# Yate Town Council

## Full Council

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Yate Town Council** to be held at **Poole Court (Council Chamber)** on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023** between **7.00pm and 9.00pm** for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the Agenda below.

Hayley Townsend  
Town Clerk

*Anyone attending this meeting is encouraged to follow the below guidance:*

- *On entering the venue, please use hand sanitiser;*
- *Attendees must not attend if showing any symptoms of Covid-19;*
- *No papers will be available; attendees are requested to download documents to their devices prior to the meeting;*
- *Attendees are encouraged, wherever possible, to take low carbon transport to meetings including walking, cycling, car sharing etc;*
- *In the event of a fire alarm or other emergency (signalled by a continuously ringing bell), please leave the building through the nearest fire exit or safest evacuation route. Please meet by the flag pole in the car park.*

*In the exercise of Council functions, Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and the need to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Council also has a duty to tackle discrimination, provide equality of opportunity for all and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivering services under the public sector Equality Duty and Equality Act 2010.*

1a. To receive apologies for absence.

1b. To receive leave of absence request from:

- \* Councillor Sandra Emms, from 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023;
- \* any other councillor of YTC.

2. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011

*Members who consider that they have an interest are asked to: (a) State the item number in which they have an interest, (b) The nature of the interest, (c) Whether the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.*

Hayley Townsend, Town Clerk, Poole Court, Poole Court Drive, Yate, South Gloucestershire, BS37 5PP



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3. To receive any requests for dispensations.  
*(NB: Minute No. 17 of the Full Council meeting on 16 May 2023 granted dispensations to Councillors John Ford and Ray Perry to enable them to discuss matters relating to YOSC Ltd (for which they are both trustees) at Town Council meetings until the 2027 elections).*
4. Public Participation Session with Respect to Items on the Agenda.
5. To receive and **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023. [Click here for minutes](#)
6. To receive and **NOTE** the Minutes of the Environment and Community Committee meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. [Click here for minutes](#)
7. To receive and **NOTE** the Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023. [Click here for minutes](#)
8. To receive and **NOTE** the Minutes of the Planning and Transportation Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023. [Click here for minutes](#)
9. To receive and consider the following items on the Clerk's Report. (Copy herewith)
  1. **Environment and Community Committee**
    - 1/1 Items Referred from the Environment and Community Committee Meeting Held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023
    - 1/2 Website Sub-Committee
  2. **Finance and Governance Committee**
    - 2/1 Items Referred from the Finance and Governance Committee Meeting Held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023
      - 2.1.1 Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee
        - (a) Governance
        - (b) White Ribbon Campaign
  3. **Planning and Transportation Committee**
    - 3/1 Items Referred from the Planning and Transportation Committee Meeting Held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023
  4. **Delegated Decisions**
    - 4/1 Record of Delegated Decisions
    - 4/2 Planning Comments Submitted under Delegated Powers (26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023)
  5. **Financial Reports**
    - 5/1 Accounts for Payment
    - 5/2 Audit
      - (a) 2023/2024 In Year Assurance Internal Audit Report
      - (b) 2022/2023 External Audit Report

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## 6. Town Council Project Steering Group Reports (Task Limited)

- 6/1 Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group – Kingsgate Park Refurbishment Project
  - (a) Phase 1: Timber Refurbishment (Children’s Playground Company)
  - (b) Phase 2: Eibe Play
  - (c) Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
  - (d) Other Project Updates
- 6/2 YOSC
  - (a) YOSC Liaison – Governance
- 6/3 New North Yate Community Building

## 7. Consultations

- 7/1 Current Consultations
  - (a) Polling Districts and Polling Stations in South Gloucestershire
  - (b) Change to the Opening Hours for One Stop Shops
  - (c) Chance to Communicate Key Financial Issues
  - (d) South Gloucestershire Council Budget 2024
- 7/2 Consultations Responses
  - (a) Consultation on the Future of Population and Migration Statistics in England and Wales
  - (b) Jo Cox Civility Commission – Call for Input by Local Councils
- 7/3 Urgent Consultations

## 8. Yate Town Centre

- 8/1 Yate Town Centre Strategy Group

## 9. Ladden Garden Village

- 9/1 Ladden Garden Village Liaison Group

## 10. Confidential Items

- 10/1 Confidentiality Confirmation

To **RESOLVE** to enter confidential session if required: *In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 etc, it is advisable in the public interest that any members of the press or public present be excluded and they be instructed to withdraw.*

- 10/2 Confidential Item – Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group (contract variation for Kingsgate Park Refurbishment Project).

- 10/3 To **RESOLVE** to return to public session.

## 11. Consideration of Impact of Decisions on Climate, Planet and Waste



# Yate Town Council

## Full Council meeting

### 24 October 2023

#### Town Clerk's Report

#### **1 ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE**

##### **1/1 Items Referred from the Environment & Community Committee Meeting Held on 19 September 2023**

To **NOTE** that no items were referred to Full Council from the Environment and Community Committee meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

##### **1/2 Website Sub-Committee**

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Website Sub-Committee\* held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and consider recommendations therein. (Appendix 1)

*(\*This sub-committee reports to the Environment & Community Committee. However the recommendations therein refer to decisions that the committee do not have the power or budget responsibility to resolve).*

#### **2 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

##### **2/1 Items Referred from the Finance & Governance Committee Meeting Held on 3 October 2023**

##### **2.1.1 Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee**

##### **(a) Governance**

To receive the minutes relating to governance matters, from the Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and to consider the recommendations held within for approval by Full Council. (Appendix 2)

Recommendations for Full Council to consider:

- Adopt amended Leavers Policy (Long Service Award);
- Adopt new Safeguarding Policy;
- Agree review of Annual Investment Strategy;
- Adopt new Work Experience Policy;
- Adopt amended Flag Flying Policy;
- Adopt new South Gloucestershire Council Code of Conduct;
- Adopt new Equalities and Diversity Action Plan.

## **(b) White Ribbon Campaign**

Further to minute number 4/5 of the Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee (Governance) meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023, the following was resolved:

*Information regarding the White Ribbon campaign was received and it was **RESOLVED** to commit to become a supporter of the campaign.*

It has since come to light that there is a one-off charge of £150 to join as a supporter of the White Ribbon Scheme. Further to email consultation with the Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee, it is **RECOMMENDED** that the joining fee of £150 be agreed to formally support this valuable awareness campaign. (Fee to be paid from 'subscriptions' budget heading).

## **3 PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

### **3/1 Items Referred from the Planning & Transportation Committee Meeting Held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

To **NOTE** that no items were referred to Full Council from the Planning & Transportation Committee meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## **4 DELEGATED DECISIONS**

### **4/1 Record of Delegated Actions**

To **NOTE** that where action has been taken between meetings, it has been in consultation with members of the council via email and the existing below delegation invoked:

*"The Town Clerk shall have the power to take action as necessary between Meetings of the Full Council, Committees, Sub-Committees, Project Steering Group Committees and Working Groups provided that such action is in accordance with the policy of YTC and is within budget."*

To receive list of decisions taken using above delegation to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 [Click here for list](#)

### **4/2 Planning Comments Submitted Under Delegated Powers**

To **NOTE** that further to agreement to amend Planning & Transportation Committee meeting dates, (Minute No. 47 of the Full Council meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023), to save time and cost, and for the Committee to agree (digitally) the comments to be submitted and for delegation to the clerk to be invoked to submit the comments to SGC, the submissions of 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 will be reported to the next meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

## **5 FINANCIAL REPORTS**

### **5/1 Accounts for Payment**

To receive and **NOTE** the accounts for payment previously authorised in line with the Financial Regulations [Click here for payment list.](#)

### **5/2 Audit**

#### **(a) 2023/2024 In Year Assurance Internal Audit Report**

To receive the 2023/2024 In Year Assurance internal audit report. [Click here](#)

To **NOTE** the report provided the opinion that Yate Town Council has a high standard of financial control procedures, with several key strengths outlined and no key risks or key actions identified.

#### **(b) 2022/2023 External Audit Report**

To receive the year end external audit report and certificate from BDO LLP for year ending 31 March 2023. [Click here for report](#)

To **NOTE** the report provided the opinion that the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

To further **NOTE** the Conclusion of Audit was publicly displayed and posted on the Town Council website and Poole Court noticeboard on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in line with the Accounts and Audit regulation 2015.

## **6 TOWN COUNCIL PROJECT STEERING GROUP REPORTS (TASK LIMITED)**

### **6/1 Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group - Kingsgate Park Refurbishment Project**

*NB\* At Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023: Delegated powers be granted to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Play Area and Properties Project Steering Group, to progress any matters relating to the Kingsgate Park and Peg Hill projects (in addition to existing delegations outlined in the Terms of Reference to the Project Steering Group itself*

To **NOTE**:

- Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group minutes of 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023 [Click here to read minutes](#);
- Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group minutes of 3 October 2023 : [Click here to read minutes](#), regarding safety inspection report feedback relating to the mole digger located within the sand pit unit;

- Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group minutes of 18 October 2023 (to be circulated).

To **NOTE** the following Kingsgate Park Refurbishment project updates:

**(a) Phase 1: Timber Refurbishment (Children's Playground Company)**

- I. Invoice 3 to the value of £15,683.39 was paid;
- II. An alternative ropes supplier will be sought by Children's Playground Company for the remaining ropes / bridges;
- III. The first order of ropes has been fitted to the senior trail;
- IV. New posts in the timber trail and stepping posts were fitted;
- V. An issue was identified with a tree root where a new concrete pad was required. Following inspection by our tree surveyors and careful excavation of the existing concrete by the supplier, it was possible to protect the tree root and fit a new concrete pad;
- VI. The timber youth hut was vandalised with red spray paint during w/c 2 October 2023; this was reported to the police.

