



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of Flitwick Town Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm

Present:

Cllr A Snape – Chairman
Cllr J Gleave
Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr C Thompson
Cllr R Wilshire
Cllr T Connell
Cllr J Roberts
Cllr T Harald
Cllr D Toinko
Cllr T Parsons
Cllr M Platt

Cllr H Townsend – Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Member

Also present:

Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO

Carly Ruffhead – Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets
Nigel Cross – Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets

Members of the public – 2 (1 via virtual access).

5512. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Badham (work) and Cllr Hodges (holiday).

5513. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.
- (b)** Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

5514. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor referred to former Councillor Russ Shaw's resignation as a Councillor for Flitwick (Part) East and thanked him for the work he had done on the Council. The casual vacancy was being advertised and two candidates were interested. The Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor would meet with the candidates with a view to making any recommendations for co-option at the October meeting.

The Town Mayor had attended the following civic events:

- Flitwick Classic Car Show

- Flitwick Football Centre 3G Pitch Opening
- Lord-Lieutenant's Coffee Morning
- Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets Ceremonial Event
- 'Flitwick: A Living History' event

The Town Mayor congratulated Cllr Blazeby on his work for the 'Flitwick: A Living History' event the previous week. He mentioned that this event was very well supported by the community.

The Deputy Mayor had attended the topping-out ceremony and the first Steering Group for the Steppingley Road Care Facility. He asked Members to forward any questions or feedback on the development to him. Other Members were welcome to attend future meetings.

5515. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Cllr Townsend reported that the Ward Members were still not receiving the Council agendas.

Action: Deputy Town Clerk

Transport Interchange

Cllr Townsend explained that a further issue had been identified with Stand B by the bus companies. Further work would be undertaken to resolve this issue before Grant Palmer or Stagecoach would utilise the bus interchange. Works were planned to commence in mid-October, including changed routes for crossings, which would be followed by a 42 day notice period.

Traffic Lights

Members were informed that the two sets of traffic lights – gas works by Cadent on Steppingley Road and roadworks for the Aldi Site (Ampthill Road) – would be gone soon.

The Avenue

The Avenue would be resurfaced in November with an intended timeframe of 2 weeks to complete the work.

Concrete – School Buildings

Cllr Toinko referred to a recent social media post from Cllr Adams regarding school safety concerns due to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and asked Cllr Townsend for an update on the current situation in Central Bedfordshire District. Members were advised that the Assets Team at CBC had confirmed that all maintained schools within the District had no issues. Cllr Townsend said that so far, there were also no issues with RAAC identified at any academy school, but not all responses were back yet.

Cllr Wilsmore asked if CBC would be liable for repairs if the concrete issue was in an academy run school. Cllr Townsend did not know the answer to this question, but she would find out and report back.

The Chairman requested for an opportunity for Town Councillors tour the new crematorium site in Steppingley and Cllr Townsend agreed to investigate.

5516. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

5517. INVITED SPEAKER

No invited speaker.

5518. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No questions.

5519. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. **For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on Tuesday 15th August 2023, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.**

This item was discussed under Exempt.

- b. **For Members to receive and consider resolution and recommendations of the Business Development Improvement Board Meeting, held on Tuesday 12th September 2023, this meeting was held at The Rufus Centre.**

Members noted the resolutions of the Business Development & Improvement Board meeting held on Tuesday 12th September 2023 at the Rufus Centre.

3 Station Road

The Chairman referred to the note on the agenda regarding fees relating to 3 Station Road (BI&DB item 1478b ii) explaining that Members needed to clarify which budget the expenditure was coming from. He requested for a separate nominal code to be set up to track expenditure. Officers stated that the funding should not come from reserves as mentioned in the recommendation, but that Members were required to consider agreement to the overspend on Professional Fees (4506/422).

It was **resolved** to permit an overspend on Professional Fees to the value of £10,000 to work with a property developer and architect to review options for the development of 3 Station Road. A new nominal code would be set up to track expenditure appropriately.

