

Galleywood Parish Council

The Keene Hall, Watchhouse Road, Galleywood, Chelmsford CM2 8PT



Members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend an **Annual Parish Council Meeting** on **16 May 2024** at 7.00pm in Lodge Room, The Keene Hall, Watchhouse Road, Galleywood CM2 8PT for the purpose of transacting the following business. Members of the press and public are welcome to attend.

K Wilde
Mrs Kelly Wilde
Clerk to Galleywood Parish Council
1 May 2024

Councillors: G Bonnett, R Hyland, A McQuiggan, N Paul, J Potter, G Smith, C Shreeve, S Troop (Chairman), and B Woolward.

ANNUAL COUNCIL AGENDA **This meeting will be recorded.**

- FC24-764 Election of the Chairman**
To receive nominations and elect a Chairman for the ensuing year.
- FC24-765 Declaration of Acceptance of Office**
To receive Chairman's signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- FC24-766 Apologies for Absence**
To receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence.
- FC24-767 Election of Vice Chairman**
To receive nominations and elect a Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.
- FC24-768 Declaring of Interests and Dispensations**
a. Members are reminded to review and update their declaration of interest forms.
b. Members must not participate in any discussion on the matter in which they have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other Pecuniary Interest.
- FC24-769 Public Participation Session with respect to items on the agenda**
To allow up to 15 minutes for members of the public to make representations.
- FC24-770 Confirmation of Minutes** (herewith)
To agree and sign the minutes of the meetings held on:
a. Annual Parish Meeting held on 31 May 2023.
b. Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 April 2024.
c. Council Meeting held on 18 April 2024.
- FC24-771 Reports**
To receive reports from:
a. The Clerk (herewith)
b. Essex County Councillor and Chelmsford City Councillors (to follow)
c. Representatives from The Keene Hall and Galleywood Heritage Centre (to follow)

- d. Councillor Monthly Surgery 27 April 2024, Councillors Paul, and Troop (to follow)

ANNUAL PROCEDURES

- FC24-772 Scheme of Delegation (herewith)**
To review and resolve (no amendments)

- FC24-773 Policies and Procedures (herewith)**
To review and resolve:
- a. Code of Conduct (no amendments)
 - b. Complaints Procedure (no amendments)
 - c. Press and Media (no amendments)
 - d. To note that all other policies due to be reviewed will be done so at a future meeting.

- FC24-774 Terms of Reference (herewith)**
To review and approve for all committees:
- a. Annual Parish Meeting (amended)
 - b. Finance and Resources Committee (amended)
 - c. Finance and Resources Working Party (amended)
 - d. Personnel Committee (amended)
 - e. Personnel Sub Committee (no amendments)
 - f. Planning and Highways Committee (amended)
 - g. Youth Club Sub Committee (no amendments)

FC24-775 To appoint members to serve on Committees and Outside Bodies.

Members have expressed a wish to serve on committees as follows:

a. Finance and Resources Committee

Cllrs: Bonnett, Hyland, McQuiggan, Paul, Shreeve, Smith, Troop (7)

To elect seven members, a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

(Elected members only to vote on appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman)

b. Planning and Highways Committee

Cllrs: Bonnett, McQuiggan, Paul, Potter, Smith, Troop, Woolward (7)

To elect seven members, a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

(Elected members only to vote on appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman)

c. Personnel Committee

To elect four members, a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

(Membership shall consist of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council, the Chairman of Planning and Finance and Resources committees. Elected members only to vote on appointment of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.)

d. Personnel Sub Committee

To elect three members who are current members of the Personnel Committee.

e. Youth Club Sub Committee

Cllrs: Hyland, McQuiggan, Paul, Troop (4)

To elect four members.