**(b) Phase 2: Eibe Play**

- I. All equipment was received onsite by w/c 9 October 2023; equipment was reviewed by officers for invoice payment recommendation;
- II. Following multiple instances of vandalism in the first 7 days of phase 2 (for which incident reports were submitted to the police), the contractor raised concerns regarding the storage of equipment to be installed. Officers met Eibe and the following actions were taken:
  - i. Arranged for phased delivery of units to minimise quantity of units stored on site; one load delivered weekly for approximately 4 weeks (starting from 21 September 2023);
  - ii. Storage space for play and installation equipment (e.g. telehandler) was provided by YTC;
  - iii. Eibe shipping container was located outside the YTC yard to allow for cctv coverage (was originally planned to be located in car park area);
  - iv. In consultation with members of the Project Steering Group, agreed possibility of storage of play units in Poole Court car park, for a limited time and for minimum pieces of equipment, as a last resort (to date this location has not been required);
  - v. Learning Partnership West and Armadillo were asked to visit the area during detached youth work sessions.
- III. Concreting began w/c 9 October 2023 for pads and unit footings;
- IV. Contract variation 1, to the value of £2,550, was submitted to Eibe for the extension of the sand pit;
- V. Eibe is behind schedule due to:
  - i. Poor/wet weather conditions;
  - ii. Repeat incidents of vandalism (time is spent cleaning up mess made by intruders to the site overnight);

- iii. Delivery issues, (i.e. cars parking/blocking the car park entrance which delays deliveries and takes staff off work task to search for vehicle owners);
  - iv. Sand pit unit size increase requires additional design and materials;
- VI. Surfacing start may be delayed slightly due to poor weather conditions;
- VII. Installers are experiencing serious drainage issues with the in-ground trampoline. The footings filled up with water within hours of being drained. The installation team has increased the depth of the foundation to increase the area for drainages;
- VIII. Due to tree roots, the ladybird seat and the playhouse locations will be adjusted, but will remain in the same “quiet” area;
- IX. One existing spinner was due to be relocated; however the new location has many tree roots. The contractor will do their best to find a location for the spinner where roots will not be compromised/tree stumps are not in the fall zones.

### **(c) Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)**

- I. Works to complete the wall refurbishment and painting completed early October 2023;
- II. A decision was taken by the Project Steering Group to enhance the specification of the MUGA court painting, to the value of £1,767, to the specification below, to create a professional court appearance:  
*Set out, supply and spray two coats of TENNIS GRADE pigmented water based acrylic colour coating to bitumen macadam surfaces, to include the application of markings to 1no. Basketball Court;*
- III. Works will take place in spring 2024 during better weather (as it is not possible to undertake painting at this time of year due to poor weather affecting the paint);
- IV. Enover Community Trust (ECT) agreed to extend the YTC funding agreement until 31 July 2024, as £1,369.18 of ECT funding was allocated to MUGA line painting. The ECT funding agreement is due to be signed/sealed at the Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group meeting on 18 October 2023;
- V. The MUGA was vandalised with red spray paint during w/c 2 October 2023; the vandalism included acts of hate crime (racism) - this was reported to the police.

### **(d) Other Project Updates**

- I. A public time capsule activity, to gather public photos and stories of Kingsgate Park through the generations, took place at Yate International Festival;
- II. SGC was contacted on 14 September 2023 and 16 October 2023, requesting an urgent response to YTC’s request to remove the break clause from the Kingsgate Park lease. This request (along with confirmation of YTC agreeing to cover the associated cost of the amendment to the lease) was sent to SGC on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and a response remains outstanding.



## **6/2 YOSC**

### **(a) YOSC Liaison – Governance**

#### **To NOTE:**

- a meeting took place between officers, the chair of YOSC Ltd and the Site Manager of YOSC on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023 to discuss the draft lease sent to YOSC Ltd in December 2022; YOSC Ltd was encouraged to seek legal advice in the drafting of any revisions they require before responding to YTC and we await a formal response;
- the TOCA arrangement was up for renegotiation from 23 July 2023 and a response is awaited from SGC to progress this matter.

## **6/3 New North Yate Community Building (NNYCB)**

#### **To NOTE:**

A meeting took place between YTC officers (Town Clerk/Community Projects Manager) and SGC Officers (Grainne Stables and Allan Twine) on 4 October 2023. SGC officers advised the following:

1. SGC has appointed an external project manager to undertake a feasibility assessment of the S106 legal specification for the NNYCB. The last feasibility assessment was undertaken in 2021 and is no longer accurate (NB. NNYCB project finances were agreed by SGC in 2015);
2. The outcome of the above feasibility assessment is expected at the end of October 2023, following which, SGC officers will meet with YTC representatives (14 November 2023, 12pm at Poole Court) to review the findings of the feasibility report and discuss opportunities for partnership working on the project;
3. SGC advised expressions of interest to operate the NNYCB facility will be sought first from Town and Parish Councils.

To agree to delegate powers to the Town Clerk working with members of the NNYCB Project Steering Group to:

- Take an in-principle decision on whether to re-enter negotiations with SGC for YTC to be a capital project partner with SGC, who have taken the decision to proceed with the s106 (or less) footprint for a building, using capped s106 funds (to the value of £2,930,000);
- Take an in-principle decision on whether to enter negotiations with SGC regarding YTC being the operator of the building only, making no capital investment;
- Make recommendations to Full Council on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 about project funding (in exchange for a consistent capital stake in the building).

## 6/4 S106 Projects

To **NOTE** that the following s106 bids made for Millside and YOSC were successful:-

1. Millside – £4,737.37 capital / £4,981.38 revenue to fund play improvements at Millside Play Zone, Yate (sports table and slide);
2. YOSC - £9,048.42 capital / £2,738.65 revenue to fund improvements to facilities for disability athletics at Yate Outdoor Sports Complex (toilets and doors).

Project Management Plans will be drafted, quotes sought and funding agreements will then be forwarded by SGC for YTC to sign.

## 7. CONSULTATIONS

### 7/1 Current Consultations

Consultation Name	Link	Date Circulated	Closing Date	Notes
Polling Districts and Polling Stations in South Gloucestershire	<a href="#">Click here to access consultation</a>	03.10.2023	30.10.23	
Change to the Opening Hours for One Stop Shops.	<a href="#">Click here to access consultation</a>	17.10.2023	23.11.23	
Chance to Communicate Key Financial Issues Your SCN Councils Have - Direct To Commons LUHC Committee.	<a href="#">Click here to access consultation</a>		No Deadline Date	
South Gloucestershire Council Budget 2024	<a href="#">Click here to access consultation.</a>	17.10.2023	08.12.23	

## 7/2 Consultation Responses

Consultation Name	Link	Date Circulated	Closing Date	Notes
Consultation on the Future of Population and Migration Statistics in England and Wales	<a href="#">Click here to access consultation</a>	29.08.2023	26.10.2023	To <b>NOTE</b> Councillor Chris Willmore submitted comments on 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2023, <a href="#">Click here to access submitted comments</a>
Jo Cox Civility Commission - Call for Input by Local Councils	<a href="#">Click here to access consultation</a>	29.09.2023	30.09.23	To <b>NOTE</b> no responses were received.

## 7/3 Urgent Consultations

To receive any urgent consultations.

## 8 YATE TOWN CENTRE

### 8/1 Yate Town Centre Strategy Group

To **NOTE** that a meeting took place on 11 September 2023 and the minutes were received and **NOTED** at the meeting of the Environment & Community Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. (In future this item will only be reported at the Environment and Community Committee meeting).

## 9 LADDEN GARDEN VILLAGE

### 9/1 Ladden Garden Village Liaison Group

To receive the notes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023. [Click here to read notes.](#)

## **10 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

### **10/1 Confidentiality Confirmation**

To **RESOLVE** to enter confidential session if required: *That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it is advisable in the public interest that any members of the press or public present be excluded and they be instructed to withdraw.*

### **10/2 Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group**

To **NOTE** confidential Appendices A, C and D of the Play Areas and Properties Project Steering Group meeting held on 3 October 2023 (confidential appendix 3), regarding safety inspection report feedback relating to the mole digger, located within the sand pit unit, and contract variation.

**10/3** To **RESOLVE** to return to public session.

## **11 CONSIDERATION OF IMPACT OF DECISIONS ON CLIMATE, PLANET AND WASTE**

To consider if there are any impacts on climate, planet and waste following discussions and decisions taken during the meeting.

## **MINUTES OF THE WEBSITE REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 FROM 6.45PM TO 7.45PM AT POOLE COURT.**

### **PRESENT:**

**Councillors Cheryl Kirby, Gabriela Miron, Ben Nutland and Chris Willmore – Yate Town Council. Service Support Officer – Yate Town Council.**

#### **1. Election of Chair**

**RESOLVED** Councillor Cheryl Kirby was elected chair.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011**

No declarations of interest were received.

#### **4. Yate Town Council Email Addresses**

A discussion took place regarding the adoption of Yate Town Council email addresses for Yate Town Councillors and an officer report was received (Appendix 1).

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023 :

- proceed with the email address offer for all councillors at a cost of £1,999.20 per year for 17 licences (£9.80 per licence per month);
  - Licences includes access to the following Outlook 365 features :
    - Outlook Email;
    - Online and mobile versions of Word, Excel and PowerPoint;
    - Microsoft Teams;
    - OneDrive (1 TB of cloud storage);
    - Sharepoint (which can act as a “Members Area”).
- provide appropriate training and;
- accommodate those who wish to opt out of the organisational email address as their main point of public contact.

## 5. Yate Town Council Website Updates

A verbal report was received from the Service Support Officer:

### 1. Venues

- The Service Support team have been working with Yate Heritage Centre, The Armadillo and the Pop Inn Café to pull together a list of what they are looking for in terms of their pages on the Yate Town Council website;
- Draft pages will be created and sent to the venues teams to confirm any changes before the pages are published.

### 2. Bookings

- The Service Support team is currently working with the bookings team on incorporating their plans, such as a calendar, to show availability of venues.

### 3. The Service Support team is:

- now able to amend the tiles on the front page of the website, making it easier to amend for any new projects, news etc;
- working their way through sorting the background items / files which were transferred over from the old website.

### 4. "Other downloads" have been working well for meetings by enabling a link to be added to meeting papers, rather than additional appendices.

It was **RESOLVED** that;

1. A review plan and timeline for the website be drawn up;
2. News and projects updates continue to be shared on the website;
3. Councillors email addresses are added to their details on the website "Who's Who" website page;

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023 :

4. During meetings, all agendas to include an item for consideration on what can be done, in terms of social media and the website, to publicise the work and decisions of the council (similar to the "Consideration of Impact of Decisions on Climate, Planet and Waste" which features on agendas).

