

## **PARISH OF GODALMING**

Tel: 01483 523575  
Fax: 01483 523077  
E-Mail: [office@godalming-tc.gov.uk](mailto:office@godalming-tc.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.godalming-tc.gov.uk](http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk)

Municipal Buildings  
Bridge Street  
Godalming  
Surrey GU7 1HT

Sir/Madam

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU to attend the Full Council Meeting of the Godalming Town Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Bridge Street, Godalming on THURSDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2018 at 7.00pm.

DATED this 9<sup>th</sup> day of November 2018.

Andy Jeffery  
Clerk to the Town Council

The meeting will be preceded by prayer with the Fr. David Parmiter of St Edmunds RC Church officiating – all who wish to participate in prayers are most welcome to do so; however, anyone not wishing to participate may leave the chamber or sit quietly for the short duration of the prayers. All individuals' decisions in this matter are respected.

### **A G E N D A**

1. THE TOWN MAYOR to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 13 September 2018.

2. TO RECEIVE apologies for absence.

3. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

THE TOWN MAYOR to allow members of the public to ask the Council questions, or make a statement or present a petition. This forum to be conducted in accordance with Standing Order 5.

4. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To receive from Members any declarations of interests in relation to any items included on the Agenda for this meeting required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

5. TO RECEIVE official announcements, letters, etc.

Email received from Waverley Borough Council dated 24 September 2018:

*"Please accept this email as formal acknowledgement that Waverley Borough Council has received the Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents from Godalming Town Council."*

Members of the Public have the right to attend all meetings of the Town Council and its Committees and are welcome.

Letter of Consultation of Amendments to Planning Application received 6 November 2018 from Waverley Borough Council.

Reference: WA/2018/1239

Proposal: Erection of 262 dwellings (Use Class C3) including 78 affordable dwellings together with a 131sqm building for community use (Use Class D1) and associated works including informal and formal open space, internal road network, landscape enhancement and access; following demolition of existing buildings at Ockford Wood Farm, Ockford Wood Cottage, No.19 and No. 21 Aarons Hill (as amended by plans and documents received 02/11/18).

Location: LAND BETWEEN NEW WAY AND AARONS HILL, GODALMING

Members are asked if they wish to respond to the consultation.

6. TO RECEIVE Chairmen's reports of the Committees as under:

### **Audit Committee**

#### **Review of Financial Regulations**

The Audit Committee, having reviewed the Council's Financial Regulations, resolved to agree to make the following recommendations to Full Council:

The Town Clerk's delegated authority be increased from £1,000 to £4,500 per annum for both unbudgeted items and emergency expenditure with financial regulations be amended to read as follows:

*4.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget.*

*4.2 No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure, or that is not contained within the revenue budget or within the Town Clerks delegated authority of £4,500, other than by resolution of the Council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate (virement).*

*Any time the Town Clerk exercises a delegated financial authority, the Town Clerk will agree expenditure with the Chair or Vice Chair of the appropriate Committee and shall report the action taken and costs incurred to the same Committee as soon as practicable thereafter.*

*4.5 The Town Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, health and safety or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budget provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £4,500. Before doing so, the Town Clerk will agree expenditure with the Chair or Vice Chair of the appropriate Committee and shall report the action taken and costs incurred to the same Committee as soon as practicable thereafter.*

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the proposed amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations.

## **Policy & Management Committee**

### **Policy Documents for Review**

The Policy & Management Committee considered the documents listed below (attached for the information of Members) and resolved to agree to pass them for adoption by Full Council:

### **Equality & Diversity Statement**

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the Equality & Diversity Statement.

### **Equality & Diversity Policy**

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the Equality & Diversity Policy.

### **Customer Complaints Procedure**

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the following policies:

- Customer Complaints Procedure, '*How to Make a Complaint*' and
- Customer Complaints Procedure, '*How to Handle a Complaint*'.

### **Freedom of Information – Publication Scheme**

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the Freedom of Information – Publication Scheme.

### **Schedule of Meetings 2019/20**

The Policy & Management Committee considered the Schedule of Meetings for the Local Government year 2019/20 (copy attached for the information of Members) and resolved to agree to pass the schedule for adoption by Full Council.

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the Schedule of Meetings for the Local Government year 2019/20.

## **Staffing Committee**

### **Employees' Code of Conduct**

The Staffing Committee reviewed the draft Employees' Code of Conduct and having agreed corrections to the draft document agreed to approve the policy for the Town Clerk to distribute for staff consultation, with the outcome of the consultation being reported to the Chairman of the Committee. Members further agreed that, subject to the Chairman of the Committee and the Town Clerk being content that no substantive issues are raised during staff consultation that would need to be considered by the Committee, the Employees' Code of Conduct should be recommended for adoption by Full Council.

No substantive issues were raised during Staff Consultation, therefore, Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the Employees' Code of Conduct (copy attached for the information of Members).

### **Dignity at Work Policy**

The Staffing Committee reviewed the draft Dignity at Work Policy and having agreed corrections to the draft document, agreed to approve the policy for the Town Clerk to distribute for staff consultation, with the outcome of the consultation being reported to the Chairman of the Committee. Members further agreed that, subject to the Chairman of the Committee and the Town Clerk being content that no substantive issues are raised during staff consultation that would need to be considered by the Committee, the Dignity at Work Policy should be recommended for adoption by Full Council.

No substantive issues were raised during Staff Consultation, therefore Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the Employees' Code of Conduct (copy attached for the information of Members).

#### Engagement of Umbrella Service Provider for Disclosure & Barring Service Applications

Prior to Godalming Town Council inheriting the Godalming Museum from Waverley Borough Council (WBC), a risk assessment relating to working with children and vulnerable adults had been conducted by WBC, which identified four positions requiring to be DBS checked. These positions (two staff and two volunteers) are those that support the Museum's schools educational program. As part of WBC, DBS checks were conducted by WBC, however, on transfer of ownership the responsibility now lies with Godalming Town Council (GTC). In order for to be able to exercise its responsibility, it is necessary for GTC to engage an Umbrella Organisation to conduct the required DBS checks on the Council's behalf.

The Staffing Committee considered the processes required for GTC to be accepted by SCC as a client organisation and resolved to agree to pass the following documents, required for GTC to meet the SCC agreement obligations, for adoption to Full Council (attached for the information of Members):

- policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders;
- policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; and
- DBS Data Handling Policy – The Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention, Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information from the Disclosure and Barring Service and Umbrella Service Provider (Surrey County Council).

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the above-mentioned policies.

#### Health & Safety Related Policies

The Staffing Committee reviewed the health and safety related policies indicated below and resolved to recommend those policies for adoption by Full Council (attached for the information of Members).

- First Aid Policy
- Fire Safety Precautions and Emergency Procedures
- Lone Working Policy

Full Council is requested to resolve to agree to adopt the above-mentioned policies.

7. TO RECEIVE the minutes of the undermentioned Committees:

	Meetings Dated
Audit Committee	20 September 2018
Staffing Committee	20 September 2018 8 November 2018
Policy & Management Committee	18 October 2018

8. GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE – REPORT

TO NOTE FOR INFORMATION the report of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee of its proceedings on the 8 November 2018.

Member's attention is specifically draw to Minute No 42-18 relating to grave spaces within Nightingale Cemetery. Although a separate entity, the Town Council is nonetheless, along with Busbridge Parish Council, a constituent member of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee. As such, due to the scope of the proposal, it is considered appropriate that in addition to those Members of the Town Council who sit on the Joint Burial Committee, that all Members of Godalming Town Council should be made aware (for information purposes) of the proposal and provided with the initial and subsequent reports as the project develops. Therefore, the agenda report relating to the minute item above is attached for the information of Members.

9. TO AUTHORISE the Clerk to sign or, where appropriate to have sealed on behalf of the Town Council any orders, deeds, or documents necessary to give effect to any of the matters contained in the Reports received at this meeting or in any Resolution passed by the Council.

10. PRESENTATION FROM CITIZENS' ADVICE WAVERLEY

Members to receive a presentation and update of the work of Citizens' Advice Waverley as part of the SLA process.

11. PRESENTATION FROM HOPPA COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Members to receive a presentation and update of the work of Hoppa Community Transport and specifically the Hospital Hoppa as part of the SLA process.

12. STAYCATION 2018

Members to receive a presentation from the Community Services & Communications Officer relating to Staycation 2018.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Full Council meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 10 January 2019 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brought forward by permission of the Chairman. Requests to be submitted prior to commencement of the meeting.



## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this document is to promote diversity and equality of opportunity so that no employee, job applicant, or service user is unlawfully discriminated against, either directly or indirectly.

The Council aims to encourage a harmonious working environment based on dignity and respect for all.

This policy applies to all employees and those undertaking work on behalf of Godalming Town Council including any consultants, temporary and agency staff.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Godalming Town Council recognises that everyone is different. The Council welcomes this diversity and wants to help every individual to meet their full potential. The Council aims to treat the people it serves and its staff members fairly, consistently and with respect, and expects its councillors, employees, contractors and service users to treat others in the same way.

The Council is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of the following 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex; or
- Sexual orientation

The Council takes all allegations of discrimination seriously and will investigate concerns and take appropriate action as required.

For further information please refer to the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy.



## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY**

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## **POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010. The legislation covers a prescribed set of protected characteristics including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It also covers prohibited conduct including discrimination, adjustments for disabled persons, victimisation and harassment; services and public functions; premises; employment; contracts; and advancement of equality. The latter provision specifies a public sector equality duty, which applies equally to town and parish councils.

### **PURPOSE**

Godalming Town Council is committed to pursuing an equal opportunities approach in the employment of its staff and in every aspect of Council activity and recognises its statutory duties

under legislation in terms of service provision and employment and is committed to meeting them by complying with this policy.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics and an equality of opportunity in the provision of services and access to Council facilities. The Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimization or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. The Equality & Diversity Policy underpins all policies, procedures and strategies, therefore providing a strong foundation for equality in the Council and the services it provides.

This policy is designed to value diversity and to ensure equality of opportunity and access to services and that no one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of:

- Race (i.e. colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality or citizenship)
- Gender reassignment
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Religion or belief
- Caring for others
- Trade Union or political activities
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

This list is not exhaustive.

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY**

Godalming Town Council is committed to equality of opportunity in the provision of services and access to its facilities. The Council will deliver services that are relevant, of the highest quality possible and accessible. Training in relation to the roles and responsibilities of employees and the Council in delivering services will be sought and undertaken.

### **To improve delivery, information and access to services the Council will:**

- ensure all employees, contractors and users of council services are informed about the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy;
- apply equal opportunities principles to work undertaken for the Council by external contractors, other organisations in receipt of council funding and in work with its partners; and
- rectify any elements of the Council's work which have the potential for discrimination and prejudice.

### **To promote equality and diversity with other partners the Council will:**

- promote tolerance and respect between diverse groups and individuals;
- acknowledge and celebrate, wherever possible, the variety of lifestyles and cultures within the town;
- challenge all forms of discrimination within the Council and the wider community; and
- support the development of communities and assist them in challenging discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence.



## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Council.

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. This is further defined in the Dignity at Work Policy adopted by the Council.

The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing society as a whole.