5520. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th August 2023 – no items.
- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers – there would be an update given under Exempt.

5521. OUTSIDE BODIES

No items.

5522. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Scheme of Delegations Review**

- i) Members were asked to elect 3 or 4 Members to the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

It was **resolved** to elect Councillors Parsons, Snape and Blazeby to the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

- ii) Members were asked to adopt the circulated Terms of Reference for the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

It was **resolved** to adopt the circulated Terms of Reference for the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

- iii) Members were asked to consider the circulated report and Officer recommendation regarding communications responsibilities.

(A resident joined the meeting via virtual access at 20:04).

A discussion took place about options for reporting on corporate communications. Cllr Thompson asked if the Forward Plan for social media content would remain an agenda item for the Community Services Committee. Cllr Blazeby advised that the report circulated indicated this would not be the case, but the Officer's recommendation included a section about electronic file sharing for communications for interested Members. The Chairman suggested including a report to the Council on a quarterly basis regarding communications of big events as he reported that there was often a member behind the scenes championing them. Members were informed that Officers had been asked to send all members calendar invites for events. Members requested for Officers to be proactive with file sharing.

It was **resolved**:

1. To progress with Option 4, putting business-as-usual communication responsibilities (Terms of Reference points 8.1 – first half, 8.2, 8.3 & 8.5) within Officers' remit.
2. For Council to consider the Comms & Marketing Strategy, Annual Residents Survey and point 8.4 in appendix 1. Other large-scale surveys to be approved by relevant Committees.
3. For the BI&DB to consider any Comms & Marketing Plans created which focussed on the Rufus Centre or Rendezvous Café.
4. To use electronic file sharing with interested Members on specific tasks if required.

Action: Comms & Marketing Manager

b. Local Organisation Leases

The Chairman advised that he had attended an event hosted by the Sea Cadets the previous week where he had a conversation with Carly Ruffhead (CR) and Nigel Cross (NC) from the organisation about the former changing rooms which are in the same building as the Headquarters. The Sea Cadets had expressed an interest in having this additional space and the Chairman had mentioned coming to the Council meeting to address Members.

CR, one of the representatives present at the meeting, stated that the Sea Cadets had looked at the former changing room space and were investigating options to develop the cadet experience by being able to enrol more young people. The additional classrooms for learning would enable this. Details of how the additional space might be divided up were suggested, and CR asked the Council to consider increasing the Sea Cadets lease term from 15 to 20 years to assist with grant funding. CR informed Members that from the initial quotations sought, the project to convert and use the changing rooms space was in the region of £53,000.

Cllr Blazeby advised that Officers needed to look at re-rating the ground rent (that was not charged) considering the Sea Cadets' use of the whole building going forward.

Action: Deputy Town Clerk

It was **resolved** to assign a 20-year lease to the Sea Cadets that incorporated the former changing rooms space.

(CR and NC left the meeting at 20:10).

5523. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Finance Reports Part 1

Members were asked to note the following finance reports:

- i) Flitwick Town Council Summary, Investments & Loans – noted.
- ii) Corporate Services Summary – noted.
- iii) Civic Expenses Summary – noted.
- iv) RCF & Grant Funding Review – noted.
- v) Bank Reconciliations – noted.

RIALTAS Reports:

- vi) Consolidated Bank Reconciliations – noted.
- vii) Income & Expenditure (Corporate & Community) – noted.
- viii) Cashbook (CB1 & CB2) Transactions – noted.

The Chairman explained that Council would continue to have sight of the following reports once the Finance Scrutiny Working Group was operating:

RCF & Grant Funding Review
Cashbook
Balance Sheet

b. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Members noted the supporting paperwork and were informed that the Town Clerk was due to meet with CBC's Lead Officer for the fund on 21st September.

c. Planning – Responses to CBC including Officer Delegated Decisions

Decisions were noted.

d. Planning – CBC Decisions

Decisions were noted.

5524. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

(Members of the public left the meeting).