## 6. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting to be agreed via the circulation of a doodle.

# Yate Town Councillors Email Addresses

## 1. Introduction

In keeping with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), investigations have been made into the cost, efficiency and need for Yate Town Councillors to be given a @yatetowncouncil.gov.uk email address.

There are many sources of information, such as ICO, NALC and SLCC, which outline the risks of personal devices and email addresses being used, as well as the council's data protection obligations and responsibilities, eg,

*ICO FACT: Council must be able to demonstrate that they are UK GDPR-Compliant, and the use of personal email accounts, and privately-owned devices makes this complicated.<sup>1</sup>*

## 2. Risks and Disadvantages of Using Personal Email Addresses

There are many different risks to take into consideration when Council's operate using personal email addresses.

1. RISK : The Council is unable to suspend user access immediately.

If, for example, a Councillor resigned or was disqualified, the Council would not be able to suspend access to an email account which would have received Council documents and conversations.

2. RISK : Those who are no longer Councillors still have access to documents, conversations and email decisions made by the Council.

3. RISK : Personal data could be processed for different purposes from which it was originally collected.

Under GDPR, personal data can only be used/processed for the specific purpose(s) that they have given permission for. If this is done via personal addresses/devices, the Council has no control of the data being processed.

4. RISK : Data is at risk of not being processed securely.

The Council has a duty to process data securely in accordance with its Privacy and Data Protection policies.

5. RISK : Copies of data stored on different devices has an increased risk of becoming out of date or inaccurate.

<sup>1</sup> [Fact sheet for councils: the use of personal email addresses and devices \(ico.org.uk\)](https://ico.org.uk)

6. RISK : Data can be compromised either accidentally or deliberately.
7. DISADVANTAGE : If there is a problem with the email address, or account it is associated with, the Council's IT support will be unable to assist.
8. DISADVANTAGE : If a Freedom of Information or Subject Access Request is brought to the Council, it can be difficult to respond in time if information is stored on different devices.

### **3. Benefits of Using an Organisational Email Address**

There are many benefits to the use of an organisational email address.

1. Presents a uniformed and professional image to the public.
2. The Council can demonstrate that they are pro-actively UK GDPR compliant.
3. The Council has more control over processed data.
4. Councillors have access to an alternative "secure members area".
5. Council documents, conversations and emails are kept within the organisation.
6. Those who are no longer Councillors are unable to access council business information (such as emails, conversations, and documents).
7. Change to email capacity (emails which contain multiple documents are easier to send).
8. Officer efficiency :
  - a. Calendars can be shared directly with members.
  - b. Multiple people can be in one document (via online versions of Word, Excel etc...)
  - c. Meeting requests can be sent electronically with options to either 'accept' or reject'.
  - d. Giving contact details to members of the public is more standard.
  - e. Can create a 'secure area' where information is stored and can easily be retrieved.
  - f. Simplified email addresses – look more professional and are easier to recall as they are standardised.
9. In keeping with other local Councils who have organisational email addresses.
10. Any issues which arise with the email address and associated account can be dealt with by the Council's IT providers.
11. IT security will be the same as the Council's in terms of firewalls and email security.



#### 4. Comments from External Organisations

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)<sup>2</sup> raises the following comments in relation to organisational email addresses :

- Obtaining a gov.uk email account demonstrates the council's official local government status;
- Important to have a secure, centrally managed email system;
- Using a central system means:
  - Emails are less likely to be identified as spam;
  - Council has the ability to add, edit or remove users as appropriate;
  - Immediately suspend user access in an emergency;
  - Centralised searching of all data is more effective compliance with Data Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information Requests.

LocalGov<sup>3</sup> also raises the following comments in relation to organisational email addresses :

- All councils must ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all personal data it holds even if the data is being processed through personal email accounts or is stored on a privately-owned device;
- Data Protection Breach Risks :
  - Documents will become inaccurate or out of date over time;
  - Retained for longer than necessary;
  - Can be viewed by others who have access to device or private email address;
  - Difficult to respond to Subject Access Requests.
- Risk of the use of personal devices include:
  - Data will be accessed if device is stolen;
  - Systems that are used to transfer data to other devices are not secure;
  - Blurring of personal and/or political use with council use.

SLCC<sup>4</sup> raises the following comments in regards to public sector organisations gave a '.gov.uk' or other government domain for their websites, emails and services :

- A unique address to help people find the council website.
- Outgoing .gov.uk emails are more likely to be cleared by security filters and delivered successfully.
- You can control access to official papers and correspondence day to day.
- Local council offers won't have to surrender private emails if you have a 'Freedom of Information' or data request.

<sup>2</sup> [The importance of secure email systems and GOV.UK domains for local councils - News \(nalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/the-importance-of-secure-email-systems-and-gov.uk-domains-for-local-councils)

<sup>3</sup> [LocalGov.co.uk - Your authority on UK local government - The safety of data on councillors' personal devices](https://www.localgov.co.uk/news/your-authority-on-uk-local-government-the-safety-of-data-on-councillors-personal-devices)

<sup>4</sup> [SLCC | Why should your town, parish or community council have a .gov.uk domain?](https://www.slcc.gov.uk/news/why-should-your-town-parish-or-community-council-have-a-gov.uk-domain)

- Your domain will be monitored by the Central Digital and Data Office’s Domain Management Team.
- As .gov.uk domains are based within UK jurisdiction they have better legal protection.

SLCC also produced an information sheet as to [“Why Should Your Parish Council Have A .GOV.UK Domain?”](#)

## **5. Cost of Yate Town Council Email Addresses**

Officers have researched the cost of all Yate Town Councillors to have an organisational email address.

### **Office 365 Business Basic and Azure Active Directory**

**Cost Per Councillor :** £9.80 per month  
*(Business Basic £4.90,  
 Azure Active (cloud platform) £4.90)*

**Total Cost (for 17) :** £1,999.20 per year

Office 365 Business Basic package includes :

- Outlook Email;
- Online and mobile versions of Word, Excel and PowerPoint;
- Microsoft Teams;
- OneDrive (1 TB of cloud storage);
- Sharepoint (which can act as a “Members Area”).

## **6. Sharepoint – Members Only Area**

When Yate Town Council updated its website, as part of the review, members indicated that they were interested in the idea of having a separate “members area” where they could access documents which were not uploaded to the public side of the website. Following this a “secure area” was created by the website developer. Some feedback was given to the developer :

<b>YTC Comments/Feedback</b>	<b>Developer Response</b>
Feedback was received that the current search function does not highlight words within documents available on the website.	<i>The search box above the downloads table only searches the name of the file.  The website’s main search box could be added to the downloads page as it has the potential to search the content of documents but will deliver those search results on a separate page rather than in the downloads table.</i>

	<p><i>The website currently uses a plugin called 'SearchIQ'. This will need to be moved away from as it is free and we are approaching our maximum number of free pages (also if you wanted to search document content you would have had to pay \$159 a month, so we need to find a cheaper plugin anyway).</i></p> <p><i>The most suitable option is called 'SearchWP' which is \$199 per year but \$99 for the first year, this gives you the capability to search file contents.</i></p>
<p>Feedback was received that you cannot open multiple documents at a time which isn't user friendly for those using a tablet for example.</p>	<p><i>The experience should be that you click the download button, then it takes you to the download/file opened in the browser? To open another document you hit the back button on the browser which takes you back to the list of downloads.</i></p>
<p>Feedback was received that there is no "login" button for Councillors to use to access the secure area of the website as opposed to going through a link.</p>	<p><i>Adding a link to the secure area is a security risk as you're telling everyone where your secure area is, which gives people the chance to hack it. Instead encourage people to add the secure area link to their bookmarks/favourites.</i></p>

Comments from the website developer say that some of the requested changes to the area are possible (but there may be additional charges) but that there are some changes which are not recommended mainly due to security risks.

An alternative system to the secure area is 'Sharepoint' (created by Microsoft Office). Currently, all staff have access to this app via their Yate Town Council Microsoft Office account. A few of the features are that it allows multiple people to view and edit documents at one time, can create document libraries and create shared calendars.

Using Sharepoint would also keep non-public documents away from a public-facing asset and would therefore be keeping it more 'in-house'.

## **7. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the council proceed with the purchase of 17 Office 365 Business Basic and Azure Active Directory and issue to Yate Town Councillors.

It is also recommended to trial a "Members Only Area" via Sharepoint to see if it is a viable alternative to the current website secure area.

## **Minutes of the Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee meeting (appertaining to Governance) held on Tuesday 12th September 2023 from 6.00pm – 6.30pm held at Poole Court.**

**Present: Councillors Tony Davis, John Ford, Cheryl Kirby and Karl Tomasin.**

**Deputy Town Clerk/Service Support Manager.**

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR**

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Tony Davis be elected Chair of the Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee and that a Vice-Chair is not appointed.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Mike Drew and Chris Willmore were not present.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

### **4. GOVERNANCE**

#### **4/1 Staffing Policies**

(a) It was **NOTED** that the following staffing policies have been reviewed as part of the 2023/24 Staffing Policy Review and have not been amended significantly, other than minor amendments such as typos or in line with working practices or legislative changes:

- Retirement;
- Whistleblowing Policy (reviewed annually);
- Recruitment and Selection Policy.

(b) The Leavers Policy (Long Service Award) (Appendix 1) reviewed as part of the 2023/24 policy review, was received and **RECOMMENDED** that it be presented to Full Council for adoption.

#### **4/2 General Policies**

(a) The Safeguarding Policy (Appendix 2), reviewed and rewritten by an external consultant as part of the 2023/24 policy review, was received and it was **RECOMMENDED** that it be presented to Full Council for adoption.

(b) It was **NOTED** that the following general policies have been reviewed as part of the 2023/24 General Policy Review and have not been significantly amended, other than minor amendments such as typos or in line with working practices or legislative changes:

- Annual Investment Strategy - it was **RECOMMENDED** this be agreed by Full Council (Appendix 3).