### **To improve access and opportunity to employment and training the Council will:**

- implement its Equality & Diversity Policy in its role as an employer;
- demonstrate its commitment in the way the Council:
  - recruits and selects people;
  - trains and develops people;
  - recognises the abilities that individuals demonstrate;
  - expects the highest standards of employee conduct and behaviour.
- not accept any form of unfair treatment, discrimination, bullying or harassment or removal of dignity by any of our employees or to any of our employees; and
- review and develop procedures in the context of equality and diversity.

Breaches of the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimization through the Council's Grievance Procedure.

## **COMMITMENT**

The Council is committed to equality and diversity and to the vision of improving the quality of life for local people.

The Council aims to be:

- accessible
- accountable
- fair
- inclusive
- proactive
- professional
- responsible
- transparent

Godalming Town Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity and valuing diversity in all aspects of its work:

- a. through the delivery of its services to the community by ensuring that within reason, services are accessible to all and that the Council fully recognises the diversity of people's needs;

- b. through the way the Council recruits, employs and trains its workforce to enable it to provide better services;
- c. in the Council's leadership role, working with partners to promote the importance of treating every individual with dignity and respect.

Godalming Town Council will comply with all current and future legislation referring to equality and diversity and will aim to promote good practice in all aspects of the organisation. The Council will publicise this policy on its website and will highlight it in recruitment and relevant official documentation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Council has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy. The Staffing Committee is responsible for the implementation of all equal opportunities policies and procedures, the Town Clerk has overall delegated responsibility for co-ordinating the day to day operation of the policies and procedures. The policy will be reviewed at least every two years, to ensure it remains commensurate with the law and best practice.

In the implementation of this policy the Council will:

- ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential;
- promote diversity and equality for all staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds;
- promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair privilege to any individual or group;
- treat part time staff fairly and equally;
- challenge inequality and less favourable treatment wherever practicable;
- promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds in relation to all staff, councillors, contractors and visitors attending the Council's offices or meetings.

The task of promoting social inclusion, tackling discrimination and encouraging equal opportunities are key issues for Godalming Town Council and the Council is committed to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advancing equality of opportunity between different groups;
- fostering good relations between different groups.

## **EQUALITY AIMS**

**Age:** The Council shall not permit unlawful age discrimination.

**Sexual Orientation:** The Council shall not permit unlawful discrimination

**Disability:** The Council will remove barriers to participation by disabled people, wherever possible. Staff who become disabled whilst working with the Council will be offered reasonable adjustments to enable them to continue working.

**Race/Ethnic Origin:** The Council will encourage participation of minority ethnic groups in its activities.

**Religion:** The Council respects people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and will give due regard to the needs and requirements of people who adhere to a range of cultural and religious beliefs. This will include staff needs in relation to dietary requirements, and requests for leave and facilities for religious observance.

**Equal Pay:**

The Council is committed to equal pay in employment. It believes its male and female employees should receive equal pay for like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. In order to achieve this, the Council will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Councillors and employees have a duty to co-operate with the Council to make sure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Action will be taken under the Council's disciplinary procedure against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation. Serious breaches of this Equality & Diversity Policy will be treated as potential gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal.

Councillors and employees should also bear in mind that they can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination or harassment and that any such act may also be a criminal offence.

Employees must draw the attention of either their Line Manager/Supervisor, the Town Clerk or the Chair of the Staffing Committee as appropriate, to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or suspected cases of harassment or bullying. Employees must not victimise or retaliate against an employee who has made allegations or complaints of discrimination or harassment or who has provided information about such discrimination or harassment. Such behaviour will be treated as potential gross misconduct in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure.

The Council will also take appropriate action against any third parties or councillors who are found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful harassment against its employees.

**REPORTING COMPLAINTS****Procedures for Employees**

All allegations of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily. The Council will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of discrimination or harassment from employees

If you wish to make a complaint of discrimination, you should use the Council's Grievance Procedure.

## **CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (HOW TO MAKE A)**

The purpose of this sheet is to tell you:

How to complain to Godalming Town Council or Godalming Joint Burial Committee; and how they will deal with your complaint.

### **1. HOW TO COMPLAIN**

#### **How do I Make a Complaint?**

If you feel the Council has done something wrong or badly, or failed to do something, the first thing you should do is contact the Officer you have been dealing with. You should ask them to put things right for you or explain why the Council has acted in this way. If you remain dissatisfied, you may wish to make a formal complaint by following the advice on this sheet.

To help us deal effectively with your complaint you will need to tell us:

- What the problem is and how it has occurred.
- How it has affected you.
- What you consider we should now do to put the matter right.

#### **What Can I Complain About?**

A complaint must be about something specific. It is most likely to be about one or more of the following:

- The standard of service provided by the Council
- Failure by the Council to provide an agreed service
- Failure by the Council to respond to a request for a service
- That the Council has exceeded its powers
- That the attitude or conduct of an Officer has been unacceptable
- The Council has not followed an agreed procedure
- Maladministration by the Council (ie. delay, muddle, bias or confusion)

#### **What Can I Not Complain About?**

This procedure does not cover:

- Requests for a service
- Requests for information or an explanation of Council policy or practice
- Complaints about Councillors
- Complaints made more than 12 months after the events complained about unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why the complaint could not have brought within this time.

If, after reading the guidance above, you are not sure if your “complaint” is covered by this procedure, please write to the Town Clerk explaining what your complaint is. The Town Clerk will look into the matter and notify you accordingly.

Complaints about Councillors should be made directly to:

The Monitoring Officer  
Waverley Borough Council  
The Burys  
Godalming  
Surrey GU7 1HR

Tel: 01483 523333

## **2. HOW WILL YOU DEAL WITH MY COMPLAINT?**

Complaints differ widely in nature and complexity and in dealing with any complaints made in accordance with the Customer Complaints Procedure we will seek to apply three basic principles:

1. To investigate a complaint as quickly and as impartially as possible. This will initially be done by the Officer you have been dealing with.
2. To provide you with a full response that outlines the findings of the investigation and, wherever possible, resolves the matter to your satisfaction.
3. To keep the steps of the Customer Complaints Procedure, as set out below, separate from each other.

### **What Happens in the Complaints Procedure?**

#### **Step 1**

You should first contact the Officer you have been dealing with and explain the issue to them. The Officer you talk to may be able to help you there and then, or at least indicate if the matter can be resolved.

If you are not satisfied, you should write to the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days of receipt and will provide you with a full response within 10 working days of receipt.

#### **Step 2**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Step 1, you can write to the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee or the Chairman of the Joint Burial Committee and ask him/her to review your complaint. If your complaint relates to the Town Clerk, the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee will review the complaint. The Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee or the Chairman of the Joint Burial Committee will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days of receipt and will provide you with a full response within 30 working days of receipt.

You can write to the Town Clerk at:

Godalming Town Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Bridge Street  
Godalming GU7 1HT  
Telephone: 01483 523575  
E-Mail [townclerk@godalming-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@godalming-tc.gov.uk)  
Website: <http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk>

You can write to the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee or the Chairman of the Joint Burial Committee at the address given above or e-mail them at [office@godalming-tc.gov.uk](mailto:office@godalming-tc.gov.uk)



## **CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (HOW TO HANDLE)**

### **WHY DO WE NEED A COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE?**

Benefits to the individual:

It demonstrates our commitment to act upon, and listen to views; it ensures customers receive a fair, speedy, confidential and effective response.

Benefits to the Council:

It enables us to improve our customer care and service delivery arrangements and, when appropriate ensures remedial action is taken and reduces the number of recurring complaints.

**The Town Council's customer complaints' procedure is designed to be:**

***Accessible*** A well publicised procedure available on the website and in leaflet form

***Simple*** A few simple, easy to understand stages that can be initiated by telephone, personal visit, or in writing.

***Speedy*** Making sure tight deadlines are kept and people are kept informed.

***Fair and confidential***

***Effective*** Addressing all the points at issue and providing appropriate remedies.

***Informative*** By monitoring the process, managers can ensure that we learn from our experiences.

Apply equally to the ***Godalming Joint Burial Committee***.

### **WHAT IS A COMPLAINT?**

A complaint can be any expression of dissatisfaction made by any individual.

However, for the purposes of the complaints system the Council's definition of a complaint is:-

An expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of the Town Council's service, actions or lack of action by staff, particularly where a problem has not been remedied to the satisfaction of the individual.

This procedure will not normally cover:

- requests for a service;
- requests for information or an explanation of Council policy or practice;
- complaints about Councillors;

- complaints made more than 12 months after the events complained about unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why the complaint could not have been brought within this time; and
- complaints made about a service provided by another local authority.

## **THE ROLE OF COUNCILLORS**

Complainants inevitably approach Councillors at different stages of the complaints process.

- a) As a rule Councillors should advise and encourage complainants to use the customer complaints procedure;
- b) Councillors should get directly involved only when the procedure appears not to be working satisfactorily.

In practice, if a Councillor wishes to log a complaint directly or to pursue the progress of a particular complaint, they should contact the Town Clerk – who will keep the Councillor informed.

The Town Clerk will report annually to Councillors on complaints received in the last year.

## **THE CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **Stage 1**

#### **Receiving a complaint**

A complaint may be received in a number of ways and Town Council staff are encouraged to recognise any complaint whether made in writing (by letter or e-mail), by personal visit or by telephone call. All staff will give their name to complainants, for their future reference.

The complaint may be made by a third-party and while individuals should be encouraged to make their own complaint it is acknowledged that for many reasons some individuals find it difficult to do so. (For example the recently bereaved may prefer a funeral director to pursue a complaint on their behalf.) Therefore, the Town Council will deal with a third-party (except where data protection legislation prevents the sharing of personal data with a third party).

Any member of staff receiving a complaint shall try and find out the detail of the complaint – in particular the service or matter complained of, and any remedy sought. All such details will be passed on to the office responsible for the service complained of, and/or the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

#### **Recording Complaints**

All complaints must be logged in the complaints file; the file shall be maintained by the Support Services Executive and will be kept confidential.

#### **Who Should Deal with a Complaint?**

In the first instance the Officer responsible for providing the service/issue complained of should deal with a complaint; although, the complainant should be informed of their right to have the complaint dealt with by the Town Clerk should they wish.

#### **Acknowledging and Responding to a Complaint**

In all cases an acknowledgement should be sent within five working days from the day a complaint was received. (Note that this will normally be by letter but where a complaint has been received by e-mail then an e-mail acknowledgement is appropriate.)

In most cases it should be possible to answer the complaint within those five days (in which case the response will also serve as the acknowledgement), if not it must be answered within ten working days. If, in exceptional circumstances, it is not possible to answer a complaint within ten working days then a letter (or e-mail) must be sent on the tenth day keeping the complainant informed and setting out a timetable for response.

A response to a complaint should contain as full an explanation as possible – either of what went wrong (if something did) or why the complaint is held to be unjustified. The response should also inform the complainant of their right to appeal to the appropriate committee (Stage 2).

## **Remedies**

Where a complaint is found to be justified, consideration needs to be given to the appropriate remedy. The remedy should, as far as possible, put the complainant into the position they would have been in, had things not gone wrong.

The types of remedy to be considered should include:

1. Providing the service desired.
2. Change of procedures to prevent further occurrence of the problem and assuring the complainant to that effect.

Remedies 1 and 2 may be delivered by any member of the Town Council's staff. If the complaint is justified, or after due consideration and consultation, it is found to be justified, the staff member dealing with the complaint is authorised to provide a service if it is normally in their power to do so.