- f. Trustees to the Keene Hall (4) - 4-year term
To note that Cllrs: McQuiggan, Paul, Shreeve and Troop are current representatives until May 2027.
- g. Trustees to the Galleywood Heritage Centre (3) - two-year term
Cllrs: McQuiggan, Paul (2)

To elect two members. (Cllr Troop is a current representative until May 2025)
- h. Galleywood Infant School (1) - 4-year term
To note that Cllr McQuiggan is the current representative until May 2026.
- i. Public Transport Representative ECC (1) - yearly term
Cllr: (0)

To elect one member.
- j. The Galleywood Common Liaison Group (1) - yearly term
Cllr: Hyland (1)

To elect one member.
- k. Chelmsford Association of Local Councils and National Association of Local Councils Representative (2) - yearly term
Cllrs: Hyland, Paul (2)

To elect two members.
- l. Larger Local Councils Forum –
Cllr: Hyland (1)

Any councillor can attend.

FC24-776 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
To note these will be reviewed at a future meeting

FC24-777 General Powers of Competence
To note that Galleywood Parish Council meets the criteria specified in [The Parish Councils \(General Power of Competence\) \(Prescribed Conditions\) Order 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) paragraph 2, and resolves in accordance with section 1 to adopt this power.

FC24-778 Inventory of Land and Assets (herewith)
To review and resolve.

FC24-779 Insurance (herewith)
To note the Council's arrangements for insurance cover for 2024-2025.

FC24-780 Subscriptions 2024-2025
To review and resolve.

- a. EALC & NALC Membership - £947.81
- b. Data Protection Registration - £40.00
- c. RCCE Membership - £72.75 + VAT
- d. SLCC Membership - £348.00

- FC24-781 Adequate and Effective Systems (herewith)**
To review and resolve that the following be approved:
- a. The effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit.
 - b. The effectiveness of the system of Internal Control.
 - c. Statement of Internal Control
- FC24-782 RBS Year end 2023/2024**
To note the Year End closedown 2023/2024 was carried out remotely on 2 April 2024.
- FC24-783 Internal Audit 2023/2024 (herewith)**
To receive the Internal Auditor's Report following the Year End Internal Audit carried out on 22 April 2024.
- FC24-784 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/2024 (AGAR) (herewith)**
- a. Annual Governance Statement
To consider and recommend Council approve the Annual Governance Statement. (Section 1 of the AGAR) at an extra ordinary Council meeting on 4 June 2024.
 - b. Accounting Statements
To consider and recommend Council approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2023/2024. (Section 2 of the AGAR) at an extra ordinary Council meeting on 4 June 2024.
 - c. Notice of Public Rights
To note that the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of the unaudited AGAR will be announced on the 10 June 2024.
- FC24-785 Internal Audit 2024/2025 (herewith)**
To consider the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2024/2025 and for a subsequent three years as outlined in the report provided

The next Council Meeting is on Thursday 18 July 2024 at 7pm

**GALLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE HERITAGE CENTRE, GALLEYWOOD
on WEDNESDAY 31 May 2023**

6.00pm – Exhibition: 7.00pm – Formal Meeting

Formal acceptance will take place at the Annual Parish Meeting 2024

Present:

Councillors: Cllr R Hyland, A McQuiggan, N Paul, J Potter, S Troop (Chairman)

In attendance: Clerk and Admin Assistant

Public: 16

Councillor Troop welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced her fellow Councillors.

Thanks were given to the local community groups and organisations for providing their information stands, to the Galleywood Women's Institute for serving the refreshments, to the Parish Council and Heritage Centre staff for the meeting preparations.

Thanks, were also provided to the children of St Michaels Junior School who took part in designing the front cover of the Spring 2023 edition of the Grapevine, to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. The competition winner was awarded a certificate and gift.

The Parish Council have organised a Storytelling Event on 1st June, at Twitten Green together with Play in the Park on 15th August at Chelmer Park and 17th August at Jubilee Park. Both events have been sponsored by the Council and are free for all to attend. A litter pick has also been arranged for 16th September, volunteers to meet at the library at 10am.

The opportunity was given to those in attendance to view the many display stands and speak with the organisations about their individual events, both before and after the meeting.

The Annual Report for 2022/23 had been provided.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Shreeve, G Smith and B Woolward.

2. Acceptance of Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 5 May 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes from the meeting held on 5 May 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Guest Speakers:

- Kirstie Orton and children - St Michael's Junior School
- Donna Price - Galleywood Social Club

The Chairman thanked all speakers on the wonderful contributions they have made to the Galleywood community.