5525. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

a. Minutes & Recommendations

It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th August 2023 as a true record with minor amendments to those present.

b. Finance Update

It was **resolved** to accept the recommendations presented in the Officer's report.

c. Finance Reports Part 2

Members noted the finance reports.

d. Steppingley Road/Allotment Access

It was **resolved** to accept the proposal as presented with a request.

e. 4YP Update

Members received an update on 4YP.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

**Recommendations and resolutions of the
Community Services Committee 3rd October 2023**

The Town Council are asked to note the **RESOLUTIONS** and **approve** the **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Community Services Committee 3rd October 2023

1114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Badham and Cllr Connell due to ill health.

1114 MINUTES

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes for the Community Services meeting held on Tuesday 1st August 2023 with no amendments.

a. **The Lockdown Car Show 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** to give permission for the Lockdown Lorry, car and bike show to take place on Millenium Park on the 18th August 2024 with no charge subject to SAG approval.

b. **Community Allotment**

It was **RESOLVED** to approach the Scouts in relation to their Allotment to ask if they would be willing to have a Community Allotment group share their allotment.

c. **Family Fun Day 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept option 1 from the report as follows without the addition of wristbands or Fireworks.

Event Options One:

The event continues as in previous years, this will include: • Event running time 12 noon – 10pm • Free Fun Fair (12 – 8pm) • Free Cinema Showings (3 Films) • Food Court • Stalls • Free Popcorn Approximate Cost - £20,000 ex vat

d. **D-Day Anniversary - Beacon**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept option 6 which included not purchasing a beacon or holding an event in June 2024 and signposting to other locations.

e. **Community Hub**

Members received a report with a request to change the resolution made on Tuesday 4th April 2023 in relation to the opening times of the Community Hub on Wednesdays due to the low attendance in the afternoon,

It was **RESOLVED** to amend the opening times of the Community Hub to 2.30pm and to allow for Officers digression to be used for any further alterations.

f. **Allotment Bonfires**

It was **RESOLVED** to amend the Allotment Agreement to state 'No bonfires will be permitted on-site at any time'. This revision would be in place for the contacts issued in January 2024

g. **Scarecrow Festival 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** to amend the festival to over a weekend in September with the theme for 2024 being Childrens films.

h. **Sunday Markets**

It was **RESOLVED** to allow that Sunday Market to take place on the 29th of October.

i. **Manor Park**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the report and move forward with the planning of treatment.

1125

12a Youth Provision Report

It was **RESOLVED** to move item 12a to Exempt.

Flitwick Town Council



Scheme of Delegations

Adopted and approved at the Town Council meeting --/--/23

FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEES

DELEGATED POWERS - TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Members will be advised by the Town Clerk whether a particular item under discussion is within the Committee's delegated powers, if so then the minutes will then record the decision as "**Resolved**".

If the matter is not within the Committee's delegated powers, then the minutes will show the decision as "**Recommended**", and the matter will then be brought to the Council's particular attention by the Chairman of the Committee at the next meeting of the Council. This item can be discussed in full by the Town Council. In any case where a Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman is either unsure whether or not any matter falls within delegated powers, or whether or not any matter should be determined by them, they should refer that matter to the next highest level of decision.

A Committees' delegated power need not always be exercised. Committee Chairs should be mindful that it may better serve the Town Council and be more democratic to have significant decisions considered by the full Town Council, especially when considering matters that are strategic in nature, or could cause controversy.

It is Unlawful to delegate powers to any individual Councillor, including Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs.

1. Town Council
2. Business Improvement & Development Board
3. Community Services
4. HR
5. Appeals
6. Responsibilities Delegated to Officers.

1. Town Council

The Town Council can take **all decisions**, or it may appoint one or more Committees or sub-Committees for the purposes of discharging its functions. The Council may also delegate some of its functions to officers of the Council.

The following matters are reserved to the Council for decision, notwithstanding that the appropriate Committees may make recommendations thereon for the Council's consideration.