3. An apology by letter and/or a visit. (If the complainant has suffered, but not financially, a gesture of goodwill may be appropriate eg. A bunch of flowers).
4. Replacement of damaged items.
5. Reimbursement of expenses if the complainant has suffered specific financial losses.

Remedies 3, 4 or 5 may only be authorised by the Town Clerk (or in the Clerk's absence the Officer duly authorised by the Council to act as Proper Officer in the Town Clerk's absence) so as to ensure that the Council's approach to remedies is consistent, within the law, and fair to all involved. If any of remedies 3, 4 or 5 are used then the matter must be reported to the relevant committee at the earliest opportunity. The Council has no specific policy for financial compensation in recognition of time, trouble expended by the complainant, exceptional worry, distress or inconvenience caused, any such financial compensation is at the discretion of, and must be authorised by, the relevant Committee.

## **Monitoring and reviewing the procedure**

The Support Services Executive will monitor complaints received and log the date received, the date acknowledged and the date on which a response was made. The Town Clerk will report, in summary form, annually to the Policy & Management Committee and Joint Burial Committee, as appropriate, on complaints received in the past year. Significant complaints will be reported as they arise, particularly if the remedy requires the Committee's authorisation.

## **Stage 2**

### **If the Complaint Cannot be Resolved by Officers**

If the appropriate Officer cannot resolve the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction, or if the complainant has a legitimate reason for not wishing Officers to deal with the complaint (for example



if the complaint concerns the conduct of the Town Clerk) then the matter must pass to the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee or the Chairman of the Joint Burial Committee.

The Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee or the Chairman of the Joint Burial Committee is responsible for determining whether the complaint needs to be dealt with by the full committee, by the Staffing Committee or by another means.

When a complaint passes to a Committee it should be dealt with, in confidential session (except that the complainant and a companion may be present), by the next meeting of that Committee. The complainant should be informed about the date of the meeting and asked if they wish to make representations in writing or in person.



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – PUBLICATION SCHEME

Information available from Godalming Town Council under the Freedom of Information – Publication Scheme. If a request is made for a hard copy, these will be provided and charged for accordance with the Schedule of Charges at the end of the document.

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class1 – Who We Are and What We Do</b> (organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)	
Who's who on the Council and its committees	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council Members	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Location of main Council office and opening times	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Staffing Contacts	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class 2 – What We Spend and How We Spend It</b> (financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)	
Annual Return form and report by auditor	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Finalised budget	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Precept	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Standing Orders	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Financial Regulations	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Grants given and received	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class 3 – What Our Priorities Are and How We Are Doing</b> (strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	
Annual Report (current and previous year as a minimum)	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Supporting our Community	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class 4 – How We Make Decisions</b> (decision-making processes and records of decisions) <b>current and previous council year as a minimum</b>	
Timetable of meetings (council, any committee meetings and town meetings)	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Agendas of meetings (as above)	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Minutes of meetings (as above) – NB. This will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Reports presented to council meetings – NB. This will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Responses to planning applications (minutes of Policy & Management Committee, when appropriate)	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class 5 – Our Policies and Procedures</b> (current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)	
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Standing Orders</li> <li>· Committees' terms of reference (in Standing Orders)</li> <li>· Delegated authority in respect of Officers (in Standing Orders)</li> <li>· Code of Conduct</li> <li>· Policy documents</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Internal policies relating to the delivery of services</li> <li>· Equality &amp; Diversity Policy</li> <li>· Health &amp; Safety Policy</li> <li>· Data Protection/GDPR</li> <li>· Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information)</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Privacy Policy	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Data Protection Policy	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Schedule of Charges (for the publication of information)	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers currently maintained lists and registers only</b>	
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held, this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	
Assets Register	Available for inspection only
Burials Register	Available for inspection only
Register of Purchased Graves	Available for inspection only
Register of Members' interests	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Register of gifts and hospitality	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
List by surname of burials to 2013	<a href="http://www.godalming-jbc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-jbc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk

Information to be Published	How the Information can be Obtained
<b>Class 7 – The Services We Offer</b> (information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses) <b>current information only</b>	
Allotments	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Burial grounds (on behalf of Godalming Joint Burial Committee)	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Community centres and village halls	<a href="http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk">http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk</a> Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Bus shelters	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
Public conveniences	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk
A summary of services for which the Council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Hard copy, apply to Town Clerk



**Contact details:**

**Town Clerk  
Godalming Town Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Bridge Street  
Godalming  
Surrey GU7 1HT**

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

<b>TYPE OF CHARGE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BASIS OF CHARGE</b>
<b>Disbursement Cost</b>	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost*
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class

\*the actual cost incurred by the Town Council

**GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL**  
**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2019/20**

**MAY 2019**

2	LOCAL ELECTIONS			
8	Councillor Induction Event	7.00PM	Wilfrid Noyce Centre	
16	ANNUAL COUNCIL/MAYOR MAKING	7.00PM	Council Chamber/Bor Hall	✓
23	Policy & Management	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
	Mayoralty (Election of Chairman)	8.00PM**	Mayor's Parlour	
	Audit (Election of Chairman)	8.00PM**	Council Chamber	
	Staffing (Election of Chairman)	8.10PM**	Council Chamber	
30	Joint Burial – (Approval of Internal Audit)	6.00PM	Council Chamber	

**JUNE 2019**

23	CIVIC SERVICE	3.00PM	TBC	
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**JULY 2019**

4	Staffing	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
11	Policy & Management (Grants)	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
18	Audit (Internal Controls)	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
25	Full Council	7.00PM	Council Chamber	

**AUGUST 2019 – No Meetings**

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

5	Joint Burial – Cemetery Inspection	5.00PM	TBC	
	Joint Burial	6.00PM	Council Chamber	
	Policy & Management	7.00PM**		
12	Staffing	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
19	Audit (Financial Regulations)	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
26	Full Council (Staycation Thank You)	7.00PM	Council Chamber	

\*\* Meetings will commence at the specified time or at the conclusion of the preceding meeting, whichever is later.

## **OCTOBER 2019**

17	Policy & Management (Grants)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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## **NOVEMBER 2019**

7	Joint Burial (Budget) Staffing	5.30PM 7.00PM	Council Chamber
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10	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY	10.15AM	
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14	Full Council (TBC)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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28	Policy & Management (Revised Estimates)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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## **DECEMBER 2019**

5	Mayoralty	7.00PM	Town Clerk's Office
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12	Policy & Management (Budget)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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19	Full Council (Precept)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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## **JANUARY 2020**

16	Policy & Management (Grants)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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23	Audit (Risk Management)	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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30	Staffing	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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## **FEBRUARY 2020 – No Meetings**

## **MARCH 2020**

5	Policy & Management	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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19	Full Council	7.00PM	Council Chamber
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\*\* Meetings will commence at the specified time or at the conclusion of the preceding meeting, whichever is later.

## **APRIL 2020**

2	Joint Burial	6.00PM	Council Chamber	
9	Policy & Management (Grants)	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
16	ANNUAL TOWN MEETING	8.00PM	Council Chamber	
20	Audit (Review System of Internal Control & Annual Accounts)	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
23	Full Council	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
24	MAYORALTY RECEPTION & DINNER	7.15PM	Wilfrid Noyce Centre	✓

## **MAY 2020**

7	ANNUAL COUNCIL/MAYOR MAKING	7.00PM	Council Chamber/Bor Hall	
14	Policy & Management	7.00PM	Council Chamber	
	Mayoralty (Election of Chairman)	8.00PM**	Mayor's Parlour	
	Audit (Election of Chairman)	8.00PM	Council Chamber	
	Staffing (Election of Chairman)	8.10PM	Council Chamber	

\*\* Meetings will commence at the specified time or at the conclusion of the preceding meeting, whichever is later.

**FESTIVALS:**

Spring Festival (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in April)  
 Summer Festival (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in July)  
 Staycation (1<sup>st</sup> complete week in August)  
 Christmas Festival (Last Saturday in November)

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 30 March 2019
Spring Festival	Saturday, 6 April 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 27 April 2019
St John's Spring Fair	Saturday, 4 May 2019 (TBC)
Annual Council/Mayor Making	Thursday, 16 May 2019
Godalming Run	Sunday, 19 May 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 25 May 2019
Town Show	Saturday, 1 June 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 29 June 2019
Summer Food Festival	Saturday, 6 July 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 27 July 2019
Staycation	Saturday, 3–Sunday, 11 August 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 31 August 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 28 September 2019
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 26 October 2019
Fireworks	Friday, 1 November 2019
Remembrance Sunday	Sunday, 10 November 2019
Christmas Festival & Light Switch-On	Saturday, 30 November 2019
Blessing of Crib & Carol Service (Godalming Town Day)	Saturday, 14 December 2019
Pancake Races	Tuesday, 25 February 2020
Farmers' Market	Saturday, 28 March 2020
Spring Festival – Spring into Godalming	Saturday, 4 April 2020

✓

## **EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **A Guide for the Town Council's Staff**

#### **1. OUTLINE OF THE CODE**

##### **1.1. Status of the Code**

As a local government officer your conduct must be beyond reproach and you must do nothing that might give rise to the suspicion, however ill-founded, that you are in any way influenced by improper motives.

This code sets out the standards that are expected of employees and provides a framework that will help to promote good practice. All employees of the Council are required to observe and uphold the standards of the code and all policies and procedures of the Council.

##### **1.2 Who Does the Code Apply to?**

This code covers all employees of Godalming Town Council.

The standards set out here must also be followed by agency staff, temporary workers and internal contractors who carry out work on behalf of the Council.

##### **1.3 Responsibility**

All employees of the Council are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to councillors and fellow employees with impartiality.

All employees are encouraged, without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management or Members any impropriety or breach of procedure that comes to their attention.

##### **1.4 Abuses of the Code**

Employees who attempt to abuse this policy may face disciplinary action. The Council takes false or misleading accusations very seriously which may result in further action taken through the disciplinary procedure. This does not include ill-founded allegations that were made in good faith.

##### **1.5 Publicising/Distribution of the Code**

A copy of this code is issued to every employee, worker and contractor who carry out work on behalf of the Council. A copy can also be viewed on the Council's website.

New employees will be informed of the existence of this code in their recruitment and induction information.

## **1.6 Reviewing the Code**

The Council will keep the operation of this policy under review and will make such changes to the policy as deemed appropriate in the light of the experience of its application. Any such changes shall be made in consultation with staff.

## **1.7 Alternative Formats**

Should you require a copy of this policy in any alternative format then a request should be submitted to the Town Clerk.

## **1.8 Further Information**

If you require any further advice relating to this document, you should contact your line manager in the first instance. Policies and procedures referred to in this document can be found on the Town Council's website - [www.godalming-tc.gov.uk](http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk)

# **2. PROCEDURE**

## **2.1 Equality and Diversity**

All members of the local community, customers and other Council employees have a right to be treated with fairness and equity and the Council is committed to treating the people it serves or employs fairly, consistently and with respect.

All employees must ensure that they are familiar with and comply with policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the Council, e.g. the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy & Statement, in addition to the requirements of the law. This applies both in the delivery of Council services and in relation to its employment practices.

The Dignity at Work Policy defines standards of unacceptable behaviour for staff in relation to their work, identifying the responsibilities of both managers and individual employees.

## **2.2 Standards and Attitude**

Employees must give the highest possible standard of service to the public and, where it is part of their duties, provide appropriate advice to elected Members and fellow employees with impartiality.