(c) The following general policies were reviewed and **RECOMMENDED** they be adopted by Full Council:

- New Work Experience Policy (created to give structure to current ad-hoc arrangements) (Appendix 4);
- Amendments to Flag Flying Policy; further to the recommendation from the Environment & Community Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 (Appendix 5).

### **4/3 Standing Orders & Code of Conduct**

The new Code of Conduct adopted by South Gloucestershire Council in December 2022 (sent to Town & Parish Councils on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023) was received. (A request for a tracked copy to ascertain where updates had been made but we were advised by the Monitoring Officer that they were unable to provide this.) Appendix 6.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the new South Gloucestershire Code of Conduct be adopted.

### **4/4 Equality and Diversity**

As a priority of the council to focus on equalities and diversity and in light of the expanded role of the Community Engagement Assistant who has the remit of ensuring an Equality & Diversity action plan is rolled out, the following actions have been carried out:

- A draft action plan has been prepared (Appendix 6a);
- Ball park figures for training have been obtained from various providers (Appendix 7)

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Equalities and Diversity Action Plan be adopted and **RESOLVED** that the Clerk makes arrangements to roll out necessary training within budget. Contact to be made with South Gloucestershire Council Diversity Officer to make a request that similar training to that provided to South Gloucestershire Council, be rolled out to Town and Parish Councillors (with costs shared) and to investigate if the Diversity Officer would also be prepared to run similar courses for Yate Town Council Staff.

#### **4/5 White Ribbon Campaign**

Information regarding the White Ribbon campaign was received and it was **RESOVLED** to commit to become a supporter of the campaign. (Appendix 8)

It was further **RESOLVED** that support and marketing of any campaigns against violence should be promoted across Town Council social media.

## Long Service Award Review

The Yate Town Council Staffing Policy has a Long Service Award referenced that reads as follows:

### ***1. Long Service Award***

*1.1 Staff whom have completed more than 25 years continuous local government service will be awarded either a voucher or gift amounting to £200 on leaving Yate Town Council,*

To bring this in line with the South Gloucestershire Council policy, it is suggested the wording is amended to read as below;

An award of £17\* per completed year of continuous service will be given to all employees leaving the council who have achieved 25 years continuous local government service or more, of which the last 10 years or more must have been with this council. \*The amount of the award is subject to review.

The eligibility conditions which apply are:-

- No-one can have more than one award.
- If an employee dies in service, an award related to service at the date of death will be made to the surviving partner or in appropriate circumstances to the closest family member of the employee.
- The policy allows payment to all leavers from the council (whether they are taking up a pension or not) as long as they satisfy the service criteria as specified above.

This amendment to the existing YTC policy will:

\* specify a 10 year period where the continuous service has to be with Yate Town Council (for example, the current YTC means that an employee with 24 years continuous service within local government could work for YTC for just 1 year and still reach current entitlement threshold);

\* reward loyalty for continued employment after the 25 year anniversary has been exceeded.

## Yate Town Council

### Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy

Yate Town Council is committed to ensuring that children and adults at risk are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Town Council.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect from harm, all children, young people and adults at risk, who receive Yate Town Council's services.
- to set out the overarching principles that guide the Town Council's approach to safeguarding.

This policy applies to employees, casual workers, councillors and volunteers, 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors of other organisations working by contractor partnership with the Town Council.

#### 1. Legal Framework:

**Protecting Adults at Risk:** The Care Act (2014) sets out clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

**Safeguarding Children:** The Children's Act 1989 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated in 2022) sets out clear legal framework for how local authorities and everyone else working with children and young people, should protect them from abuse and neglect.

Other legislation that should be considered when we are protecting children and adults at risk includes but not limited to:

- The Children's Act 2004
- The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Data Protection Act & GDPR Regulations (2018)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005, and The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2009 (DoLS) an amendment to the Mental Capacity Act 2005

Yate Town Council seek to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe by:

- empowerment - supporting and encouraging people to make their own decisions and informed consent;
- valuing, listening to and respecting the thoughts, feelings and opinions of others;
- appointing a nominated lead and a deputy lead member for safeguarding.
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes, confidently and competently.
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.



- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- signposting to safeguarding support, so everyone using Yate Town Council's services knows where to access support if they have a concern.
- sharing concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving all who are concerned, appropriately.
- managing any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- creating and maintaining a safe environment by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.

## 2. Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Safeguarding is defined as protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Adult safeguarding is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time ensuring the adult's wellbeing is promoted including having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. Professionals and other staff should not advocate 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual wellbeing.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- Is experiencing or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.

### 2.1 What is Abuse?

Abuse is when someone causes us harm or distress. It can take many forms, ranging from disrespect to causing someone physical or mental pain. It can occur anywhere, in private homes, professional facilities or services e.g. care home or hospital, or in a public place. It can be intentional or unintentional and will likely happen when someone doesn't have the skills or support needed to care for themselves, or someone else.

Professionals and others should be vigilant in looking beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. To see these patterns, it is important that information is recorded and shared appropriately.

Abuse can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

There are 10 types of abuse listed in the Care Act (2014), these are:

- **Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Domestic abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse.
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, sexual assault, sexual acts carried out without the consent of the individual or where the individual was pressured into consenting; sexual exploitation (sex or sexual acts in return for gifts or money);
- **Psychological / emotional abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

- **Financial or material abuse** – including gambling, illegal lending, theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** – Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including racism, sexism, homophobia, that based on a person's impairment or protected characteristic, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Organisational or institutional abuse** – can include any of the above and is characterised by repeated instances of poor care, intentional or unintentional behaviours resulting from a lack of knowledge, poor professional practice or an imbalance of power because of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Self-neglect** – neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

We also need to consider and act on concerns for radicalisation, sexual and criminal exploitation and honour based abuse (a crime or incident committed to protect or defend the "honour" of a family or community).

### 3. Safeguarding Children and Young People

Safeguarding children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best possible outcomes.

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is what we do to protect children who, we believe, are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation or have otherwise been harmed. It is the response we take when we suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Significant harm is laid out under Section 47 of The Children's Act 1989 where it states that:

- Serious harm includes, but is not limited to case where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect a) potentially life-threatening injury or b) serious or likely long-term impairment of physical/mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

#### 3.1 What is Abuse and Neglect?

It is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children

may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or other children or young people. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

There are 4 categories of abuse, these are:

- **Physical** – A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Sexual** – Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact and may also include non-contact activities, Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- **Emotional** – The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- **Neglect** – The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development

It is important that professionals also consider that abuse might not fit in to one of these categories and we also need to consider:

- Honour Based Abuse
- Sexual Exploitation
- Criminal Exploitation
- Modern Day Slavery
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Radicalisation
- Online harm
- Domestic Violence

Professionals must be observant and look beyond any single incident and build up a picture of what is happening to that child. We must be professionally curious and record all our concerns and report them appropriately.

#### **4. Safeguarding Principles**

The principles of safeguarding underpins everything we do and is fundamentally important in keeping children, young people and adults at risk, safe and protected.

With regards to adults at risk there are 6 main principles to follow:

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

With regards to children, we must adopt a child centred approach in everything we do and we must hear the child's voice. We need to understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and this must be considered when working with children or adults at risk.

#### **5. Responding to a Safeguarding Concern**

How you respond to someone if you suspect, or have been informed, there has been abuse or neglect can have an immense impact on the child or young person.

Any person should attempt to seek advice and guidance from the Designated Person if there are concerns for the safety and wellbeing of an individual, and/or if there are any doubts about how to proceed. Any person, whatever their role, can take action in their own right to ensure that an allegation or concern is investigated, and can report to investigating agencies.

- If an individual is in immediate danger, the member of staff/ volunteer/ person identifying the concern should call 999 immediately, and report to their line manager/ DSL as soon as possible.
- All staff/ volunteers/persons should take the disclosure or allegation seriously and understand their responsibilities.
- Staff/volunteers/persons should ensure the person is safe and supported. They should listen carefully and remain calm. They should be sympathetic and offer reassurance and acknowledge that the disclosure or allegation will be taken seriously, and that they will report this to their manager/ person in charge of shift.
- Staff/volunteers/persons must record everything that is said, in the disclosing person's words. They need to log the date, time and those present at the disclosure. It should also be noted, where and when the person disclosed and the circumstances during which the disclosure was made. You must record on a Yate Town Incident Form.
- When responding to safeguarding concerns, ensure you communicate in a sensitive and respectful manner, using language the person will understand, consider use of communication aids/language line if required.

Inform the disclosing child, young person or adult that you are required to share the information, explaining what information will be shared and why. Seek consent to share the information if it is safe to do so and if you are not putting the person in further risk or danger. If you at all unsure of what to do discuss this with the DSL or contact ART or Adult Safeguarding team.

- At no point in this process must staff/ volunteers /persons promise to keep this information to themselves. They should not press for more information, ask leading questions or put words into the victim's mouth. For examples of good practice of open questions, to gain further information, follow the TED model:
  - .1. Tell me
  - .2. Explain to me
  - .3. Describe to me
- Staff/volunteers/persons must never stop someone whilst they are disclosing something.
- Where relevant staff /volunteers/persons may need to preserve any evidence of e.g. the person's physical condition, their clothing, property. ( For example if there is evidence of physical abuse then record this on a body chart, or if there is evidence of a phone call made or message written eg bullying messages)
- Any disclosures or allegations should be clearly recorded at the earliest opportunity and these records will be stored securely and confidentially.

## **Designated Person**

This person is responsible for:

- Beginning a case file. This will hold a record of communications and actions in a coherent chronological order. (using incident form that needs to be forwarded to Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk).
- Supporting staff who have raised any child protection concerns.
- being the first point-of-call for all of the staff and volunteers and make sure you are approachable.
- Communicating with organisations committee/trustees ensuring they are kept up-to-date with safeguarding concerns.
- Challenging poor practice amongst staff and volunteers.
- If the file reveals a cause for concern about a child, young person or adult at risk it should be reported to South Gloucestershire Council safeguarding teams (see section 10). They should also be contacted for advice as needed. Do not delay in reporting or seeking advice.
- Exceptional circumstances: if it is feared that the child, young person or adult at risk might be at immediate risk on leaving the premises, take advice from the South Gloucestershire Council safeguarding teams. If there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the Police should be contacted immediately. If a parent arrives to collect their child, the employee, worker, volunteer or responsible adult has no right to restrict/prevent parental access.