- To do anything calculated to facilitate or conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions. (LGA 1972, s 111), General Power of Competence, (Localism Act 2011).
- Deal with matters of principle or policy.
- Nominate and appoint representatives of the Council to any other authority, organisation or body.
- To elect members to outside bodies.
- To form Sub-Committees as required.
- To manage policy with regard to promotion and publicity of the Council.
- Policies and procedures, Member/Officer Protocol, Code of Conduct (Committee-specific policies and procedures to be agreed at Committee level).
- Elections/Councillor Vacancies, Town Mayor/Deputy Town Mayor, Regalia etc.
- Honorary Citizenship
- Making, amending or revoking bylaws.
- Making of orders under any statutory powers.
- To approve and monitor all tenders and contracts, after review by other Committees as relevant.
- To monitor and control office procedures, office facilities and equipment.
- Control and development and continued improvement of the Council.
- Fire precautions – to ensure measures are in place to deal with fire.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Council.
- Liaising with the Police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Council.
- Licencing.
- Business Continuity.
- IT (split with Business Improvement & Development Board) – responsibility of IT infrastructure and systems used by the Council as well as service and maintenance contracts with the exemption of the Rufus Centre website.
- Organising of all civic events.
- Annual residents survey.
- Initiation of major projects with high expenditure.
- To keep minutes.

Strategy

- Town Council Strategy, Vision, Mission Statement, Objectives etc. (Reviews to be undertaken via a Task & Finish Group).
- Development of Corporate Plan.

Finance

- Resolving actions incurring expenditure that do not fall under the remit of the Committees (e.g. Rolling Capital Fund applications)

- Setting the Precept
- Borrowing Money
- Approval of the Councils Annual Accounts and completion of the Annual Return.
- Making and amending, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this Scheme of Delegation.
- To review the internal audit procedures annually and to appoint an Internal Auditor.
- To request the agreed Precept amount from Central Bedfordshire Council, or their successors.
- To receive estimates of expenditure in for the forthcoming financial year from other Committees of the Council, to set a recommendation for the Precept for approval at the January Council meeting.
- To oversee loans, property and mortgages where relevant.
- Monthly reviews of statutory finance reports.

Planning

- To appoint Members or instruct officers to attend Central Beds Councils Development Management meetings to make representations on behalf of the Council where necessary.
- To consider major planning applications on their merit and to make comment and pass resolutions in respect of these.
- When considering major planning applications, to take the statements of any adopted Master Plan, Town Plan or Neighbourhood Plan into consideration.
- To monitor Central Bedfordshire Council Policies and Plans that could affect the town.
- To monitor proposals from developers under Section 106 Agreements.
- To respond to Central Bedfordshire Council on all planning applications within the set time scales.
- Street naming.
- To comment on behalf of the Council in relation to any consultations on footpath diversions, modifications, or adoptions.

Other responsibilities

- Mineral Plans, Waste Plans and regional Plans or any other plans or studies as considered appropriate

2. Business Improvement & Development Board

The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions and deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the committee.

Capital projects are referred to the Town Council as an application to access the Rolling Capital Fund.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the Council.

Responsible for the control and development of:

- Development of business strategy for commercial activities as well as the development of the Rufus Centre building including the provision of office space.
- Management of the Rufus Centre building including maintenance and cleaning contracts.
- Reviewing tenant rent rates, conference rates and function rates with the objective of ensuring the business remains financially viable.
- Rufus Centre Marketing related to commercial activities.
- Develop the Strategy for 3 Station Road.
- Tenant lease for 3 Station Road.
- Rufus Centre website.
- IT (split with Council) – responsibility to IT infrastructure and systems used by the Rufus Centre as well as service and maintenance contracts with the exception of the FTC Website.
- Recycling and Environmental Impact including energy efficiency for the Rufus Centre.
- Approval of its minutes as true and correct records.
- Any other matters that may be delegated to it by the Council from time to time.