Employees must always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial delivery of services to all groups and people within that community according to the Council's policies.

In all cases, it is not enough to avoid actual impropriety, as public perceptions are very important. Employees should at all times avoid any appearance of improper conduct, which may give rise to suspicion.

## **2.3 Dress Code**

All employees are required to be neat, clean and tidy whilst at work, whether working on the Council's premises or elsewhere. Dress should be appropriate to the work undertaken. For example, smart casual clothing is generally acceptable to wear on a day-to-day basis although formal office wear is sometime required for more formal work situations including at council meetings.

## **2.4 Confidentiality and Data Protection**

All information and data must be handled sensitively and processed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy. All employees owe a general duty of confidentiality to the Council, have a contractual obligation in relation to confidential information and are required to protect official information held in confidence.

Employees shall not divulge to any person (other than another member of staff or member of the Town Council that requires information for the performance of his/her duties), any information which the member of staff has obtained by reason of his/her employment to the Council, except where that information is anyway in the public domain by virtue of legislation or under the Council's Publication Scheme. In particular, no member of staff shall divulge personal information regarding any employee, person or contractor, having dealings with the Council and information relating to tenders or other such issues.

Under the General Data Protection Regulations, individuals have the right to see their own personal data held subject to the rights of confidentiality of any third parties involved in that information. Please see the Information & Data Protection Policy for further information.

## **2.5 Political Neutrality**

Employees serve the Council as a whole. Employees must serve all elected Members. In addition, they must ensure that the individual rights of all elected Members are respected.

Subject to the Council's conventions, employees may also be required to advise political groups. They must do so in ways which do not compromise their political neutrality.

Employees must follow the lawfully expressed policies of the Council and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere improperly with their work.

## **2.6 Relationships**

### **2.6.1 Colleagues**

Good working relationships between colleagues are essential. Officers should always treat their colleagues with dignity and respect. Attention is particularly drawn to the Council's Dignity at Work Policy, a copy of which should be issued alongside this Code of Conduct.

### **2.6.2 Councillors**

Mutual respect between employees and councillors is essential for good local government. Whilst there will be a need to work closely with councillors, a professional and courteous relationship should be maintained at all times.

### **2.6.3 The Local Community and Service Users**

Employees should always remember their responsibilities to the whole of the community they serve and ensure courteous, effective and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community in accordance with the policies of the Council.

### **2.6.4 Contractors**

All relationships of a business or personal nature with external contractors or suppliers, or potential contractors or suppliers, must be declared to the Town Clerk at the earliest opportunity. Orders and contracts must be awarded in accordance with Council standing orders on merit and without discrimination. No special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives.



### **2.6.5 The Press and the Media**

All enquiries for information or comment on issues affecting the work of the Council must be referred to the Town Clerk.

Employees must not deal directly with the press or the media unless required to do so in the course of their work or they have been expressly authorised by the Town Clerk.

### **2.7 Tendering Procedures**

Employees involved in a tendering process or who have any other official relationship with external contractors, must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors.

If you are responsible for engaging or supervising contractors and have previously had, or currently have, a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, you must declare that relationship to the Town Clerk.

If you become privy to confidential information on tenders or costs relating either to internal or external contractors, you must not disclose that information to any unauthorised person.

All employees must ensure that no special favour is shown to current, or recent former, employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in any capacity.

At all times, employees dealing with Tenders and Contracts must ensure that they comply with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations with respect to Contracts.

### **2.8 Use of Financial Resources**

Employees must ensure that public funds entrusted to them are used in a responsible and lawful manner. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge to the Council.

All employees involved in financial activities and transactions on behalf of the Council, including budgetary control, payments of accounts, payments of salaries and wages, petty cash and orders for works, goods or services must do so in accordance with financial regulations.

Where employees have concerns over the lawfulness of certain action they should express such concerns to the Town Clerk.

### **2.9 Protection of the Council's Property**

Employees must take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the Council's regalia, equipment and other property that is placed in their charge is kept safe and is protected from damage.

In the general interests of security in the Council's premises, employees should take care not to do anything that reduces the level of security. In particular, employees must ensure that doors and windows are shut and locked when leaving any premises and that any security alarms (if present) are set or that arrangements are in place for them to be set later. If an employee notices a potential lapse in security, they should bring it to the attention of the Facilities Supervisor or the Town Clerk.

All resources of the Council including equipment, stationery etc. are to be used for the Council's business and are not for personal use.

## **2.10 Information Technology**

Use of IT equipment and facilities must be in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct - IT Facilities.

## **2.11 Anti-Bribery – Hospitality, Gifts and Sponsorship**

It is illegal to offer, promise, give, request, agree, receive or accept bribes (Bribery Act 2010). This includes accepting any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or refraining from doing, anything in an official capacity or showing favour or disfavour to any person in an official capacity.

### **2.11.1 Gifts**

In general, the Council does not believe that it is appropriate for employees to accept gifts from service users, suppliers or any other person or organisation with which the Council has (or might have) business connections. This is because it is important to ensure that no employee acts in any way that is inconsistent with the Council's objectives or with the integrity of the Council by accepting a gift in circumstances where it could influence, or be seen to influence, that employee's actions or decisions. Acceptance of gifts by employees may be viewed by the public with suspicion and may make the Council extremely vulnerable to criticism.

For your own protection, if anyone makes an approach to you which seems to you, or might seem to a third party, to be aimed at obtaining some form of preferential treatment, or in any suspicious circumstances in connection with a contract, you must report the matter to the Town Clerk, disclosing the fact of the gift, its nature and the identity of the sender.

Employees should not accept personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers. The only exceptions to this rule are;

- a) small gifts of only token value often given by way of trade advertisements to a wide range of people, e.g. calendars, diaries, tape measures and similar articles of use in the workplace; or
- b) small gifts of only token value given on the conclusion of a courtesy visit, e.g. to a factory, trade fair or other premises.

Gifts which fall outside the definition above should be politely refused and the Council's policy on the acceptance of gifts should be explained.

If a gift is delivered to the office without prior warning, unless it falls within the scope of acceptable gifts the gift should be returned, or if the return of the gift would cause offence the item should be donated to the Mayor's Charity.

### **2.11.2 Hospitality**

Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the Council in the community. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented. They should be authorised by the Town Clerk, in advance whenever possible.

When receiving authorised hospitality employees should be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking affecting those providing the hospitality.

When hospitality must be declined, those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within Godalming Town Council.

### **2.11.3 Register of Hospitality and Gifts**

All hospitality offered, whether it is accepted or not, and all gifts offered or received, whether they are accepted or returned, must be entered in the Register of Hospitality and Gifts and a note made of the action taken.

If you have any doubt about a gift or offer of hospitality, please seek advice from the Town Clerk.

### **2.11.4 Sponsorship – Giving and Receiving**

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a Council activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or service, neither an employee nor any partner/civil partner, spouse nor relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to the Town Clerk of any such interest. Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

## **3.0 APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS**

### **3.1 Appointments**

If an employee wishes to recommend an individual for employment, they must notify the Town Clerk. Any potential candidate for employment by the Council recommended by an existing employee will be assessed equally alongside all other candidates. Employees shall not canvass any Member or other employee of the Council in respect of candidates seeking employment with the Council.

Employees shall disclose to the Town Clerk any close relationship (partner or family member) between themselves and any person who they know is a candidate for employment with the Council. (The Town Clerk shall make any such disclosure to the Chairman of the Staffing Committee.)

To avoid accusations of bias, employees must not be involved with appointments where they are related to any applicant or otherwise have a close personal relationship with them.

Employees who are involved in appointments must ensure that these are made on merit and on a non-discriminatory basis.

### **3.2 Outside Commitments**

Any employee who wishes to take another job must, before commencing the second job, request and be granted written permission from the Town Clerk. The Council does not prohibit employees from taking secondary employment and will not unreasonably withhold permission for an employee to work in a second job, provided that the second job does not interfere, and is not likely to interfere, with the performance of the employee's job with the Council.

You should not partake in any outside interests, voluntary activity or work that are in conflict with the work of the Council. If you are in any doubt whatsoever that any outside activities or employment might be detrimental to the Council's interests, you must discuss the matter with the Town Clerk.

### **3.3 Personal Interests**

You must declare, in writing, to the Town Clerk any financial or non-financial interests which could bring about conflict with the Council's interests. If you are in any doubt about a potential conflict of

interest, you should bring the matter to the attention of your line manager so that a decision can be made as to how best to proceed. You must not make or become involved with any official or professional decisions about matters in which you have a personal interest.

You must declare to the Town Clerk membership of any organisation not open to the public, requiring any commitment of allegiance, or which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct, for example, the Freemasons. The Town Clerk must make any declarations required by this paragraph, in writing, to the Chairman of the Staffing Committee.

### **3.4 Use of Non-financial Council Resources for Personal Purposes**

You should not use or abuse the Council's equipment and other resources for your own personal purposes, either at home or at the office, regardless of whether such use is for your personal gain.

However, in certain circumstances and with the prior agreement of the Town Clerk, it may be possible for you to make reasonable use of the Council's resources. In such a case, the Council will make an appropriate charge for the use of its resources, for example, photocopying.

### **3.5 Chairman of the Staffing Committee**

Irrespective of line management or communication lines indicated within Council Policies for highlighting concerns or reporting actions or events which an individual staff member may believe are contrary to the interests of the Council or other individual members of staff, any staff member may directly approach the Chairman of the Staffing Committee with their concerns if they feel it appropriate to do so.



## **DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY**

### **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

Godalming Town Council fully supports the right of all people to be treated with respect and dignity in the workplace. The Council recognises that bullying is not only unacceptable on moral grounds and harassment on legal grounds, but that either can have a negative effect on both individuals and the organisation. Prolonged harassment or bullying can cause both serious psychological and physical health problems, such as stress and depression. Godalming Town Council is, therefore, committed to having a workplace which is free from harassment and bullying and to ensure that all employees, contractors and others who come into contact with the Council are treated with dignity and respect.

This policy and procedure is intended to assist Godalming Town Council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

### **THE POSITION ON BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

All employees are required to help create a working environment in which bullying and harassment are unacceptable. Employees should, in particular, ensure that they do not collude with bullying or harassing behaviour and that they fully cooperate with any complaints' procedure. Managers are responsible for raising awareness of the issue, responding constructively to any complaints, and challenging and stopping bullying and harassment at work.

Godalming Town Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in the workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or a repeated course of conduct, and whether done purposefully or not. The Council will not tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. Employees should also be aware that if a court or tribunal finds that an act of bullying or harassment has occurred, in some circumstances that treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

The Council will take appropriate action if any employees or contractors are bullied or harassed by our stakeholders or suppliers.

If, after an investigation, it is decided that an employee has harassed or bullied another employee or contractor, then the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Retaliation or victimisation will also constitute a disciplinary offence, which may, in appropriate circumstances, lead to dismissal.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and as far as possible, confidentially. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

## WHAT TYPE OF TREATMENT AMOUNTS TO BULLYING OR HARASSMENT?

Bullying and harassment may occur 'face-to-face', in meetings, through written communications including email, by telephone and through automatic supervision methods.

**Bullying** is generally behaviour that is identified as a misuse of power. Bullying is primarily intimidating in nature, but may also be insulting, offensive or malicious. It is frequently recognised through the abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or create a detriment for the employee. Bullying may occur as an isolated incident, but is commonly persistent.