4. To receive the Annual Report for 2022/23

RESOLVED to accept the Annual Report for 2022/23.



5. Questions from residents

Q1. How much does it cost to join the Galleywood Social Club per year?

A. The Social Club replied by stating £25 and £15 for over 65s.

6. Chairman's Closing Remarks

We hold a Parish Council surgery on the last Saturday of the month at 10am in the library, please come and take these opportunities to meet our Councillors and talk about what is going on in and around Galleywood. A meeting room will soon be available at the Parish Council, in Keene Hall, to allow visitors to be welcomed downstairs. Please feel free to contact the Clerk and Admin Assistant should any help or advice be required; the Council website also has a whole host of information.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. Once again thanks were provided to the Galleywood Women's Institute for serving the refreshments, the local club and organisations for their information stands, the speakers, Parish Council and Heritage Centre staff. Surplus Kings Coronation mugs were available for attendees to take one home if they wished.

There being no further public business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.30pm.

Signed Chairman

Date:



**GALLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE KEENE HALL, GALLEYWOOD
on THURSDAY 11 APRIL 2024**

6.00pm – Exhibition: 7.00pm – Formal Meeting

Formal acceptance will take place at the next Full Council Meeting

Present:

Councillors: Cllr R Hyland, A McQuiggan, N Paul, J Potter (Vice Chairman), C Shreeve, B Woolward

In Attendance : Admin Assistant

Public : 42

1. Welcome by the Chairman

Councillor Potter apologised for the absence of the Chairman of the Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced her fellow Councillors and staff members.

Thanks were given to the local community groups and organisations for providing their information stands. The opportunity was given to those in attendance to view the displays stands and speak with the organisations about their individual events, both before and after the meeting, explaining that this year the Annual Meeting was focusing on children and the youth services.

Thanks, were also given to the Galleywood Women's Institute for serving the refreshments, to the Parish Council and Keene Hall staff for the meeting preparations.

The Annual Report for 2023/24 had been provided at the meeting giving the opportunity for those in attendance to read.

The Parish Council have organised a Storytelling Event on 1st August, at Twitten Green together with Play in the Park on 30th July at Chelmer Park and 31st July at Jubilee Park. All three events have been sponsored by the Parish Council and are free for all to attend.

2. Photographic Competition

The winners of the 'My Galleywood ' Photography competition were announced and prizes together with certificates were awarded. Thanks was given to Mike Bacon and the small team of experienced members of U3A photography group who judged the competition.

3. Guest Speakers

- Kirstie Orton from St Michaels Junior School



- Jayne Owles from Galleywood Youth Football Club and John Gray from Galleywood Cricket Club

The Vice Chairman thanked all speakers for their talks and contributions made.

4. To receive the Annual Report for 2023/24

The Annual Report for 2023/24 had been circulated to all households via Grapevine in the Spring term.

RESOLVED to accept the Annual Report for 2023/24.

5. Questions from residents

Q1. Why does The Keene Hall not recycle?

A. Cllr Paul addressed the room as Chairman of The Keene Hall on this matter. It was explained that provisions are not in place for separate recycling and that The Keene Hall have just one bin that is emptied by the City Council. A request would be made to Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) to consult with the City Council to support this matter and recycle where possible.

Action: Cllr Paul and Cllr Potter to follow up on this matter

Q2. Concern over missing kerbstones on Pyms Road?

A. Cllr McQuiggan explained that there have been lots of maintenance needs in Galleywood and the focus had previously been on potholes. With effect from April 6th reports on can be made online to Highway at Essex County Council, or by contacting ECC Cllr McQuiggan directly, of all kerb stone issues. Once priorities have been established by Highways, repairs will take place within 6 to 8 weeks.

Q3. Why were the grant payments reduced in 2023/2024?

Cllr Paul explained that the Finance Committee considered the overall expenditure of the Council when reviewing the grant requests. It was unfortunate that the grants had to be reduced this year, however due to inflation costs, the committee had no choice. It was a difficult decision to make, and each member was disappointed at having to make these reductions. All grant applications were trimmed by a similar percentage, to ensure that all were treated fairly and equally.