## **6. Position of Trust and Whistleblowing**

'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children or who works with adults at risk.

As stated in Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018, you have a duty and responsibility to disclose any concerns about the conduct of another person. If the concern is regarding unsafe or poor practice of a member of staff or volunteer that has a position of trust, and they have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

Whether you are working with children, young people or adults at risk, the matter must be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or line manager. They will decide what action needs to be taken and when it involves children. For further advice, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or line manager may contact specialist services, detailed in section 12 below.

The DSL can keep you informed about the action they've taken, but they can only share with you information that you need to know.

If you feel that your concern has not been taken seriously by the DSL, you must take your concern to either another DSL. If it involves children, you may also contact the specialist services, detailed in section 12 below, or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) yourself.

It is the organisations legal duty to protect anyone whistleblowing and must have systems in place to support you. Follow the organisation's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **7. Record Keeping**

Records must be kept of all safeguarding concerns reported and actions taken even if they have not been raised to the Local Authority. Please use the Yate Town Council Incident Form.

Your record should be legible, timely, factual and accurate and should include:

- date and time of the disclosure or allegation
- place where the conversation was held
- a description of what was said and done, by whom and in whose presence;
- appearance and behaviour of the person making the disclosure, including any injuries observed;
- if the abuse was witnessed, write exactly what you saw;
- do not add opinions or interpretations;
- signed and dated by the person making the record.

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. All employees, workers, volunteers and persons must have a clear understanding about the need to record and report concerns about young people. The Designated Person for each of the Town Council premises is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be shared with other agencies.

Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect, and safeguarding records for children and adults, are stored confidentially and separately to other sensitive information, with access confined to Designated Persons. This is to prevent access to sensitive material by those who do not need to know.

It is equally important to record when actions have not been taken and why e.g. if it is deemed that there is not enough information at the time and that you are going to continue to monitor the situation. Direction on actions required/not required will be instructed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Staffing and Governance Sub-Committee receives an annual Safeguarding report.

## **8. Information Sharing**

Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people is fundamental to good practice in both adult and child safeguarding.

Section 45 of The Care Act (2014) covers the responsibility of others to comply with requests for information from the Safeguarding Adults Board. Sharing information between organisations as part of day-to-day safeguarding practice is covered in the common-law duty of confidentiality, the Data Protection Act 2018, Human Rights Act 1998, and Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018 is a non-statutory advice document that has been produced to support practitioners when deciding to share information. It complies with The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. It is for all frontline practitioners and senior managers working with children, young people, parents and carers who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case-by-case basis. It states:

7 golden rules of information sharing:

- Ensure information is necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing.

- Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are unsure about sharing information, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. If you at all unsure of what to do discuss this with the DSL or contact ART or Adult Safeguarding team.

- Consider safety and wellbeing of the person at the centre of concerns
- Keep a record of your action taken and the reasons for it.

## 9. Safe Recruitment

Yate Town Council will ensure all necessary checks are carried out on individuals expected to work with children, young people, and adults at risk:

- Completion of an application form including a self-disclosure about criminal records;
- Consent to obtain information to check for convictions for criminal offences against children or adults in accordance with current legislation;
- Receipt of DBS check where required;
- Receipt of two references;
- Verification of qualifications;
- Verification of identity.

The following statement to be included on recruitment literature for roles involving children, young people and/or adults at risk:

### *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*

*Please give details, including dates and places, of pending prosecutions and any convictions, cautions and bind-overs that are not 'spent'. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 gives individuals the right not to disclose details of old offences which are seen as 'spent'. However for this job, employers are allowed to ask about these offences, as it includes working with children or vulnerable adults, and will require a check on previous convictions (including those deemed to be spent), plus details of any cautions, reprimands, warnings, bind overs or no case to answer. It is your responsibility to declare all of these.*

*Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is a criminal offence if an individual who is disqualified from working with children knowingly applies for, offers to do, accepts or does any work with children.*

### 9.1 Level and Frequency of Check

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be obtained where the duties/activities (paid or unpaid) involve the individual in a position of trust for the care, supervision or personal needs of children, young people, or adults at risk. This will normally apply to situations where the individual has direct contact with relevant individuals or groups on a regular basis but may also apply where there is a higher level of contact over a short period, or where the individual will have access to sensitive personal information in written, verbal or electronic format.

It is not expected that everyone who has any contact with children, young people, or adults at risk, is DBS checked. There needs to be proper consideration given to the level, frequency and context of the activities to be undertaken.

#### **a. Enhanced DBS Check**

An enhanced DBS check will be obtained where Regulated Activity with children, young people, or adults at risk is undertaken e.g. working in a specified place, frequently (once a week or more often of 4 days or more in a 30 day period) with the opportunity for contact with children, young people, or adults at risk, in unsupervised specified activity. (E.g. for Community Heritage Officer post, Heritage Education Assistant post and posts within the Armadillo.) A subscription will be made to the portable update service if an enhanced DBS check is made for Town Council employees.

The Town Council require that casual Armadillo workers or volunteers have an enhanced DBS check no older than 2 years. The update service will not be subscribed to for casual workers or volunteers.

#### **b. Basic DBS Check**

A basic disclosure will be obtained for any staff at appointment who fall outside of "Regulated Activity" criteria but are in regular situations where contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults occurs (eg, Estates posts). The update service will not be subscribed to but rechecks made at a frequency appropriate to the role.

#### **c. Volunteers**

DBS checks will not be routinely undertaken for Town Council volunteers (except volunteers of the Armadillo), but risk assessments will be in place to assess whether there is a need to do so.

#### **d. Employees**

If the Town Council undertakes a DBS check for an employee, during the annual appraisal process, employees who have been DBS checked are to be asked if there have been any changes to their DBS status (in line with Minute No. 4/1e of Staffing and Governance, 20 December 2011).

In accordance with the requirements of the Town Council insurers, records for DBS checked posts will be retained for a period of 25 years in terms of job application, training, results of DBS check, along with risk assessments and records of complaints and suspicions of breaches of the Town Council's Safeguarding Policy.

#### **e. Councillors**

Basic DBS checks be undertaken for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council at the commencement of their term in office as the nature of their roles mean that there is a small chance that they may find themselves in 1 to 1 situations with children, young people or vulnerable adults, but subscription to the update service will not be made.

### **10. Roles and responsibilities**

**All staff** employed and volunteers are responsible for:

- Recognising and responding to allegations or disclosures of abuse or neglect
- Reporting and recording any allegation or disclosure of abuse or neglect
- Having professional curiosity
- Listening to the person, and hearing their voice
- Escalating concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead or line manager if they feel they haven't been listened to
- Undertaking training & updates appropriate to their job role
- Reading and understanding this policy, including any reviews



## **Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

- Provide expert safeguarding advice and support to all staff & volunteers on any queries or concerns.
- Ensure information has been referred to statutory agencies of any safeguarding concerns for example the Local Authority Children's Partnerships or Children's social services or Adult Safeguarding team.
- Provide a culture for staff & volunteers to express concerns and to ensure that all employees, workers, councillors and volunteers know the signs of possible abuse and know what to do if they have concerns or suspicions.
- Provide safeguarding supervision and support during the referral system and any Section 47 enquiry.
- Keep up to date with new developments in Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- Regularly review and update safeguarding children and adults at risk policy.
- Develop good working relationships with local authority safeguarding teams to ensure accountable, partnership working.
- Consult with Children's Partnership, children's social care, adult safeguarding team, family support services, and LADO, for support and guidance.
- Ensure quality assurance processes are in place to ensure the safeguarding policy is understood and followed.
- Conduct any internal investigations as identified from a whistleblowing allegations or allegations of low level concerns.

The designated persons are:-

### **Armadillo**

- Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding: Senior Youth Co-ordinator
- And in their absence: The Venues Operations Officer or Community Projects Manager

### **Estates**

- Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding: Estates Manager
- And in his/her absence: Estates Supervisor

### **Heritage Centre**

- Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding: Community Heritage Officer
- And in his/her absence: Community Projects Manager

### **Poole Court**

- Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding: Town Clerk
- And in his/her absence: Deputy Town Clerk

### **Pop Inn Café**

- Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding: Venue Operations Officer
- And in his/her absence: Community Projects Manager

## **11. Induction and Training**

Appropriate and timely training will be provided where necessary and the Safeguarding Policy made available.

## **12. South Gloucestershire contact information**

To report a concern about a **child or young person**:

- South Gloucestershire Access & Response Team (ART) can be accessed for advice or information contact on 01454 866000 Monday to Friday 9-5 or via [compass@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:compass@southglos.gov.uk)
- 01454 615165 out of hours and at weekends
- South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board Website: [www.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/children](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/children)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01454 866000
- South West Child Protection Procedures: <http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/southglos/index.html>
- If a child or young person is in immediate danger, then please dial 999 and ask for police assistance

To report a concern about an **adult at risk**:

- South Gloucestershire Council Customer Service Desk Adult Care Team can be accessed for advice or information contact 01454 868007 Monday to Friday 9-5
- 01454 615165 out of hours and at weekends
- South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Website: [www.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/adults](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/adults)
- If an adult at risk is in immediate danger, then please dial 999 and ask for police assistance

Remember – any internal investigations do not replace any criminal investigation by the Police.

### 13. External Bookings

The Town Council will ensure that booking forms, agreements and contracts contain the expectation that outside bodies hiring or booking Town Council premises must have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. This expectation also applies where services and/or activities are provided on Town Council premises, by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party organisation or individual.

Allegations or concerns relating to 3rd party organisations, contractors, or users of Yate Town Council Facilities including tenants and hirers, should also be reported within one working day to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

#### Useful information:

**Access and Response Team (ART):** the formal referral for support. You will require the details of the individual/ clear concerns/ you know what support you are requesting.

**Compass:** for advice and guidance for children, young people and families, a light touch first step that can be escalated to an ART referral if required.

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** – will deal with concerns relating to activities from any organisation or group e.g. unregulated sports groups, where those coaching/ managing/hosting activities for children are volunteer leaders.