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

- has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his/her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Examples of **bullying and harassment** include (but are not limited to):

- spreading malicious rumours, or verbal abuse or offensive comments, jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation;
- deliberate exclusion from conversations or work activities;
- unfair treatment;
- rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property;
- unwelcome sexual advances — lewd or suggestive comments, touching, standing too close, display of offensive materials;
- subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, often in front of others;
- preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities;
- physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling;
- abusing a position of power

(this list is not exhaustive)

It is important to note that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or proper performance management.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable. All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

## PREVENTION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

**What should an employee do if they feel that they are being Bullied or Harassed by a Stakeholder or Supplier (as opposed to a colleague)?**

If an employee is being bullied or harassed by someone with whom they have come into contact with at work, they must raise this with the Town Clerk (or the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the

Staffing Committee in the case of the Town Clerk) in the first instance. A decision will then be made as to how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with the employee who has raised the concern.

### **What should an employee do if they are being Bullied or Harassed by a Colleague?**

If an employee is being bullied or harassed by another employee or contractor, there are two possible avenues for the individual to consider, informal or formal.

#### **Informal Approach**

If an employee is being bullied or harassed by another employee or contractor, the employee may be able to resolve the situation independently by informing the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the Council's policy and must stop immediately. Alternatively, it may be that the individual may obtain support from a colleague.

In either case, the employee can approach the Town Clerk for advice and support. If the employee being bullied or harassed is the Town Clerk, he/she can approach the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Staffing Committee for advice and support. If the above approach is unsuccessful or if the employee does not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if the employee is being bullied by the Town Clerk, the employee should raise the issue with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Staffing Committee. The request for help will be treated confidentially.

The Chairman of the Staffing Committee or the Town Clerk will discuss with the employee the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by:

- informing the alleged perpetrator(s), without prejudging the matter, that there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a fellow employee;
- that such behaviour is contrary to the Council's policy;
- that the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence.

It may be possible for the Town Clerk, Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Staffing Committee to have this conversation with the alleged perpetrator. The Town Clerk, Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Staffing Committee will only share information that has been agreed with the employee. Complete anonymity cannot always be guaranteed in all circumstances as the employee may be identifiable from the matter being discussed. The Town Clerk, Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Staffing Committee will also ensure that the perpetrator is aware that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances the Council may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Town Clerk, Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Staffing Committee will discuss this with the employee if it is appropriate.

If the complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as a serious allegation of sexual or racial harassment, or in cases where a problem has happened before) the Council may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that the matter had been raised informally. The Council will consult with the employee before taking this step.

#### **Raising a Formal Complaint**

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, the employee can make a formal complaint through the Grievance Procedure.

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be informed of the name of the employee making the complaint and the details of the grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, the Council will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible.

When carrying out any reviews or monitoring, an individual's personal data must be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

### **The Use of the Disciplinary Procedure**

If, at any stage, from the point at which a complaint is raised and it is believed that there is 'a case to answer' and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, the Council will instigate the formal disciplinary procedure. The employee will be kept informed of the outcome.

### **False Allegations of Bullying or Harassment**

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. If it is found that an employee has made a false allegation of bullying or harassment for malicious reasons, this will be investigated and dealt with fairly and objectively under Godalming Town Council's Disciplinary Procedure. This will not include ill-founded allegations that were made in good faith.

This is a non-contractual policy.

#### Linked policies and procedures:

- Dignity at Work
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure



## **RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY STATEMENT**

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Godalming Town Council complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS application on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Godalming Town Council is committed to the fair treatment of its staff and potential staff regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A DBS application is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs and discussions will indicate that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.

Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage. We guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Unless the nature of the position allows Godalming Town Council to ask questions about the entire criminal records of applicants, we will only ever ask about “unspent” convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Godalming Town Council will ensure that appropriate professional support is provided for the recruitment process to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We will also ensure that those involved with the recruitment process are provided with guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured conversation takes place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a DBS Check aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing any conditional offer of a position or role.

**Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.** This will depend upon the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

## **RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY**

1. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions, which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order, using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), Godalming Town Council complies fully with the Home Office Revised Code of Practice for Disclosure and Barring Service Registered Persons November 2015 pursuant to section 122 (2) of the Police Act 1997 (available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
2. Godalming Town Council undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
3. Godalming Town Council can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that Godalming Town Council is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended).
4. Godalming Town Council can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
5. Godalming Town Council is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
6. This policy will be made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
7. Godalming Town Council actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
8. Godalming Town Council selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
9. An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
10. Godalming Town Council will ensure that appropriate professional support is provided for the recruitment process to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.
11. Godalming Town Council also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
12. At interview, or in a separate discussion, Godalming Town Council ensures that an open and measured conversation takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might

be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

13. Godalming Town Council makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and makes a copy available on request.
14. Godalming Town Council undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

## **DBS DATA HANDLING POLICY**

### **THE SECURE STORAGE, HANDLING, USE, RETENTION, DISPOSAL OF DISCLOSURES AND DISCLOSURE INFORMATION FROM THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE AND UMBRELLA SERVICE PROVIDER (SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL)**

#### **1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Godalming Town Council complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request and published on the Council's website.

#### **2. STORAGE AND ACCESS**

Certificate information is to be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

#### **3. HANDLING**

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. Godalming Town Council will maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

#### **4. USAGE**

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

#### **5. RETENTION**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, Godalming Town Council does not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. Retention of certificates is in accordance with Godalming Town Council's Document Retention Policy, which states that information relation to employment applications will be retained as follows:

- duration of employment for successful applicant; and
- 1 month after vacancy filled.

If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than the stated periods, Godalming Town Council will consult Surrey County Council as the umbrella service provider for the Town Council and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

## **6. DISPOSAL**

Once the retention period has elapsed, Godalming Town Council will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

Godalming Town Council will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate.

## **FIRST AID POLICY**

### **ORGANISATION AND ARRANGEMENTS**

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 impose a duty on employers to provide first aid support and facilities for their employees. Godalming Town Council considers a high standard of first aid service to be a vital component in maintaining high standards of health and safety at work and has, therefore, adopted the following First Aid Policy.

### **DEFINITIONS**

First Aid is defined in the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 as a case where a person will need help from a medical practitioner or nurse in the event of serious injury or illness; where such help is not available, a First Aider will provide treatment for the purpose of preserving life and minimising the consequences of injury and illness until such help is obtained. It also covers treatment of minor injuries and minor illness, which would otherwise receive no treatment or which do not need treatment by a medical practitioner or nurse.

These regulations apply only to employees although some First Aid provision is made for users of the Council's community buildings.

By agreement with Waverley Borough Council the First Aid procedure for the Town Council offices, at the Municipal Buildings, Godalming, is that of Waverley Borough Council, whose building the Town Council shares. The procedures for the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, Broadwater Park Community Centre and the Old Town Hall (the Pepperpot) are attached as an annexe to this document.

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 place a general responsibility on employers to provide appropriate first aid facilities. First Aid Boxes are provided at all of the Council's premises. In the case of lone workers - if they sustain a minor injury, they might be able to use a first aid box or telephone for help.

### **FIRST AID ORGANISATION**

1. Overall responsibility for fulfilling the first aid policy of the Council rests with the Town Clerk.
2. The person dealing with a first aid incident must inform the Town Clerk or Facilities Supervisor as soon as possible.
3. If an accident involves a member of staff, the Town Clerk or Facilities Supervisor, will inform the next of kin.
4. The Town Clerk will enter into an agreement with Waverley Borough Council for the provision of first aid services within the Town Council offices during office hours.
5. The Support Services Officer will make appropriate arrangements to ensure at least three members of staff have undertaken work place first aid training, including at least one member of the museum staff.
6. The Town Clerk will delegate the procurement of first aid equipment and medical supplies for the Town Council offices and all Town Council premises to the Facilities Supervisor.

7. The Facilities Supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring that the First Aid Boxes at the Town Council offices and the Community Buildings are regularly restocked as necessary.
8. The most senior member of staff present at the time of any accident is to ensure that the Accident Book is completed

### **MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, GODALMING**

In addition to providing its own first aid trained staff, Godalming Town Council also has access by agreement with Waverley Borough Council, to the Waverley's procedures to enable first aid treatment to be administered to staff who are injured or feel unwell during office hours. To summon first aid, dial 01483 523000 (Waverley's internal emergency number) and tell the receptionist what is wrong and where you are. The receptionist will arrange for a First Aider to attend to you very quickly.

A First Aid room is provided in The Burys and is located on the first floor in the Civic Suite corridor, adjacent to the vending machines.

Please note that the first aid room has a combination lock and can therefore only be accessed with a First Aider.

### **GODALMING MUSEUM**

Godalming Town Council will ensure that at least one member of the museum's employed staff have attended a work place first aid training course.

**N.B. An ambulance is required to be summoned in all cases where a casualty loses consciousness for any period.**



Supporting Our Community

## **FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES** **MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS**

Fire in any building is a potential killer. It is important that all staff are familiar with the fire precautions for the areas that they find themselves in while you are at work. The Town Clerk should ensure that all new employees are made aware of the fire precautions and procedures in the Town Council offices on the first day of their employment.

Staff should be aware of the alternative means of escape. If a member of staff is hosting visitors – at a Committee or other meeting, they are to ensure that the fire evacuation information is given out before the meeting commences.

### **Sounding the Alarm**

The alarm will be raised, normally by the continuous ringing of a loud bell. On hearing the alarm, staff are to leave the building immediately. Staff and any visitors are to make their way to the evacuation muster point at the Burys Field via Bridge Street and Wiggins Yard and are to await the instructions of the designated Fire Marshal or the Fire Brigade before returning to the Council Offices.

### **Fire Evacuation Wardens**

The RFO is the Town Council office Fire Evacuation Warden (in the absence of the RFO this role will be undertaken by the Support Services Executive). The Fire Evacuation Warden will ensure the Town Council offices and Council Chamber are empty and report this to the person in charge at the assembly area. Staff are to obey the instructions of Fire Wardens when the fire alarm sounds.

### **Discovering a Fire**

If you discover a fire you should **raise the alarm at once**. There are manual call points (alarm buttons covered by a glass window, also known as “break glasses”) by the front door to the Town Council offices and by the window on the upstairs landing. To raise the alarm break the glass (carefully), this will activate the fire alarm. The Waverley switchboard has the responsibility to summon the fire brigade once the alarm sounds. If safe to do so close all doors and windows and leave the building by the nearest safe route. Once outside, tell the person responsible where the fire you discovered is located.

### **Fire Extinguishers**

Suitable fire extinguishers are located in the Town Council office at the top and at the foot of the staircase. Fire extinguishers are only to be used for small fires, for example a small fire in a waste bin. If you have not used a fire extinguisher before, the time to learn is **not** when there is a fire.

### **Good Housekeeping**

If you see or become aware of any blocked fire exits, potential sources of a fire or anything else which you think may compromise safety in the event of a fire it is your duty to report it, normally to the Facilities Supervisor. If the situation is not resolved quickly, contact Waverley’s Safety and Emergency Planning Adviser on 01483 523480.