Other responsibilities:

- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Committee.
- S106 applications and grant funding from external sources that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Commuted sums that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- (Committee specific policies and procedures to be agreed at Committee level
- Communications and Marketing Plan for the business.
- Recycling and environmental impact including energy efficiency for the Rufus Centre.
- Scrutiny of the Rufus Centre and Rendezvous Café figures, as well as business forecasting (with the Finance Scrutiny Working Group focusing on their overall performance in the two cost centres).
- Creation and review of policies that come under the Committee's remit.
- Management of projects that come under the Committee's remit.
- Creation and review of surveys relevant to the Committee.
- Implementing elements of the Environmental Policy and Action Plan

3. Community Services

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for the control and development of:

- General Ground Services
- Street Lighting
- All green spaces including Manor Park, Millennium Park, Hinksley Road
- Develop design and implement an environmental enhancement scheme for Maulden Road
- Implementing elements of the Environmental Policy and Action Plan.
- Development of emergency plan.
- Organising events on and making enhancements to - Frontage 3 Station Road
- All Play Areas and Open Spaces including considering requests for use
- Football pitches and reviewing charges
- All Burial Ground matters
- Arts and Culture, to include developing a strategy.
- Organising of all Community Events
- Discussing youth provision in Flitwick
- Noting minutes of the Allotment Liaison Committee and setting allotment fees.
- Receiving reports from the Highways meetings
- Resident Driven Projects Grant Scheme. Considering Grant applications
- Dealing with Community Safety matters
- Setting up and servicing the Town councils Youth Committee.

- To comment on behalf of the Council in relation to any consultations on footpath diversions, modifications, or adoptions.
- To consider any maintenance and repair works on footpaths and public rights of way.
- Other matters relating to Highways.
- To comment on behalf of Council in relation to any Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).
- To consider issues relating to traffic calming and signage, car parking, street lighting, CCTV and other highway matters.
- Fleet Reviews for Public Realm Team vehicles.
- Approval of its minutes as true and correct records.
- Any other matters that may be delegated to it by the Council from time to time.

Other responsibilities:

- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee
- S106 applications and grant funding from external sources that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.

- Creation and review of policies that come under the Committee's remit.
- Creation and review of surveys relevant to the Committee.
- Management of projects that come under the Committee's remit.
- Recycling and Environmental Impact for the public realm.
- To oversee community building leases, the Village Hall Car Park licence agreement and vehicle insurance (fleet).

4. HR

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the committee. The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for the control, development and continued improvements to:

- Recruitment, Selection and the policies, procedures and contracts relating to.
- Training, Development and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Appraisal, to ensure accurate assessments of performance is carried out.
- Reward, to review and agree proposed annual and interim pay awards to Council Employees
- Absence Management and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Disciplinary, Grievance and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Maternity, Paternity and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Equal Opportunities and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Recommend policy change within their area of responsibility.
- Approval of its minutes as a true record.
- Any other matters that may be delegated to it by the Council from time to time.

Other responsibilities:

- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Ensuring individual work records are maintained.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- (Committee specific policies and procedures to be agreed at Committee level
- Creation and review of policies that come under the Committee's remit.
- Creation and review of surveys relevant to the Committee.

5. Appeals

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for:

- Considering evidence or to gather further evidence.
- Considering and deciding whether individual appeals have established grounds for appeal according to the disciplinary or grievance procedures.
- To gather further evidence at Appeal Committee Hearings and to decide, on the basis of that information, whether an appeal should be upheld or rejected.
- Approval of its minutes as a true record.
- Any other matters that may be delegated to it by the Council from time to time.

Other responsibilities:

- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES DELEGATED TO TOWN COUNCIL OFFICERS

The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer designated and authorised to act as Proper Officer for the purposes of all relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other statute requiring the designation of a Proper Officer.