6. Chairman's Closing Remarks

A Parish Council surgery is held on the last Saturday of the month at 10am in the library, please take these opportunities to meet our Councillors and talk about what is going on in and around Galleywood.

Please feel free to contact the Clerk and Admin Assistant should any help or advice be required; the Council website also has a whole host of information.



Cllr Potter closed the meeting by once again thanking the speakers, Staff, and residence of Galleywood in attending the meeting, and provided further opportunity for those in attendance to come and speak with the Councillors whilst enjoying refreshments.

There being no further public business to be transacted, the meeting was closed at 7.50pm.

Signed Chairman

Date:



GALLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
 HELD AT THE KEENE HALL – LODGE ROOM – GALLEYWOOD
 on **THURSDAY 18 April 2024** at 7.00pm
 Formal acceptance will take place at the next Council Meeting

PRESENT

Councillors: R Hyland, A McQuiggan, N Paul, J Potter, C Shreeve, and S Troop (Chairman)
 In attendance: Clerk

FC24-747 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED that an apology of absence be accept for Cllr: Bonnett, Smith and Woolward.

FC24-748 Declaring of Interests and Dispensations

Cllr R Hyland declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to item 24-761 on the agenda.

Cllr A McQuiggan declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to item 24-761a on the agenda.

FC24-749 Public Participation Session with respect to items on the agenda

There were none.

FC24-750 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2024 be a true and accurate account of the proceedings of the meeting and were signed.

FC24-751 Clerk's Report

Members noted the Clerk's report on:

- **Community Special Constables**
Ongoing publicity using the Parish Council website, social media, and noticeboards.
- **Training**
Calendar available on SharePoint for councillors Training Available from EALC– Clerk to be advised of any training needs.
- **Office Communication**
Regularly sent out to members, items relating to Galleywood.
- **Watchhouse Shops**
CHP have inspected the trees and confirmed satisfactory condition.
CHP building surveyor met with Councillors, inspected the paving area, highlighting defected areas for repairing.
- **Jubilee Park**
CCC had met with Councillors and agreed site of three benches.
- **YMCA**
Signed SLA returned to YMCA.
- **The Spinney**
Communication sent to TEG. They will invoice in due course.
- **Public Toilets**
Deep cleaning took place 25.03.2024.



- **Community Pantry**
Meeting booked for 14.05.2024 to meet with CHP and resident at Watchhouse Shops.
Councillors welcome to attend.
- **New Defibrillator**
Electrician arranged to quote for site at Watchhouse bus shelter.

FC24-752 Essex County Council and Chelmsford City Council Report

- Members received a written report from Chelmsford City Councillor Hyland
- Members received a verbal report from Chelmsford City Councillor Potter
- Members received a verbal report from Essex County Councillor McQuiggan

FC24-753 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

- Members received a written report on The Keene Hall from Councillor Paul
- Members received a written report on The Heritage Centre from Councillor Paul

FC24-754 Committee, Sub Committee and Working Party Meetings

Members noted the following meetings had been held and draft minutes had been circulated to all members.

- Personnel - 14 March 2024
- Finance and Resources - 28 March 2024
- Planning and Highways - 2 April 2024

FC24-755 Payroll Services

Members reviewed and considered the payroll services report.

RESOLVED that further information be sought and deferred to a future meeting.

FC24-756 D-Day commemoration

Members noted that the schedule would be circulated by email to all members once received from Rev Cattle.

FC24-757 Assets of Community Value – Removal from list - Galleywood Library

Members considered the notification received from Chelmsford City Council.

RESOLVED to reapply for an Asset of Community Value status for the Galleywood Library.

Action – Clerk to check with CCC to understand what are currently registered.

FC24-758 Community Ownership Fund – Round 4

Members considered applying for an Expression of Interest, which opens late May 2024.

RESOLVED that an informal meeting take place in May.

FC24-759 Essex Village of the Year and nominations for all the Rural Community Awards

Members considered entering and noted nominations close on 3 June 2024.

RESOLVED that an informal meeting take place in May.