**Prevent Project:** is counter terrorism, you would only refer/ seek support relating to concerns for radicalisation. Email: [preventproject@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:preventproject@southglos.gov.uk)

## **YATE TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Yate Town Council is committed to responsible investment. It invests temporarily surplus funds held on behalf of the community and aims to do so responsibly, securing the best return for residents and using those investments to positively support sustainable investments in a manner commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity. It recognises that its need to work through available investment opportunities means it will not always be able to use the investments as positively as it would hope but will do its best to find appropriate positive investment opportunities.
- 1.2 This strategy complies with the revised requirements set out in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance on Local Government Investments and Chartered Institute of Public Finances and Accountancy's Treasury Management in Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectional Guidance Notes and takes account of section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 (Guidance).

### **2. Investment Objectives**

- 2.1 In accordance with Section 15(1) of the 2003 Act, the Council will have regard to such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue, and (b) to such other guidance as the Secretary of State regulations may specify.
- 2.2 The Council's investment priorities are the security of reserves and liquidity of investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.
- 2.3 All investments will be made in sterling.
- 2.4 The Department for Levelling UP, Housing and Communities maintains that borrowing of monies purely to invest, or to lend and make a return, is unlawful and Yate Town Council will not engage in such activity.
- 2.5 Where external investment managers are used, they will be contractually required to comply with the Strategy.
- 2.6 When making investments, Yate Town Council will best endeavour to invest ethically. The Council will not knowingly invest in institutions with material links to environmental and socially harmful activities. This is in support of our Climate and

Ecological declaration:

*Yate Town Council recognises the urgency of the climate and ecological crisis facing the planet. These are not new or isolated concerns; they are entangled in wider issues of justice and equality.*

*We commit to working for a future in which we have transformed our relationship with the planet, its resources and each other. We see this as a continuing journey of transition towards a different and better future for the planet and its communities.*

*We commit our Council to ensure every Council decision is taken with due consideration of its impact on the planet. We commit to aiming for net-zero carbon by 2030 and to reduce our impact to as close to zero as possible, as quickly as we can, hoping to get there before 2030.*

### **3. Specified Investments**

- 3.1 Specified Investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and with a maturing of no more than a year.
- 3.2 For the prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, Yate Town Council will use Specified Investments in line with the Investment table below.

### **4. Non-Specified Investments**

- 4.1 These investments have greater potential risk – examples include investment in the money market, stocks and shares. Yate Town Council does not currently hold any Non-Specified Investments.
- 4.2 The limit of funds which can be invested on non-specified investments shall not exceed £45,000 and be subject to Full Town Council approval.

### **5. Long Term Investments**

- 5.1 Long term investments are defined in the Guidance as any investment other than (a) one which is due to be repaid within 12 months of the date on which the investment was made, or (b) one which the local authority may require to be paid within that period.
- 5.2 The Council does not currently hold any long-term investments.
- 5.3 Yate Town Council may wish to consider long term investments.

5.4 The limit of funds which can be invested in non-specified long-term investments shall not exceed £45,000 and be subject to Full Town Council approval.

*NB: Prior to the Town Council making any non-specified (which includes long term) investments, the council will have to:*

- (a) set out procedures for determining which categories of such investments may prudently be used;*
- (b) Identify which category of such investments have so far been identified as prudent for use during the financial year; and*
- (c) State the upper limits for the amounts which, at any time during the financial year, may be held in each identified category and for the overall amount which may be held in non-specified investments.*

## **6. Liquidity of Investments**

6.1 The Finance Manager & Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) will determine the maximum periods for which funds may be prudently committed so as not to compromise liquidity.

6.2 The Council will maintain liquidity by always having a minimum of three month anticipated operating expenditure plus £30,000 maturing within one month.

## **7. Credit Ratings**

7.1 The Finance Manager & RFO will endeavour to check the credit ratings of each institution used on a regular basis.

7.2 The main selection criteria are based on credit ratings by the three main credit rating agencies: Fitch, Standard & Poor's & Moody's.

7.3 Should it be identified that the organisations used by the Council are rated outside the Specified Investments Table, the Finance Manager RFO will take immediate action to enable the Council's funds to be transferred to an alternative organisation offering a rating within the Specified Investments Table (should this be available).

## **8 Investment Reporting**

8.1 Investment forecasts for the coming financial year are made when the budget is prepared. On a quarterly basis, or where appropriate, the investment activity is reported to the Finance & Governance Committee.

## 9. Review and Amendment of Regulations

- 9.1 This strategy will be reviewed annually and approved by Full Council annually in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (regulation 4(1)(b) and Schedule 4) (S.I. 2004/1158).
- 9.2 The Council reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to the approval of the Full Council. Any variations will be made available to the public.

## 10. Terms of Reference Delegation to Town Clerk

- 10.1 Delegation be given to the Town Clerk /RFO in consultation with two Members of the council, to be able to act immediately in the event of a significantly enhanced indication of risk attached to a particular bank, to transfer funds to another institution immediately should it be deemed necessary to do so;
- 10.2 Delegated powers granted to the Clerk, RFO in consultation with councillors Chair and Vice-Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee to make appropriate investments on behalf of Yate Town Council;
- 10.3 Delegated powers granted to the Clerk, RFO to make the necessary transfer from investments to Yate Town Council operational bank accounts to enable the smooth running of the council payments.

### Specified Investment table

All specified investments listed below must be sterling-denominated and be repayable / redeemable within 12 months. None of these investments are in share or loan capital. This list excludes investments that are not considered acceptable to Yate Town Council. The use of any form of investment shall be made under the direction of the Finance Manager RFO and approved by the Council.

<b>Investment</b>	<b>Fitch</b>	<b>Moody's</b>	<b>Standard &amp; Poor's</b>	<b>Max period</b>
Banks and Building Societies (UK High Street)	F1+ / AA- /	P-1/Aa3/	A-1+/AA-	1 year

In the event that the town council deposits with a bank that is not credit rated (e.g. Triodos), the bank must be one that does not leverage its lending by borrowing on the money market, only lending money

entrusted to it by its savers and investors, always lending out less money than it has on deposit. It must also hold a higher proportion of liquid reserves than most banks and already meet the proposed requirements of the Basel 3 regulations for liquidity aftercare. Carrying out very high levels of due diligence, assess its customers on strict financial criteria.



# Work Experience Policy

## Introduction

Work experience introduces people to a specific work environment. It can be a valuable part of education, preparing for work or returning to the work environment.

Yate Town Council values work experience placements and as a local employer, we encourage and support them. We aim to provide placements that allow participants to develop and learn, to enhance knowledge and gain an insight into our work and careers.

## Principles

The Department for Education defines work experience as “a placement on an employer’s premises in which a ‘student ‘carries out a particular task or duty, or range of tasks and duties, with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.”

Meaningful work experience is:

- purposeful, substantial and offers challenge. It is relevant to a person's studies and/or the persons career aspirations;
- managed by a supervisor or manager. This ensures that placement gets a learning experience suited to their needs;
- structured to provide tangible outcomes for both the placement and the council;
- clear about the roles, duties and expectations of both the placement and the council.

## Our Commitment

The Town Council offices are comprised of several small departments as shown below, along with examples of work experience tasks that may be undertaken during placement opportunities:

### **(a) Poole Court Offices**

- Service Support – administrative function (eg, arranging meetings, marketing and publicity, preparing meeting papers, organising events, social media & website updates);
- Finance – financial function (eg, taking bookings enquiries, processing purchase orders, issuing invoices, banking takings and reconciling petty cash);
- Community Projects (e.g. supporting and undertaking project tasks, supporting operations and services at Community venues such as Armadillo Youth Café and Yate Heritage Centre);
- Estates admin function (eg, data recording, responding to the residents’ emails, sourcing quotes, specifications, research).

### **(b) Estates (Outside Work)**

Estates outdoor function (eg, site cleaning, site inspection, general site maintenance, health & safety, season planting in October, play equipment maintenance, gardening/green space management and climate and planet (sustainability) projects.

### **(c) Armadillo Youth Café and Venue and Pop Inn Cafe**

- Supporting and undertaking project administration tasks associated with these Town Council venues;

- Supporting and undertaking operations tasks (e.g. building preparation, supporting hire, room set up);
- Supporting and undertaking tasks related to service delivery (e.g. senior coffee morning and cinema sessions at the Armadillo);
- Supporting and undertaking social media management, marketing and communications tasks;
- Responding to customer enquiries.

**(d) Yate & District Heritage Centre**

Supporting and undertaking tasks associated with:

- o Meet and greet;
- o Gallery invigilation;
- o Visitor archive support;
- o Collections management;
- o Archiving/cataloguing;
- o Data analysis;
- o Marketing and communications;
- o Website development/social media management;
- o Research projects;
- o Content creation;
- o Curation;
- o Education – resource creation and workshop delivery;
- o Community engagement / outreach projects;
- o Tours;
- o Business and strategy / strategic management;
- o Fundraising;
- o Events management/ events support;

**Placement Opportunities**

So that our work experience offering can be structured to provide maximum opportunities for participants to do interesting and varied work, whilst balancing the needs of the Town Council and the resources we have, we have designed a loose timetable below:

<b>VENUE</b>	<b>LENGTH OF PLACEMENT</b>	<b>PLACEMENTS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>IDEAL TIME</b>
Poole Court Offices	One week, across Service Support, Finance, Community Projects and Estates admin departments	X 2 per year	1 x first week in July approx.  1 x early December or Spring  However these times are flexible and can be amended to suit school timetables or internal operational requirements depending on the needs of the council

Estates (outside working throughout Yate parish)	Tuesday - Friday	X3 per year (x 1 placement each season)	March June October
Armadillo	One week intensive up to 30 hours	Up to X 2 pa	Any (excluding December)
Armadillo	Longer term placement* over several weeks/months up to 30hours	X 1 pa	Any (excluding December)
Yate Heritage Centre	One week intensive up to 30 hours	Up to X3 pa	Any (excluding December)
Yate Heritage Centre (post 16, further/higher education)	Longer term placement *over several weeks/months	To be negotiated with education provider	Any (excluding December)

\*Longer term placements may be agreed as paid opportunities.