## **BOMB THREAT CALL – MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS**

IN THE EVENT THAT YOU RECEIVE A BOMB THREAT CALL PLEASE ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND KEEP THE CALLER TALKING AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

**WHERE IS THE BOMB ?**

**WHAT TIME WILL IT GO OFF ?**

**WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE ?**

**WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS ?**

**WHO ARE YOU ?**

**AT THE END OF THE CALL IMMEDIATELY RING THE EMERGENCY NUMBER 01483 523000 AND REPORT THE INCIDENT. THEN NOTIFY THE TOWN CLERK OR FACILITIES SUPERVISOR**

WRITE DOWN THE EXACT WORDS OF THE MESSAGE.  
RECORD ANYTHING THAT WAS SPECIFIC ABOUT THE CALLER - e.g.

**Calm or excited**

**Male or female**

**Accent or odd language use**

**Old or young sounding**

**Background noise or music**

If you come across a suspect package, parcel or bag etc - please **RING THE EMERGENCY NUMBER 01483 523000 TO REPORT THE PACKAGE. THEN NOTIFY THE TOWN CLERK OR FACILITIES SUPERVISOR - DO NOT ATTEMPT TO OPEN IT YOURSELF.**

## **TERRORIST ACTION BY POST - MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS**

Waverley's internal emergency contact number is 01483 523000

### **The Threat is Minimal**

Terrorist (or other criminal) action intent on causing harm using the postal system is extremely rare and the Town Council is not considered to be an especially vulnerable target. Although there have been incidents in the UK since September 2001, which have been proven criminal hoaxes. Any incident, however, for the sake of the safety of staff, must be treated seriously.

### **What to do if you Receive a Suspicious Communication Through the Post**

The key advice is:

Your suspicions may be aroused particularly through a combination of the following conditions:

- the means of delivery is unexpected;
- the source of the communication is unknown to you or the source cannot be surmised;
- the addressing of the package is unusual;
- the package is discoloured/stained and/or gives off an unidentifiable smell;
- the package has excessive postage;
- there is excessive binding around the package; etc.

Contact **01483 523000** immediately if you receive a letter, package, parcel etc. that appears suspicious.

Having contacted 01483 523000, if practicable, place the suspect article in a bag or container that can be sealed.

Wait for further instructions. The emergency services will be contacted immediately and their advice will be passed on as soon as practicable. Regardless, you will be kept informed of progress.

### **What to do if People have been Potentially Contaminated**

If a package is leaking, has been opened and is found to contain a suspicious substance and people have been potentially contaminated by a powder or a liquid, again contact 01483 523000 and, if practicable, place the suspect article in a bag or container that can be sealed.

Close doors and windows and evacuate the immediate area in which the article has been handled. For staff within the Council Offices, Godalming (other staff locations - see note below), you will be advised almost immediately on making the call to 01483 523000 you will be advised almost immediately where you should assemble, but please note that it is critically important that all staff who have come into contact with the suspicious article should go to the evacuation area and remain in that area until otherwise advised, following receipt of advice from the emergency services.

Put some form of sign on the outside of the door into the evacuated area to ensure that other staff do not inadvertently enter what may be a contaminated area.

Others in adjacent areas may be asked to move from their office accommodation and are to comply immediately with any instruction to leave.

**REMEMBER - if you receive a suspicious letter, package, parcel etc., please contact 01483 523000 immediately**

## **LONE WORKING POLICY & PROCEDURES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

All Town Council staff are at some point lone workers. Staff working at outside locations such as the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, Broadwater Park Community Centre, Pepperpot & Godalming Museum or the Cemeteries may be lone workers by virtue of their isolation. Staff based at the Town Council offices may find themselves the only member of staff in the office from time to time. Several hazards present themselves to staff working alone, ranging from personal accident or a transport breakdown to personal attack.

It is not possible to anticipate every eventuality, therefore this document is only intended as a guide for staff to help them devise safe systems of working for lone working.

A Lone Working Risk Assessment will establish the way in which the Council applies health and safety controls and responsibilities for lone workers, either operating on Council premises or working alone away from the Council. This policy also forms part of the general Health & Safety Policy.

It is recognised that often it is necessary for staff to work alone, and sometimes away from their normal place of work, carrying out site visits, inspections and the like.

The Council as a responsible employer is concerned to take steps to increase the support and protection of its staff whilst working alone and/or away from the office. A Lone Working Risk Assessment will cover any concerns and ways for staff to protect themselves when lone working.

These guidelines attempt to balance the Council's need to carry on its business without causing its staff to be vulnerable to assault or other forms of aggression.

It is expected that through adoption of the following guidelines, the likelihood of incidents can be reduced to a minimum. Regardless, arrangements for support for employees are in place should they be required.

### **LEGISLATION**

The primary requirement of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 imposes a 'duty of care' on organisations for all its employees. This duty is reinforced by various other acts and regulations, such as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR), which stresses the requirements for risk assessments. These 1999 regulations also include further responsibilities for young workers and new or expectant mothers. The same regulations also impose a duty on organisations to exchange health and safety information with contractors, particularly where lone workers are involved. Lone working is also considered in various other forms of health and safety legislation, depending upon the operations in question.

There is no general legal prohibition on working alone but sometimes the law requires that at least two people must be involved in some types of work and specifies the safe system of work to be followed.

The **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** requires employers to assess the risks to health and safety involved with activities at work. This will need to include lone workers.

## DEFINING TERMS

The term *lone working* within the meaning of this policy, applies to persons operating singularly, as given by the following examples:-

- 1 Staff working alone in the Council offices both within and outside *normal working hours*.
- 2 Staff working alone in other Council buildings both within and outside *normal working hours*.
- 3 Staff travelling between the Town Council office and other Council (or Joint Burial Committee) premises or the Town Council's bank.

This policy does not specifically pertain to staff working from home.

## A POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING STAFF

The Town Clerk will endeavour to avoid lone working situations whenever possible. When such working is required The Town Clerk will endeavour to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that lone workers are not placed at any greater risk than other Council workers.

The Town Clerk will positively identify those workers who may be deemed as *lone workers*, operating as such on either a regular or ad hoc basis, these will include all Town Council employees – in the following circumstances:

Early or late workers:	staff who are either the first to come on to the premises in the morning or the last to leave at night.
Staff left alone in the office	Staff left alone, through holiday, sickness or diary commitments of other staff.
Staff in isolated locations:	e.g. the Community Centres.

The Town Clerk will ensure that risk assessments for lone workers are undertaken and endeavour to eliminate, so far as is as reasonably practicable, risks or hazards in such operations. Where such hazards remain, efforts will be made to minimise the risks to lone workers by safe working systems.

The Town Clerk should encourage lone working staff, so far as possible, that in addition to ensuring details of external appointments are recorded in the online diary system, that staff working, unaccompanied away from either the Town council Offices or Museum, informs a colleague before they leave and provide an expected time of return. Additionally, they are to call in to the office on a regular basis.

Managers should ensure that staff working alone and operating sometimes out-of-doors and in dark areas are supplied with appropriate clothing, communication arrangements and torches.

Lone workers must carry their mobile telephone at all times. The telephone need not be Council supplied but the contact number should be made available to the Support Services Executive or the Facilities Supervisor.

The Town Clerk and/or the Facilities Supervisor are responsible for identifying general safety training needs of lone workers and to give guidance to lone workers to enable them to identify hazards and undertake safe working practises for their own well-being.

Lone workers should make themselves aware of all Council operational safety procedures and otherwise comply with all control and reporting requirements established for their own well-being and in compliance with this policy.

Lone workers should report any new or unrecorded hazards or risks to their manager at the first opportunity, to enable managers to assess and initiate appropriate safe working arrangements and amend risk assessment records as required.

Lone workers are required, as specified under the Health and Safety etc. Act 1974, to take all reasonable safety precautions when undertaking their work function and this requirement is especially important when operating alone.

The Council will operate appropriate management systems to ensure that staff regularly working on their own, are monitored and from time to time have a meeting with their manager or other staff, to ensure that they are able to function alone in a satisfactory manner. The Council will also ensure that the well-being of such lone workers is monitored, including their general health, since normal interactive processes may be otherwise limited.

Employees who operate in a lone worker capacity should inform their manager of any change in their personal circumstances, including health, which might have a bearing on their personal safe working arrangements.

The Town Clerk and/or Facilities Supervisor will exchange health and safety procedural arrangements with any contractual workers and their employing organisation in compliance with the MHSWR and other regulations as so required. Such exchanges of health and safety information are crucially important for lone worker operations.

The Town Clerk and Facilities Supervisor delegate to lone workers, including staff working when the building is closed to the public, responsibilities for health and safety matters that remain by law the obligation of Council managers.

## **LONE WORKING PROCEDURES & GUIDANCE**

### **GUIDELINES FOR EARLY AND LATE WORKERS:**

Any member of staff working outside normal working hours, particularly on their own, is at greater risk either from intruders or from personal accident when there is no help available. The best solution is to avoid such lone working, either by home-working or by planned activity involving two or more people.

If it is unavoidable, sensible precautions should be taken:

The Town Clerk, or delegated officer in his/her absence, should be aware that such work is taking place and ensure that staff know of any special arrangements required on entering or leaving the premises and making it secure. When working alone, outside normal office hours, the front door should be fastened on the "night setting". Any callers outside of office hours should be dealt with via the intercom and on no account should the front door be opened to any visitor (unless by prior arrangement). Visitors expecting to attend Council or Committee meetings should be asked to access the Council Chamber via the Waverley main entrance.

If late working the member of staff should, if possible, make the Waverley security staff aware of their presence.

Staff should understand the availability of first aid, which will be limited in these cases, or other emergency arrangements and how to summon help if required.

### **Guidelines for Staff Working Alone during Office Hours:**

If working alone during office hours then on no account should the front door be opened to anyone without first ascertaining, using the intercom, who the visitor is.

If allowing a visitor into the offices then get up and meet the visitor in the entrance hall (in this way the visitor will be unlikely to know that there is no-one else in the office). In no circumstances should you say that you are alone in the office – if necessary indicate that a matter cannot be progressed without reference to the Town Clerk and that the Town Clerk is busy in an important meeting upstairs.

If any visitor makes you uncomfortable, and appears unwilling to leave – then you must leave the building either via the front door or via the Council Chamber (in these circumstances do not worry about whether or not the Chamber is occupied) and make your way to Waverley Reception and ask if a Waverley member of staff will accompany you back to the office.

Any incidence of an unauthorised person gaining access to the Town Council offices via the Council Chamber should be notified to the Town Clerk as soon as possible – the Town Clerk will inform Waverley.

### **Guidelines for Staff Making Site Visits**

Always tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to return.

If you expect to meet someone then leave details of who you expect to meet, when and where at the office. Electronic Diary should be kept up to date with details of any appointments and contact information of the person(s) they are meeting.

### **Guidelines for Staff Working at a Base Other Than the Town Council Office**

As far as possible keep the Town Clerk and/or Facilities Supervisor informed of the hours that you intend to be working.

Always carry your mobile phone and make sure it is useable.

Keep your electronic diary up to date with details of everyone you intend to meet. If showing a prospective user around a community centre then you must arrange to do so when someone else - another member of staff or another user - is on site.

When locking up a Community Centre at the end of a letting ask the user to stay with you until you have secured the premises.

Note that the Town Council does **not** expect you to take any undue risks. While the security of the Town Council's premises is important it is not more important than your safety - if at any time you feel uncomfortable or at risk either leave or do not enter the premises. If possible call another member of staff and ask for assistance - if necessary call the police.