FC24-760 Policies

Members reviewed the Document Retention and Disposal Policy (amended)

Resolved that further amendments were necessary and deferred to a future meeting.

20.35pm Cllr Hyland left the meeting



FC24-761 Planning Applications

Members considered the following application(s) received from Chelmsford City Council and submitted comments by return

- a. **23/05267/TPO** - Land Southeast of 21 Watchouse Road Galleywood Chelmsford
T1 Mature Oak- 4m crown reduction.
T2 twin stem Oak (described as two different trees in the arb report)- Reduction of 2m.
RESOLVED that Galleywood Parish Council had no objection to this application.
- b. **24/00404/FUL** - Sheringham Birches Walk Galleywood Chelmsford
Garage conversion including raising roof, replacement of conservatory with habitable room, single storey extension replacing conservatory, new pergola structure and pitched roof detached garage.
RESOLVED that Galleywood Parish Council had no objection to this application. (one abstained)

20.47pm Cllr Hyland returned to the meeting

FC24-762 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED to exclude the Press and Public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following item contains confidential information.

FC24-763 London Bridge

(to follow)

RESOLVED that this be deferred to a future meeting.

There being no further public business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm.

Signed Chairman

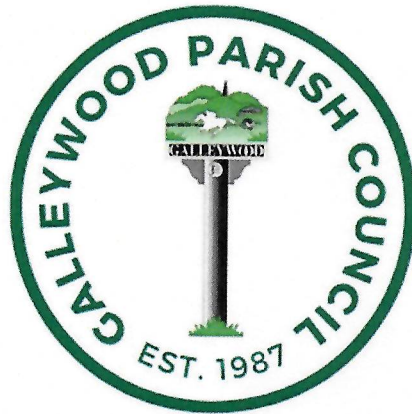
Date:



Clerk's Report - Full Council 16 May 2024

Item	Action Taken and outcome	Date Note Closed
Community Special Constables	Ongoing publicity using the Parish Council website, social media, and noticeboards.	Ongoing
Training	Calendar available on SharePoint for councillors Training Available from EALC — Clerk to be advised of any training needs.	Ongoing
Office Communication	Regularly sent out to members, items relating to Galleywood.	Ongoing
Watchouse Shop	Work commencing 01.05.2024. All areas identified as a trip hazard including various block paving, hazardous corners of the greenery areas (x4) and drainage area will be attended to and approximate duration of works is likely to be around 14 working days.	
Events – D-Day	20.04.2024 Order of service circulated to members.	16.05.2024
Community Pantry	14.05.2024 Meeting to be held with CHP /Resident and Cllrs.	
ECC Public Health Bids Grants Programme	10.04.2024/30.04.2024 circulated Expression of Interest form for completion by members to aid Clerk in submitting. – No response received. Form therefore not completed.	
Assets of Community Value	Need to resubmit to ECC with signed end of year accounts in June 2024. 26.04.2024 requested CCC what are currently registered. – Awaiting response	
Informal Meetings	30.04.2024 requested availability for meetings to be arranged for Cllrs to discuss Community Ownership Fund and Essex Village of the Year nominations. - Awaiting responses	
"	25.04.2024 Circulated the revised Action Plan and requested availability for meeting to be arranged for Cllrs to discuss further. - Awaiting responses	
Internal Audit	22.04.2024 Completed	16.05.2024

24-771a



Scheme of Delegation

	Date	Minute Reference	Amended
Adopted:	April 2021	FC21-273	
Reviewed Annually:	April 2022	FC22-437	No
	April 2023	FC23-589	No
	May 2024	FC24-772	No
Next Review	May 2025		

The Keene Hall, Watchouse Road, Galleywood, Essex CM2 8PT

Introduction

Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides:

- That a Council may delegate its powers (except those incapable of delegation) to a committee or the Clerk
- A Committee may delegate its powers to the Clerk
- The delegating body may exercise Powers that have been delegated

Any delegation to a Committee or the Clerk shall be exercised in compliance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, any other policies or conditions imposed by the Parish Council and within the law.

In an emergency the Clerk is empowered to carry out any function of the Parish Council.