We may accept placements outside of the above dates/times by discussion with the relevant line managers. Priority for work experience placements will be given to Yate residents in the first instance.

Work experience application process is administered by the Service Support Team. Work experience opportunities will be advertised on our website together with details of how to apply.

Work experience placements are in addition to our rolling apprenticeship placement scheme that offers opportunities across all departments.

## YATE TOWN COUNCIL

### FLAG FLYING POLICY

#### **(This policy does not apply to flag flying at Station Road Flag Poles)**

The following policy/protocol sets out the parameters for flying a flag at Poole Court and has been based on guidance provided by the Flag Institute and the College of Arms.

#### **1. Introduction**

Government and local authority buildings in England are encouraged to fly national flags and may do so as they wish, subject to compliance with any local planning requirements.

There is however no legal requirement to fly a flag, but the Union Flag is the national flag by long established custom and practice, rather than statute.

#### **2. When Flying the Union Flag:**

- The Union Flag must be flown the correct way up. This is with the wider diagonal white stripe above the red diagonal stripe in the half nearest to the flag pole;
- The Union Flag must be in good repair and unsoiled. To fly a flag which is in poor repair or dirty does not befit the national emblems.

#### **3. The Union Flag is flown at Poole Court as follows:**

- The Union Flag be flown at Poole Court in accordance with the schedule shown overleaf taken from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport;
- On designated flag flying days, the flag be flown at Poole Court from 8.00am to sunset.
- Occasions which the Union Flag is to be flown at half-mast include:
  - From the announcement of the death of the Sovereign until the funeral, except on Proclamation Day when flags are flown at full-mast following the proclamation;
  - On special command from His Majesty and may include:
    - The death of a member or near relative of the Royal Family or the funeral of members of the Royal Family;
    - The funerals of foreign Rulers;
    - The funerals of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom;
    - Any other occasions as commanded.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport will inform Government departments of any occasions when His Majesty has given a special command. They also publish a notice on their website.

**4. Definition of Half-Mast:**

- Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the flagpole;
- If more than one flag is flown, they all should be raised at half-mast or not flown at all. Flags of foreign nations should not be flown unless their country is also observing mourning.

**Date**

	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Flag</b>
Second Monday in March	Commonwealth Day	Union Jack Flag
9 April	His Majesty's Wedding Anniversary	Union Jack Flag
23 April	St George's Day	Union Jack Flag
06 May	Coronation Day	Union Jack Flag
17 June	Official Birthday of His Majesty the King	Union Jack Flag
21 June	Birthday of The Prince of Wales	Union Jack Flag
17 July	Birthday of The Queen Consort	Union Jack Flag
8 September	His Majesty's Accession	Union Jack Flag
Second Sunday in November	Remembrance Day	Union Jack Flag
14 November	Birthday of His Majesty the King	Union Jack Flag

Flags may also be flown at Poole Court at the discretion of the Clerk to recognise significant national events.

## Flag Poles at Station Road

Flags flown at Station Road flag poles will not follow the above protocol other than:

17 June	Official Birthday of His Majesty the King	Union Jack Flag
8 September	His Majesty's Accession	Union Jack Flag
Second Sunday in November	Remembrance Day	Union Jack Flag
14 November	Birthday of His Majesty the King	Union Jack Flag

At all other times either the Yate Town Council flag will be flown or alternate themed flags at the discretion of the Town Clerk.

## Protocol for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office

This protocol (based on the guidance provided by the [National Association of Civic Offices](#) to LAs) provides a procedure to follow for marking the death of the reigning Sovereign, other senior members of the Royal Family and certain national figures or local holders of high office, listed below, to ensure the appropriate response is made by the district in such circumstances and will be implemented by the Chief Executive, or Head of Governance, Legal and Democratic Services, in her absence.

It may also be appropriate to use elements of the procedure when responding to an incident which has led to a large number of deaths, for example, a terrorist attack or major incident. (Refer also to the Council's Strategic Emergency Plan and Recovery Plan.) This would apply if a National Day of Mourning was announced by 10 Downing Street.

This protocol sets out the action to be take in the event of

the death of: HRH The King (State Funeral)  
HRH The Queen Consort (Ceremonial Royal Funeral)  
HRH The Prince of Wales (Ceremonial Royal Funeral)

All other member of the Royal Family will receive non ceremonial royal

funerals It will be appropriately adjusted in relation to:

- o The Prime Minister
- o Any former Prime Minister

- o The Members of Parliament for the constituencies of which the District of South Gloucestershire forms a part
- o A serving Chair or Leader of the Council
- o A serving member of the Council

# Code of Conduct

Approved December 2022  
In effect from May 2023

[www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)



# Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

## Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

## General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

## Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

# Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken. Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

## General Conduct

### 1. Respect

**As a councillor:**

**1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.**

**1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.**

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors. In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

### 2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

**As a councillor:**

**2.1 I do not bully any person.**

**2.2 I do not harass any person.**

## **2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.**

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

## **3. Impartiality of officers of the council**

**As a councillor:**

### **3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.**

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

## **4. Confidentiality and access to information**

**As a councillor:**

### **4.1 I do not disclose information:**

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone

- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless
  - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;
  - ii. I am required by law to do so;
  - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
  - iv. the disclosure is:
    - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and
    - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and
    - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

**4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.**

**4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.**

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

## **5. Disrepute**

**As a councillor:**

**5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.**

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

## 6. Use of position

As a councillor:

### 6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

## 7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

### 7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

### 7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local authority or authorising their use by others:

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

## **7B – Consideration of Advice**

### **As a councillor**

**7B.1 I will, when reaching decisions on any matter, consider and pay due regard to any relevant advice provided to me by:-**

- a) the Council's Chief Finance Officer (S151) and/or
- b) the Council's Monitoring Officer

**in accordance with their legal requirements.**

**7B.2 I will give reasons for departing from the advice of the Chief Finance Officer (S151) or Monitoring Officer**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to have regard to advice from your Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer where they give that advice under their statutory duties. As a councillor you must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any legal requirements and any reasonable requirements imposed by your local authority.

## **8. Complying with the Code of Conduct**

### **As a Councillor:**

**8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.**

**8.2 I do not make trivial/malicious or tit for tat complaints against other councillors**

**8.3 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**

**8.4 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**

**8.5 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.



# Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority

## 9. Interests

As a councillor:

### 9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

**Appendix B** sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

## 10. Gifts and hospitality

As a councillor:

**10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**

**10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**

**10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 or totaling £100 over a year from a single source that I have been offered but have refused to accept within 28 days of the offer.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

# Appendices

## Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

### Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

### Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## Appendix B - Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office or within 28 days of your interests changing you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in “The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012”.

You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**“Disclosable Pecuniary Interest”** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**“Partner”** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A ‘sensitive interest’ is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a ‘sensitive interest’ you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a ‘sensitive interest’, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

## Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

## Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in **Table 1**) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
  - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
  - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
  - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests asset out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:
  - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
  - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the

interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

## Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
<b>Sponsorship</b>	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council</p> <p>—</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
<b>Land and Property</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
<b>Licenses</b>	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—

	(a) the landlord is the council; and the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
<b>Securities</b>	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor’s knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) ) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

\* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

<p>You must register as an Other Registerable Interest :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) any unpaid directorships</li> <li>b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority</li> <li>c) any body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) exercising functions of a public nature</li> <li>(ii) directed to charitable purposes or</li> <li>(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management</p>
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# Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

**Best practice 1:** Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

**Best practice 2:** Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

**Best practice 3:** Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

**Best practice 4:** An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

**Best practice 5:** Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

**Best practice 6:** Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

**Best practice 7:** Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.



**Best practice 8:** An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

**Best practice 9:** Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

**Best practice 10:** A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

**Best practice 11:** Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

**Best practice 12:** Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

**Best practice 13:** A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

**Best practice 14:** Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

**Best practice 15:** Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

***The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.***

*To ensure the action plan is successful, it is important to involve key stakeholders, such as employee, volunteers, customers, and community leaders. Engage these stakeholders to understand their perspectives and experiences to inform the development of the action plan.*



## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN**

The Equality Act 2010 contains a General Duty which requires Local Authorities (including Town & Parish Councils) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity;
- Foster good relations.

It covers people who share the 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Act also contains an integrated Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires all public bodies to consider the needs of protected groups when designing and delivering services.

Our Action Plan:

- sets out how we will meet our statutory obligations under this duty and how we plan to go further than those obligations to ensure that our decisions and actions are equality focused, diversity driven and inclusion minded;
- sets goals by identifying areas where inequality may occur and develops ways and strategies to make changes so that goals can be delivered;
- allocates resources needed to implement the goals set out in the action plan (eg, staff time, funding or training materials), to monitor progress and to review and update the action plan to ensure it remains relevant (reflecting any new issues that may arise) and effective;

1. GOAL – WITHIN YTC, TO INCREASE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF EQUALITY ISSUES		
Staff & Councillors Training and Awareness		
ACTIVITY	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
<b>Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction to ensure all staff participate in Equalities Training on commencing employment and to review the course at least once every 4 years to ensure it's fit for purpose and relevant (This induction includes reading the YTC Equalities Policy, reviewed at least once every 4 years, and completion of an equalities e-module)</li> <li>• All staff have a refresh of the Equality and Diversity e-module every 3 years.</li> <li>• An external consultant to present face to face workshop to all staff (every 5 years)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to have an understanding of the Equality Act and the Town Council policies and a greater understanding of cultural differences within local communities.</li> <li>• Staff are reminded of the above</li> <li>• Staff are kept up to date and refreshed.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Councillors issued with copy of Equalities Policy;</li> <li>• New Councillors asked to attend Equality &amp; Diversity Workshop or complete e module depending on timing</li> <li>• New staff and Councillors to be issued with “Show Racism the Card” resource.</li> <li>• All Councillors reminded of the Code of Conduct - annually .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members have an understanding of the Equality Act, Town Council policies and greater understanding of cultural differences within local communities.</li> <li>• Members are reminded and refreshed of their duty and commitment to the Councillor Code of Conduct.</li> </ul>	
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2. GOAL – WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, TO INCREASE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF EQUALITY ISSUES		
Community		
ACTIVITY	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
Work with local partners and community groups where available to support events and to ensure that they are organised to celebrate the different communities that live in the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The communities feel recognised, included and engaged with, and a greater understanding developed in the wider community.</li> </ul>	
Yate Heritage Centre  Cultural Content of lectures, workshop and exhibitions to expand inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All groups feel acknowledged and included and their culture valued.</li> </ul>	
Prepare a calendar of dates based on; <a href="https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk/diversity-calendar/">https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk/diversity-calendar/</a>  Ensure notable dates are promoted via social media eg. LGBTQ+, PRIDE, International Women’s Day, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All groups feel acknowledged and recognised and awareness is raised.</li> </ul>	