General Matters the Town Clerk is authorised:

1. to sign on behalf of the Council any document necessary to give effect to any decision of the Council.
2. to take any proceedings or other steps as may be necessary to enforce and recover any debt owing or other obligation due to the Council.
3. to institute, defend and appear in any legal proceedings authorised by the Council.
4. to appear or make representation to any tribunal or public inquiry into any matter in which the Council has an interest (in its own right or on behalf of the residents of Flitwick).
5. to alter the date or time of a Council/committee meeting but, before doing so, shall consult with the relevant Chairman about the need for the change and about convenient alternative dates and times.
6. to decide arrangements for the closure of the Council offices in the Christmas/New Year period, subject to consultation with the Mayor.
7. to manage the Council's facilities and assets, including allotments, open spaces, amenity areas, cemetery, and any other buildings and assets.
8. to act as the Council's designated officer for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Data Protection Officer now designated to Comms & Marketing Manager to act as the Council's proper officer as per any statute or Local Government Act 1972.

Financial Matters the Town Clerk is authorised as follows:

1. To incur expenditure up to the amount specified in the Financial Regulations. on any item for which provision is made in the appropriate revenue budget provided that any action taken complies with any legislative provisions and the requirements of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
2. To use the repairs and maintenance budgets for the maintenance, or repair of existing plant, vehicles or equipment.
3. To accept quotations or tenders (where tenders are required by the Council's Financial Regulations) for work supplies or services subject to:
 - a. the cost not exceeding the amount of the approved budget.

- b. the tender being the lowest or the one showing best added value to the Council according to the criteria set out in the tender documentation.
 - c. all the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations being complied with.
- 4. To compile, approve or vary lists of approved contractors subject to the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 5. Having consulted with the Council, to invest monies held by the Council with a view to obtaining the optimum financial return.

Staffing Matters

The Town Clerk is given delegated powers to manage the Council staff in accordance with the Council's policies, procedures and budget.

With the exception of cases of gross misconduct, the Town Clerk must seek permission from the HR Committee before dismissing a member of staff.

Property Matters

The Town Clerk is given authority to manage the land and property of the Council including:

- 1. agreeing the terms of any lease, licence, conveyance or transfer approved by Council, authorised to be signed by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- 2. the granting or refusal of the Council's consent under the terms of any lease variations of restrictive covenants of a routine nature.
- 3. the granting of easements, wayleaves and licenses over Council Land approved by the Council.
- 4. initiating legal action or proceedings against unauthorised encampments on Council land.
- 5. hiring of open spaces for activities that benefit the residents of Flitwick.

Urgency

The Town Clerk is authorised to act on behalf of the Council in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such action is to be reported to the next meeting of the Council or relevant Committee or Sub-committee. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Chairman of the relevant Committee are to be consulted before such action is taken.

The Town Clerk may decide not to exercise his delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council or the relevant Committee.

The Town Clerk and Community Services & Amenities Manager

Are delegated to deal with and respond to all non – major planning applications.

[Major Planning Applications will be classed as any development over 1 Property or House].

Officers objecting to planning applications

- Will take the statements of any adopted Master Plan, Town Plan or Neighbourhood Plan into consideration.
- Will use the Town Council's adopted Planning Guide and Planning Policy when responding to non – major planning applications.
- Will post on the website and social media a link to the weekly list of applications received relating to Flitwick and inform the public of how they can object using the Central Bedfordshire Council Planning process.

Officers will move to Council:

- a. Applications which are significantly contrary to the Local Plan.
- b. Applications which are submitted by members of staff directly involved in the consideration of planning applications, Councillors and Officers of the Council
- c. Applications attracting objections from statutory consultees.
- d. Applications which are submitted by Council, or which relate to land in the ownership of the Council or in which the Council has a financial interest.

Flitwick Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2023-24: 1st Interim

Sally King

For and on behalf of Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return. Auditing Solutions Ltd provides this service to Flitwick Town Council.

This report sets out all the work undertaken in relation to the 2023-24 financial year to date, during our visits on 21st and 22nd September 2023.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking our review for the year, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Annual Governance and Accountability Return. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in several key areas to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's Annual Return, which requires independent assurance over several internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We have therefore concluded that, based on the programme of work undertaken this year to date the Council has again maintained a sound, pro-active approach to risk management and corporate governance issues, together with the development and management of effective internal controls and procedural documentation. Once again pleased to acknowledge the quality of records maintained by the Clerk and the Finance Officers and thank them for their assistance, which has ensured the smooth progress of our review process.