### **Training Requirements**

Employees and others must be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone. Staff will be required to follow the safe working procedures and have awareness of emergency procedures. All employees are required to co-operate with these efforts to ensure safe working and to report any concerns or training needs to their line manager.

## 9. GRAVE PLOTS AT NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY

### Introduction

Burial land is a finite resource and having been opened in 1857, there are now very few inhumation<sup>1</sup> grave spaces remaining in Nightingale Cemetery. Therefore, Officers have been exploring ways of increasing availability within Nightingale Cemetery.

The current rate of burial at Nightingale Cemetery shows an average of five inhumations per annum, although a small number, the wish to be buried in Farncombe close to family connections is important to many parishioners. However, despite the fact that inhumations at Nightingale are restricted to parishioners, the cemetery now has less than 12 months' of supply. As such, Officers wish to offer Members options and possibilities for creating at least a 20-year supply at Nightingale Cemetery.

### Developing a Strategy

In order for the Joint Burial Committee to be able to continue to provide parishioners the option of an inhumation at Nightingale Cemetery, it will need to either create new burial space or reuse existing burial plots within the cemetery.

Both the creation of new plots and/or the reuse of existing burial plots will be challenging. If re-use is deemed the better option, it must be approached in a considered, well-resourced way. This will involve the development of a re-use strategy, requiring careful research and investigations of the existing burial records and cemetery plans before options are able to be fully considered. Once the research and investigations of the existing records has been completed, additional surveys may have to be conducted to confirm which areas of the cemetery would be the most suitable and acceptable areas for consideration for the re-use of graves.

Re-use may be seen as contentious by some people and would need to be carefully communicated to councillors, officers and the public. Therefore, there is a need to:

- have a plan by which to formally consult with councillors, residents and officers, and other stakeholders (including funeral directors);
- have the strategy costed and budgets allocated;
- set out clearly any risks associated with adopting and moving forward with the Strategy

A Cemetery Strategy may, in turn, ensure the burial committee will be able to:

- continue to have burial capacity and thus be able to offer a service to the community;
- maintain revenue to offset costs so as to enable cemetery landholdings to be managed in the long term.

### Types of Burial Plots

There are two types of burial plots in Nightingale Cemetery:

- private graves, meaning that an Exclusive Right of Burial (ERoB) was purchased;

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<sup>1</sup> the action or practice of burying the dead; the fact of being buried

- common graves, the norm for a common grave was that the cost of the interment was paid for by the estate/family of the deceased, but no EROB was purchased, this meant that inhumations of unrelated persons could have been made in the same grave space. Although the concept was that common graves should not have memorials on them, for whatever reason this convention does not seem to have been adhered to and though less frequent than on private graves, some common graves do have a memorial stone above them. If, however, the estate/family of the deceased could not afford the interment, it was paid by the parish and these were known as:
  - paupers' graves, meaning the parish paid for the burial. It is believed that many of those buried in this type of grave were parishioners who died in the Union Workhouse at Guildford and were returned to the parish for burial. There are no memorial stones on the paupers' graves.

What is surprising, when reviewing the burial records for Nightingale Cemetery, is how very few plots are shown to have more than a single inhumation, a sample of 255 plots within the area of the cemetery with the highest concentration of paupers' graves indicates that fewer than 6% have a double inhumation. This would indicate that the custom and practice was that the default position was to prepare graves for a single burial, with the resulting effect being a very inefficient use of the available space.

### Reclamation of Unused Grave Space

Reclamation refers to burial into unused capacity (depth) in graves where the last interment was at least 75 years prior to the new burial. Generally this involves the cancellation of private burial rights where previously held on those graves, and removal of any memorial. Because of the limited depth over existing burials, reclamation often involves only a single new burial per grave.

- Reclamation is also used to refer to burial within private plots previously purchased in reserve where there has been no previous burial and where any rights over that plot have been extinguished.
- Reclamation is also sometimes used to refer to burial over common (public) graves where there is sufficient depth to conduct new burials without disturbance of existing remains.

### Identifying Unused Capacity

#### 1. Unused Capacity Within Common Graves

As there are no exclusive rights in unpurchased graves, local authorities may use any remaining depth in them for further burials at any time. Therefore, an option exists to conduct interments atop existing interments in common graves both within the consecrated and unconsecrated areas.

There are a number of issues associated with this option, the first being whether there would be a demand for this type of grave. It is possible that parishioners would not wish to be buried atop of an unrelated stranger, no matter how long ago that person was buried. However, an alternative viewpoint is this type of burial could be a cheaper option, which could cost less than a cremation, some people may consider it a preferable choice.

The reason the cost would be significantly cheaper is because an EROB is unlikely to be sold with this type of plot (as it would be for single use only). This being the case it would not be the norm to grant permission for a memorial to be installed over the grave. However, an option could be provided to allow the installation of a memorial over a 'Common Grave' for a fixed period of time on the payment of a permit fee. The details of



this type of permit would need to be explored further if Members were minded to consider this option.

The other, and possibly more important, consideration rests on the fact that the viability of this option is dependent upon the depth of the original interment as there is a legal requirement to ensure that all parts of the coffin, in suitable soil conditions, be covered by a minimum of 2ft of soil.

The use of this option, whilst on paper the simplest and potentially most expedient method of increasing capacity, is to a large extent, reliant upon the accuracy of the historic burial records.

## 2. Statutory Powers to Reclaim Space Remaining in Old, Unused Purchased Graves

Grave spaces may exist in Nightingale Cemetery where the ERoB, has existed for at least 75years<sup>2</sup> and not been exercised, i.e. no burials have taken place. This is likely where the exclusive rights in a grave were purchased as a means of reserving a grave for future use and for whatever reason not used. In such cases, a procedure exists for the Burial Authority to reclaim the grave plot. The relevant legislation is set out below:

The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977, Schedule 2 Part 3

1. -(1). This paragraph applies to the following rights and agreements granted or entered into by a burial authority or any predecessor of theirs at a time before 1st April 1974 and to the rights and agreements made or entered into between 31st March 1974 and 28th June 1974 which were validated by article 7 of the Local Authorities etc. (Miscellaneous Provision)(no.3) Order 1974-

- (a) all rights in respect of any grave space granted under a provision falling within paragraph 2(b) of Part 11 in perpetuity, or for a period exceeding 75 years from the date of the grant;
- (b) any other right to place and maintain a tombstone or other memorial so granted; and

-(2). Where any rights described in paragraph 1(1)(a) or (b) have not been exercised, the burial authority may, at any time after the expiration of 75 years beginning with the first day on which any such rights were granted, serve notice on the owner of the rights of their liability to determination under this paragraph, and the rights shall determine by virtue of the notice unless, within 6 months of the date of the service, the owner notifies the authority in writing of his intention to retain them.

It should be noted that due to the changes in the layout of Nightingale Cemetery over the preceding 164 years, finding the exact location of isolated vacant graves is challenging.

## 3. Statutory Powers to Reclaim Space Remaining in Old, Used Purchased Graves

Legislation to extinguish exclusive rights granted in perpetuity, where a burial has already taken place and the grave has remaining space i.e. the grave was originally prepared for a double interment but only one has taken place and the first interment was over 75 years ago, appears to be only applicable to London Boroughs, although further investigation could be undertaken to determine if this remains the case.

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<sup>2</sup> Article 10 and Schedule 2 to the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977, as amended

#### 4. Summary of Options 1 and 2

Option 1, whilst seemingly a simple solution, does pose difficulties due to the uncertainty of the depth of the original interments, especially on the steeper slopes within the cemetery. This in turn carries the risk of inadvertently exposing the remains of a previous burial and the resulting inability to achieve sufficient depth for a new interment and hence the cancelling of a funeral adding further distress to the bereaved.

In the case of Option 2, whilst a basic review of the cemetery plans indicate a very small number of unused plots scattered around the cemetery, recent experience has shown that there tended to be a reason for these plots not being used – either the indicated grave space not having sufficient width due to errors of measurement in preparing other graves in the same row, or the discovery of isolated seams of bargate stone, which, when discovered required a pneumatic drill and many hours of work to create a minimum depth grave space (Members may not be aware that the cemetery is in the shadow of what was a significant local stone quarry – Knoll Quarry).

It is suggested that whilst a full investigation of the cemetery records should be conducted to identify any unused capacity in plots which are recorded as having been prepared as double depth graves, the numbers available are unlikely to achieve significant additional capacity.

#### Reuse of Existing Burial Plots

##### 5. Reuse of Graves Within the Unconsecrated Section

The disturbance of human remains within unconsecrated areas of public cemeteries requires the permission of the principal Secretary of State, which is currently unlikely to be given for the re-use of a grave space.

##### 6. Re-use of Graves Within Consecrated Areas

The general position is that buried human remains may not be disturbed without specific authority. However, *Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 (as amended by section 2 of the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014* allows, with permission from the appropriate Church of England Diocese, for the disturbance of remains in churchyards and other consecrated ground.

The Diocese of Southwark has published advice that there should be an expectation of reuse of graves after 75 years and the Diocese of St Albans has issued a faculty to Bishop Stortford Town Council for re-use of graves within its historic cemetery. Therefore, it would appear that the general principle of grave re-use in consecrated sections of a cemetery is established, although it is the responsibility of each Diocese to set its own guidelines and determine its own criteria. Members will wish to note that discussions with the Diocesan Advisory Committee highlighted that some permissions for re-use of grave spaces have been granted by the Diocese of Guildford, although each case is assessed on its merits.

There is much work that would need to be done before applying for a Faculty to the Diocese, including identifying existing common graves or private graves with expired EROB, the dates of the last interment, whether a memorial stone exists, trees maintenance and establishing protocols, etc. In order to establish much of the required information, a full audit of the historic burial records for Nightingale would need to be conducted with the results being used to create an interpretive map that could be used to assess the viability and feasibility of any potential application for a Faculty from the Diocese of Guildford.

## 7. Lift and Deepen vs Lift and Re-inter

If permission were to be given to reuse existing grave spaces within the consecrated area of the cemetery, then a protocol for the dignified handling of any existing remains and possessions discovered would have to be approved.

There are two existing methods of managing the re-use of graves, the first is 'Lift & Deepen'. This method allows for any remains and possessions discovered during the preparation of the grave to be lifted from the existing position, the grave is then dug to a greater depth than required with the discovered remains replaced in the same grave and then covered over with a minimum of 6 inches of soil. Thereafter the grave space can be used as though it was a new grave. This is a simple system with much merit in that it allows graves to be re-used without having to extensively remap the cemetery.

The second method is 'Lift and Re-inter', with this method any existing remains discovered whilst preparing the grave are removed from the grave and re-buried in a designated burial plot within the same consecrated ground, i.e. the consecrated area of Nightingale Cemetery.

## 8. Summary of Options 4, 5 and 6

Although the House of Commons Briefing Paper No. 04060, 6 June 2017 – Reuse of Graves, shows that the availability of burial space is being kept under review, with the issue last being aired in November 2016,<sup>3</sup> the only significant changes made to the 1857 Burial Act that would allow for the re-use of existing graves relate to burials in churchyards and other consecrated ground. As such, it is the re-use of graves in the consecrated area of Nightingale Cemetery that offers the best hope for parishioners wishing to be buried in Nightingale Cemetery.

At this stage of consideration, Officers would not wish to make any recommendations as to which re-use method would be the better option, as this would, if Members were minded to explore this possibility further, form part of the required considerations with the appropriate authorities.