<p>Gypsy, Roma &amp; Traveller history month to be recognised and resources shared – June each year</p> <p>Plus circulation of any resources that will raise awareness such as Ramadan, Eid etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p>Research the extent, nature and impact of inequalities on young people in our community... taking feedback via URBIE and Armadillo?</p> <p>As part of YAB, H&amp;W, consider ways to address inequalities in the wider Yate community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people are encouraged to speak out about any issues when using YTC services and common outcomes addressed through implementation of policies, procedures and processes.</li> </ul>	

### 3. GOAL – DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES

#### Leadership and Organisational Commitment

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
Review and update our Equalities Policy in line with changes in legislation and at least once every 4 years if no changes in legislation	An up-to-date and robust policy in force.	
Consider how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. Having an impact on cost of living crisis on agendas in the same way we have impact on C&P?	All members of the community are considered as part of decision	
Obtain accreditation or supporter status where possible to recognized organisations supporting protected characteristics; Eg. Disability Confident Employer White Ribbon Organisation <a href="https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/organisations">https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/organisations</a>		
Sharing useful links where appropriate (some examples given below):  <b>Exploring Power Dynamics in the Workplace</b> <a href="https://medium.com/transformative-readership/exploring-power-dynamics-in-the-workplace-86634876ae76">https://medium.com/transformative-readership/exploring-power-dynamics-in-the-workplace-86634876ae76</a>	Full Council 24.10.23	

**How Bias Influences Perception: Three Lenses**

<https://medium.com/transformative-readership/how-bias-influences-perception-three-lenses-4567563ec20f>

**Moving beyond Cross Cultural Competency**

<https://medium.com/transformative-readership/moving-beyond-cultural-competency-405ca8e6e4f1>

**Why being culturally competent is no longer enough**

<https://www.integrativeinquiryllc.com/post/the-problem-with-code-switching-addressing-the-dominant-culture>

**Psychology Today: Code Switching**

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/achieving-health-equity/202012/what-is-code-switching>



**4. GOAL: TO BUILD A DIVERSE AND ENGAGED ORGANISATION, WHERE EVERYONE IS RESPECTED**

**Workforce**

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
Recruitment training for staff involved, to cover the Equality Act, unconscious bias, positive action, genuine occupational requirement etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure we have an unbiased recruitment process where all staff involved understand their responsibility</li> </ul>	
Ensure that all interview questions have an Equalities Question for all candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking the question at interviews reinforces to the candidate how important Equalities is in the Council. It's also an opportunity to gauge a candidate's understanding</li> </ul>	
Research available opportunities for advertising vacancies amongst community groups and in areas to reach under represented groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More diverse range of applicants</li> </ul>	
Appoint an Equalities Champion for each workforce department and from the council <a href="#">Inclusion and Diversity Champions - Inclusive Employers</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have a key person in each service unit ensuring equalities is considered in all aspects of their service work</li> </ul>	
Employees and councillors encouraged to call out examples of inappropriate language, without fear of repercussion		

Review recruitment policies for staff and and cooption policies for councillors		
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	Response	Approx Cost
<p><b>Diversity Trust</b></p>	<p>Thank you for your email and for your interest in our work. We can most certainly quote for this. My colleague @Admin The Diversity Trust Mina will be able to assist. She will provide the information to her team and get back to you.</p> <p>Below is some general information on how we deliver our sessions. I hope you find this helpful.</p> <p><b>Course Outline</b></p> <p>I have attached our rate card (please note this is subject to change), and sample course outline, for information. There are further details about our range of courses on our website <a href="#">here</a> and you can read more about our online and digital offers <a href="#">here</a> and feedback from our previous course participants <a href="#">here</a>. You can view our client list <a href="#">here</a>. Our price list is <a href="#">here</a>, our cancellation policy is <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>We don't usually record sessions, however this can be done at fee which will be included in your quote.</p> <p><b>Online Sessions</b></p> <p>We deliver all courses online. Our courses vary in length but are normally between 2-3 hours and run as a 'live' facilitated interactive session. Some of our courses can have up to 20 participants. For our 3-hour interactive training sessions we can have up to a maximum of 15 participants.</p> <p>If you require an interactive session to be reduced from 3 to 2 hours (or less) this will require bespokeing and will therefore incur an additional charge (as per our rate card). We do not recommend sessions to be reduced but our team of Consultants will be happy to discuss the options with you.</p> <p>For some sessions we can host up to 100 participants on Zoom for a 'live' webinar with a Q&amp;A. Or we can provide a speaker - if you have a larger audience, over 100, and can host on your online platform. We charge our half-day rate, please see attached, for all online courses.</p> <p>Online training works best when people are on their own online device (laptop, desktop etc.) and are able to engage in polls, breakout rooms, chat and other functionality available on Zoom. Please ensure, when booking online courses, that participants have access to their own devices.</p> <p><b>In-Person Sessions</b></p> <p>We can also provide in-person training which follows a similar format as that listed above. For in-person sessions please provide access to a screen and projector (and/or computer if this is part of the set up). This is to ensure that all participants can see the slides and to make the presentation as accessible and inclusive as possible.</p>	<p>The Diversity Trust CIC works on a training and consultancy day rate of £1,695 (exclusive of VAT). Half-day training and facilitation sessions are available at a cost of £895 (exclusive of VAT). Maximum 20 course participants. The delivery of briefing sessions, with larger audiences, is charged at a rate of £895 (exclusive of VAT) per briefing session. If a course requires bespokeing, to fit your audience, we charge a bespoke fee. We will confirm this bespoke fee once we have confirmed the course or courses with you.</p>

	Please note that in addition to our rates there will be the added cost of travel and depending on how far our Consultants have to travel, accommodation expenses.	
<b>South West Councils</b>	<p>Our default delivery method is virtual using a platform such as MS Teams – although we can, of course, discuss the possibility of delivering in person.</p> <p>The cost for delivery of this 2hr event is:  £633 plus VAT for virtual delivery  £633 plus VAT, travel, overnight accommodation (if needed) for in person delivery  Min numbers of learners are 6  Max numbers of learners are 12  Please note that the recording of live training sessions (either in person or virtual) is not permitted under any circumstances. This policy ensures potential GDPR and copyright issues are not breached through, for example, the wider sharing of recordings and that both participants and trainers benefit from a safe, confidential environment for discussing and sharing views during delivery</p>	£633 for 2 hour virtual event
Becky Walsh (Trainer)	Unable to quote for this type of work	N/A
South Glos Council	Occasionally advertises set courses that YTC could join.	N/A
Inclusive Employers Consultancy	No response	N/A

## The way forward

To enable further exploratory talks with consultants we need to ensure that sufficient budget is available and agreed to be spent on formation and delivery of the E&D action plan which includes rolling out professional training to staff & councilors.

To arrange a course to suit all 47 staff and 17 Councillors would be nigh on impossible – therefore below are a few options:

### Option 1

- One day with 2 x face to face courses (day and evening)
- 1 x online facilitated live version of the course for those that cannot attend face to face training
- Purchase of e-module training for those that cannot attend either the face to face or the on line training

**Approx cost:**

1 x day face to face ( 2 courses)	£1,695
1 x live online course	£ 895
Emodules @£30 per course – approx. 15	£ 450
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,040</b>

This is a rough calculation to cover lots of bases depending on availability eg if limited numbers of no one could attend the live one line version we wouldn't need to fund that but would need to buy in more e modules if some couldn't attend the face to face. etc

The cost of the training could be met from the existing training budget (there is a sum of £2,000 ear marked for a HR qualification for a member of staff which could be postponed until 2024/25 budget year and the balance from the existing training budget heading ear marked for “ad hoc” training.

**Option 2**

An in house round table discussion in groups to input into the action plan and vision on equalities.

Emodule training for those that need it ( most staff are already in a refresh cycle and some councillors have recently received extensive training with South Gloucestershire Council.

**Emodule Cost – approx. assuming not all staff and Cllrs £1,000**

It is also recommended that the training is refreshed every 5 years with any new staff/councillors completing an emodule at induction and then attending the next available refresh.

# White Ribbon

Further to NALC'S recent announcement;

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## NALC becomes a White Ribbon Accredited organisation

*NALC has become a **White Ribbon Accredited organisation** for our commitment to ending men's violence against women in the workplace and the local community. And we are the first national body in the local government sector to achieve this! As a White Ribbon Accredited organisation, NALC will be taking forward a three-year action plan of activities to change staff culture, systems and raise awareness within the local (parish and town) council sector. P*

*Please learn more about **White Ribbon UK** and consider **making the White Ribbon Promise**.*

*White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls.*

*The reality is that most violence against women is committed by men. Our mission is to prevent men's violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes — harmful and dominant masculine norms.*

*We strive to change long-established attitudes, behaviours and systems around masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and men's violence against women. White Ribbon UK's work is preventative, we want to end violence before it starts.*

*We work to make sure all men realise that they can take responsibility for thinking about their own actions, promote equality and respect, and are prepared to call out harassing, sexist and violent behaviour when they see it in others.*

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Consideration be given to Yate Town Council becoming a White Ribbon Supporter Organisation (suggested for organisations with under 250 employees)

The actions include:

- encouraging all staff (and councillors) to make the White Ribbon Promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women;
- recruiting at least one volunteer man White Ribbon Ambassador (or woman Champion if there are no men staff or councillors who can undertake this role)
- hold at least one awareness and fundraising event or activity a year; (which could be marketing/social media campaign or at events for example.)
- ensuring that women who are experiencing violence know where to get help.