Detailed Report

Review of Accounting Arrangements & Bank Reconciliations

The Council's accounts are maintained with Rialtas accounting software; DCK Accounting no longer provide support with the accounts.

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. To that end, we have:

- Confirmed closing balances from 2022-23 have been correctly brought forward to the current year.
- Checked to ensure that a comprehensive, meaningful, and appropriate nominal coding schedule together with cost centres remains in place. It is our understanding that in conjunction with Rialtas, the Council is reviewing its coding structure to facilitate easier year end reporting and completion of the AGAR.
- Checked and agreed transactions (both receipts and payments) in the Council's main Current and Business Saver account cashbooks to the relevant Barclays Bank statements for August 2023, including the daily "sweep" transfers to retain a level of £5,000 in the current account.
- Checked and agreed the relevant bank account reconciliations for each account as of 31 August 2023 to ensure that no long-standing, uncleared cheques, or other anomalous entries exist.
- Confirmed with officers the arrangements for backing up the computer system.
- There is a satisfactory process for the approval of grants and donations (where no invoice is appropriate) and that they have been approved for payment by members under the correct expenditure code. We note that no grants will be issued during the 2023-24 financial year.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work in this area will be undertaken in this area at our future visits.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust regulatory framework in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders; those financial transactions are made in accordance with the extant Financial Regulations and that we have a reasonable chance of identifying any actions of a potentially unlawful nature that have been or may be considered for implementation. Consequently: -

- Commenced examination of the minutes of the Full Council and its various Standing Committees for the year to August 2023 to ensure that no issues affecting the Council's financial stability exist in the short, medium, or long-term, also that no legal

- issues appear to be in existence whereby the Council may either be considering or have taken decisions that might result in ultra vires expenditure being incurred.
- We note that the Council have reviewed and readopted Standing Orders at its meeting held on 17th January 2023 (minute ref 5344 g.); they are scheduled to be reviewed again in February 2024.
- Financial Regulations were reviewed at the meeting held on 21st February 2023 (minute ref. 5362 e.); again, they will be reviewed in February 2024.
- Noted that there were no comments or recommendations made in the external auditor's report, issued since our last visit regarding the Council's accounts.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area, warranting further comment.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that, in addition to confirming that sound financial control procedures are in place: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets.
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and / or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available.
- An official order has been raised for all purchases and service delivery where one would be expected.
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount.
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed.
- There is a satisfactory process for the approval of grants and donations (where no invoice is appropriate) and that they have been approved for payment by members under the correct expenditure code; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery. We note that the Council has engaged the services of a VAT consultant to conduct a review of VAT management.
- We have reviewed this area selecting a test sample for compliance with the above criteria comprising all payments individually more than £5,000 plus every 50th cashbook transaction, irrespective of value for the financial year. Our test sample comprised of 37 payments, totalling £305,639 representing 63% of non-pay expenditure to August 2023, with all the above criteria met.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work in this area will be undertaken in this area at our future visits.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

- Noted that the Corporate Risk Register has been reviewed and readopted at the Town Council meeting held on 16th May 2023 (minute ref 5410 c).
- Reviewed the Council's insurance policy with Aviva which commenced in September 2023 noting that it includes public liability cover of £10 million and employers' liability cover of £10m.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area warranting further comment.

Review of Income

In considering the Council's income streams, we aim to ensure that robust systems are in place to ensure the identification of all income due to the Council from its various sources; to ensure that the income is invoiced in a timely manner and that effective procedures are in place to pursue recovery of any outstanding monies due to the Council.

In addition to the annual precept the Council has a variety of income sources arising mainly from the Rufus Centre lettings and rentals, allotment income, café, cemetery fees, also the letting of sports pitches, miscellaneous grants, and interest.