### Other Options for the Creation of New Capacity

## 9. Use of Footpaths

At some point between 1950 and 1955, the footpaths at Nightingale Cemetery were removed and replaced with earth taken from the Binscombe area during the building of the Binscombe estate. As such, with few exceptions it is difficult to visually identify where these footpaths used to be positioned.

Utilising the historic cemetery maps and plans along with appropriate survey technics it may be possible to identify the location of the original paths.

The re-establishing of some of the original paths may be needed to allow for safe access to any new burial areas that might be opened up for use following the granting of the appropriate permissions.

It is RECOMMENDED that a survey is undertaken to identify the location of the historic pathways in both consecrated and unconsecrated areas of the cemetery and to

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<sup>3</sup> House of Commons Debate 29 November 2016 c1487

determine whether they can be used to create additional grave spaces or whether they would be needed to access new burial plots.

#### 10. Lodge House Garden:

One option could be to reduce the size of Nightingale Lodge garden and utilise the area not designated for the lodge as new burial ground. This has the potential of creating approx. 30 new graves.

This option is achievable although it will require planning consent for change of use from residential grounds to cemetery use and would require negotiations with the current tenant.

#### 11. Summary of Options 9 and 10

Options 9 and 10 could provide additional burial space and indeed similar works did provide some new capacity, the use of the old carriageway. However, the carriageway was a clearly defined area of sufficient width to easily accommodate the length of a grave, whereas the old pathways will be harder to identify and may not have sufficient width to allow for interments in the existing orientation i.e. facing towards Deanery Road. That said it is recommended that the use of old footpaths, especially in the unconsecrated section of the cemetery is fully explored.

#### Commonwealth War Graves

Graves that contain a Commonwealth war burial should not be included in any re-use scheme.

This covers both those graves owned by the Commission on which a standard pattern headstone has been erected and those private graves, owned by the relatives of the deceased war casualty, where a war burial has taken place. The Commission holds records for the latter graves that will assist in identifying their locations within any cemetery.

Notwithstanding the requirements contained in law for the Commission, i.e. the need to serve a notice on the Commission before undertaking any works on a war grave, and its right to object, it is advisable to inform the Commission that all graves containing a war burial will be specifically excluded from any potential scheme.

#### Church of England Faculty

Having identified and detailed the potential area(s) that might create new burial capacity within Nightingale Cemetery, the Joint Burial Committee would need to work with the Diocesan Advisory Committee to submit an application for a Church of England Faculty to gain the required permissions and authorisations.

A Faculty is a species of licence or permission required under Church law for any substantive alterations to church fabric. Faculty approval is required for all works, alterations and additions to parish churches and churchyards, and is also required for any substantial alteration to consecrated land within a municipal cemetery.

Faculty is also required for the re-use or reclamation of graves in consecrated ground. Faculty secures permission to undertake the action stated on the Faculty application, and cannot be taken as blanket approval to apply a particular procedure. So, for example, Faculty to re-use a particular section within a consecrated portion of the cemetery cannot be taken as permission to re-use all graves within the consecrated portion.

Faculty does not override parliamentary statute (or vica versa); s25 of the Burial Act 1857, rather it allows for the removal of remains from one consecrated place of burial to another.

Other operations as relevant to re-use/reclamation may also require permission from the diocesan authorities. Depending on their scope, nature or extent, such operations might include:

- Trial pits and intrusive site investigations.
- Development of new infrastructure such as paths and carriageways
- Development of new burial layouts.
- Development of new forms of memorialisation.

It is therefore essential to maintain good contact with the Diocese throughout the process of planning for re-use and to seek advice on the necessity for any Faculty permission.

Good practice in the matter of applications for any Faculty indicates that full information should be provided, since permission will be granted only to undertake the procedures clearly specified in the application.

The applications should include the following:

- The address of the site, and its date of opening,
- A justification for the intention to introduce re--use, including the estimated capacity of the cemetery,
- A site map with the consecrated sections clearly indicated, and the areas for intended re-use highlighted,
- Indicative photographs of the proposed section,
- A date range for the burials where re-use is intended.
- Summary of public notification strategy and planned consultation exercises with clergy, funeral directors and the public,
- A summary statement of your memorial strategy,
- A clear statement of the intent to reinter remains in consecrated ground,
- Copy of the re-use protocol.

The diocese may grant Faculty unconditionally, or require that certain conditions be met. The provision of full information at the outset gives diocesan authorities confidence that re-use will take place in a legal, ethical and fully transparent manner. The types of requirement the diocese may specify include a set notification procedure or it may require that only graves of a certain age be included in the re-use programme.

The principles of local Faculty notifications follow the need to ensure sufficient time for the lodging of objections, and the placement of notices at the areas due to be affected by the Faculty application.

The Church regards the respectful and dignified treatment of human remains as paramount, and would require applications for Faculty to re-use graves to demonstrate due sensitivity.

### Sensitivity

Adverse publicity may occur often as a result of misinformation or misinterpretation. There may be a general view that the introduction of re-use is disrespectful. As such, it is important that an open and transparent process should include bringing the media (both traditional printed and social media) early into the information process, ensuring they are provided with all the appropriate facts. At the early stages the key fact being that;

- Godalming Joint Burial Committee, on behalf of Godalming Town Council and Busbridge Parish Council, does have the power to provide new burial land, but does not have statutory duty to do so.

- With options for potential new burial sites constrained by both availability and affordability, the burial committee has an obligation to manage its existing cemeteries to the best of its ability so as to continue to provide the option for burial in Godalming for as long as possible.
- The Godalming Joint Burial Committee understands that some people may never like the concept of re-use, in the same way that some people will never like the idea of cremation. These are personal preferences and the choice of whether to accept a previously used grave is also a personal choice.
- Whilst currently less common in the consecrated areas of public cemeteries, the re-use of graves in the consecrated churchyards of the Church of England is an established process.

### Administration

Although Godalming Town Council provides the day to day operational support for the Joint Burial Committee, the degree of research and investigation needed for an application for a Faculty will require the Joint Burial Committee to provide supplementary project resource. As custodians of the burial records, Godalming Town Council has the burial registers, records of purchased graves, records of issue of deeds of EROB and cemetery plans for Nightingale Cemetery from 1857. As Members might appreciate, many of the original records are both delicate and irreplaceable and as such any research requiring access to the original burial records must be conducted with care and due regard for the continued preservation of the records.

Whilst at this stage the cost associated with conducting the required research and investigations in order to work up an appropriate Faculty application is unknown, any monies expended in the creation of additional burial space should be viewed as a 'spend to save' investment. Figure 1 provides an indication of the general process requirements to be in a position to create new capacity within Nightingale Cemetery.

### Recommendation

1. Members to resolve to agree that the Clerk should engage the services of a suitable organisation to investigate the Nightingale Cemetery burial records to determine:
  - a. The location of private and common graves indicating on a plan of suitable scale:
    - i. the common graves within the consecrated portion of the cemetery;
    - ii. grave spaces with interments less than 75 years of age;
    - iii. Private graves where the EROB is older than 75 years and has not been exercised
    - iv. the presence of memorials on identified graves;
    - v. the presence of trees and significant shrubs over identified graves; and
    - vi. Graves of national or local significance, including Commonwealth War Grave Commission graves.
2. Members to resolve to agree that utilising the information gathered the Clerk should engage with the Diocesan Advisory Committee to establish appropriate protocols and procedures in support of a Faculty application to reuse specific identified grave spaces within the consecrated portion of Nightingale Cemetery.
3. Members to resolve to agree that the Clerk should present the outcomes of recommendations 1 and 2 above in order for the Godalming Joint Burial Committee to determine whether an application for a Faculty should be applied for.
4. Members to resolve to approve expenditure of up to £10,000, to be taken from the EMR Cemeteries, which currently stands at £58,883.

## General Process Requirements

<b><i>Audit &amp; Plan Ahead</i></b>		
Audit available space – by type of grave and cemetery area.i.e consecrated unconsecrated	Consider data projections for burial demand	
Start to plan ahead with estimated timescales, consider resource and staffing implications.		
<b><i>Consider Diocesan Matters</i></b>		
Confirm consecrated areas, initiate discussions with Diocese	Initiate Faculty application for advance work if required.	
<b><i>Research for General Cemetery Strategy</i></b>		
<b><i>Map out key Characteristics</i></b>	<b><i>Below ground assessment: Available Depth</i></b>	<b><i>Above ground assessment</i></b>
Map: Age/type (lawn/kerb)/ Consecrated/Purchased & Common/War Grave/Cremated Remains/Memorial etc	Review registers for recorded depths of last burials	Check and listed bldg. / funerary monuments.
	Conduct site investigations:- rodding and or trials digs	Check TPO status/ Wooded Hillside Policies
<b><i>Age Structure</i></b>	Correlate records against site investigations. Characterise depth available	<b><i>Practical constraints</i></b>
Conduct general review of records		Size of plots, ability to accurately identify plots
Check existing electronic records and digital filtering/sorting and/or sampling sufficient for requirement	Check confirm on general ground conditions (trial dig)	
Understand age structure of Common/purchased sections		
<b><i>Consultations &amp; Communications</i></b>		
Initiate dialogue with Funeral Directors, faith groups, and other stakeholders.		
Develop and follow formal consultation programme, including stakeholder and residents		
<b><i>Develop and Adopt General Cemetery Strategy</i></b>		
Identify potential for developing burial capacity on a section by section, year by year approach.		
Map out on a section by section basis short mid and long term	Identify risks and opportunities. Develop an outline 'Cost Plan'	Consult upon Strategy, Scrutiny (including legal) Formally adopt
<b><i>Conservation Management Planning</i></b>		
Desktop review/ registers/archives	Assessment of amenity use	Habitat survey
	Review maintenance practices	Protected Species Survey
		General tree survey
Cultural significant research	Condition and specialist surveys if required	Review of tree management
Monument/architectural surveys	Statement of Significance	
Assess risks & opportunities	CMP aims & objectives	
Set out Management Prescriptions Action Plan		
<b><i>Prepare for Re-Use</i></b>		
Set up Admin Process/Records Check/Compile List of Graves Affected/Commence Extinguishing of Rights (Notifications) /Record Monuments / Prepare new Burial Records / Plan Infrastructure / Train Operatives / Prepare Info for FD's & Masons/ Initiate & Adopt any new Rules and Regulations/Agree Code for memorials etc		
Notification Periods		
Re-Use		

Figure 1.

## GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

Disclosure by a Member<sup>1</sup> of a disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration at a meeting (S.31 (4) Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Godalming Members' Code of Conduct).

As required by the Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Godalming Members' Code of Conduct, **I HEREBY DISCLOSE**, for the information of the authority that I have [a disclosable pecuniary interest]<sup>2</sup> [a non-pecuniary interest]<sup>3</sup> in the following matter:-

**COMMITTEE:**

**DATE:**

**NAME OF COUNCILLOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the form below to state in which agenda items you have an interest.

Agenda No.	Subject	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Non-Pecuniary Interest	Reason

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dated** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> "Member" includes co-opted member, member of a committee, joint committee or sub-committee

<sup>2</sup> A disclosable pecuniary interest is defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) regulations 2012/1464 and relate to employment, office, trade, profession or vocation, sponsorship, contracts, beneficial interests in land, licences to occupy land, corporate tenancies and securities

<sup>3</sup> A non-pecuniary interest is defined by Section 5 (4) of the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.