Where the Clerk is contemplating any action under delegated powers, which is likely to have a significant impact in a particular area, they should also consult Members and must ensure that they obtain the appropriate legal, financial, and other specialist advice before action is taken.

1. Extent of Delegation

- 1.1 All delegated functions shall be deemed to be exercised on behalf of and in the name of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 The Clerk will exercise these powers in accordance with:
 - Approved budgets
 - The Parish Council's Standing Orders
 - The Parish Council's Financial Regulations
 - The Parish Council's adopted Policies and Procedures
 - All statutory common law and contractual requirements
- 1.3 The Clerk may do anything pursuant to the delegated power or duty which it would be lawful for the Parish Council to do including anything reasonably implied or incidental to that power or duty
- 1.4 In addition, the Clerk is authorised to undertake the day-to-day administration of the Parish Council to include:
 - To take action on any issue of such urgency, that it cannot wait until the next Parish Council meeting (or meetings are temporarily suspended). If circumstances permit, the Clerk would normally be expected to consult the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council
 - To incur expenditure on behalf of the Parish Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £500 (Financial Regulation 4.1)
 - To take any action regarding minor repairs (up to a cost of £500)

2. Planning Delegation

- 2.1 Planning applications received by the Clerk will be provided to Councillors using the Parish Council's 365 software
- 2.2 Comments are to be submitted directly to the Clerk
- 2.3 Where there are no comments arising from a joint decision from Councillors, the Clerk shall be delegated to inform the Planning Authority, Chelmsford City Council within the time allocated
- 2.4 Delegated decisions will be reported to and recorded in the minutes of the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting

3. Delegation – Limitations

- 3.1 All decisions taken under delegated authority will be in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation.
- 3.2 All decisions will be reported to the first appropriate Parish Council or Committee meeting.
- 3.3 The Parish Council may delegate the power to make individual decisions on individual items to the Clerk and its Committees as and when appropriate.



Code of Conduct

	Date	Minute Reference	Amended
Adopted:	Sept 2020	FR20-77c	New
Reviewed Annually:	Sept 2021	Fc21-333	Yes
	Oct 2022	FC22-500	Yes
	May 2023	FC23-609	No
	May 2024	FC24-773a	No
Next Review	May 2025		

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

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

General Principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors, and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles. Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

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

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

In undertaking my role:

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

Application of the Code

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

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

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

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

- At face-to-face meetings
- At online or telephone meetings
- In written communication
- In verbal communication
- In non-verbal communication
- In electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments

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

The Monitoring Officer (Chelmsford City Council) has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct and you are encouraged to seek advice from them on any matters that may related to the Code of Conduct. Parish Councillors are encouraged to seek advice from the Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out the obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of a councillor. Should this conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

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

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

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

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously.

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

2. Bullying, harassment, and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

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

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

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

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender

reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

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

3. Impartiality of officers of the council

As a councillor:

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

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

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

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

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

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

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

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

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

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute. You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a councillor:

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

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others.

However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

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

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

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

Examples include:

- Office support
- Stationery
- Equipment such as phones and computers
- Transport
- Access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

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

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a councillor:

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

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

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

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

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

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority.

9. Interests

As a councillor:

9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

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

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

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

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

10. Gifts and Hospitality

As a councillor:

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to

your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, contact the Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendix A

The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

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

Integrity

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

Objectivity

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

Accountability

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

Openness

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

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

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

Appendix B Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer (Chelmsford City Council) the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

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

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

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

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest.

4.	Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in Table 1 , you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion, or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest,' you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
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Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

5.	Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in Table 2), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest,' you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
6.	Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you

	have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest,' you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
7.	Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects –
	a. your own financial interest or well-being; b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in Table 2 .
	You must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.
8.	Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) affects the financial interest or well-being:
	a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and; b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest
You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.	
If it is a 'sensitive interest,' you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.	

Table 1
Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation	Any Employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillors during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council - (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.

Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge) - (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where - (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either - (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

*'director' includes a member of the committee or management of an industrial and provident society

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

Table 2
Other Registerable Interests

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

Appendix C

The Committee on Standards in Public Life

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

The recommendations cover:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Persons.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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