The Allotments are managed using Rialtas software. There are 2 sites containing 58 plots. New tenancy agreements are issued each year along with the invoices and chased if not returned with payment. We are pleased to note that the Council reviews allotment fees on an annual basis. On our second interim visit we will examine the cemetery income procedures, allotment management and the cash handling procedures and stock management at the onsite café.

We further note the Council now holds a monthly debt management meeting with a report being submitted to Full Council.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work in this area will be undertaken in this area at our future visits.

Petty Cash Account & Credit Cards

We are required, as part of the annual Internal Audit Certification process in the Annual Return, to indicate the soundness of controls in this area of the Council's financial activities. The Council has an imprest style petty cash scheme it also holds floats for various activities. We confirmed this was within the limits set in Financial Regulations and confirmed controls over access to the safe where the money was kept. A physical check of cash held was also undertaken at this 1st Interim visit with no issues arising.

The Council uses a Barclaycard, and we are pleased to note that robust procedures are in place including provision of receipts and reconciliation of the statements. As part of our payment review, we examined the August 2023 Barclaycard reconciliation, with no issues arising.

We are pleased to note that receipts are now attached to the invoices received from the fuel card supplier.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in the areas examined warranting further comment.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing "surplus funds", be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions and that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on the funds held, with any interest earned brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records, also that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

We are pleased to note the Council has a Treasury Management policy in situ.

During our visits we test repayments of PWLB loans as recorded in the Council's accounts to independent PWLB statements. We have agreed the repayments to the bank statements as in relation to our work on accounting and bank reconciliation.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work in this area will be undertaken in this area at our future visits.

Asset Register

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to develop and maintain a register of assets identifying detail of all land, buildings, vehicles, furniture, and equipment owned by the Council.

We are pleased to note that the Council holds a detailed asset register updated which will now be maintained and updated “in house” for the 2023-24 financial year.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work in this area will be undertaken in this area at our future visits.

Precept Determination and Budgetary Control

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount of the precept placed on the Unitary Authority, that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work in this area will be undertaken in this area at our future visits.

Notice of conclusion of the audit

Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2023

Section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015

	Notes
<p>1. The audit of accounts for the Council/Meeting (a) for the year ended 31 March 2023 has been concluded.</p> <p>2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of the Council /Meeting (a) on application to:</p> <p>(b) The Town Clerk, Flitwick Town Council The Rufus Centre Steppingley Road Flitwick Bedfordshire MK45 1AH</p> <p>2. Copies will be provided to any local government elector on payment of £1.20 (c) for each copy of the Annual Return.</p> <p>Announcement made by: (d) Stacie Lockey, Town Clerk</p> <p>Date of announcement: (e) 2nd day of October 2023</p>	<p>(a) Delete as appropriate</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the Annual Return</p> <p>(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs</p> <p>(d) Insert name and position of person placing the notice</p> <p>(e) Insert date of placing of the notice</p>

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
 - The Annual Internal Audit Report must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - Sections 1 and 2 must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage before 1 July 2023.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2023**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2023 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2022/23, approved and signed, page 4
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2022/23, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2023 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate
- Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

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

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

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2023.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2022) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2023).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2023**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

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

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

Flitwick Town Council

www.flitwick.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2023, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2022/23 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2022-23 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2021-22 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2021/22 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

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

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

22/09/2022 19/01/2023 16/05/2023

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Sally King for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

23/05/2023

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

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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

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

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

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

20 JUNE 2023

and recorded as minute reference:

5429611

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

Chairman



Clerk



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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	961,927	886,273	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	854,243	885,564	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,539,476	1,004,601	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	-883,628	-906,587	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-58,403	-87,688	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	-1,527,342	-736,896	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	886,273	1,045,267	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	917,741	1,030,877	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	5,776,051	5,809,099	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	931,522	866,892	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date 20th June 2023

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

20 JUNE 2023

as recorded in minute reference:

5429 b iii

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



Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of

Flitwick Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2022/23

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

Not applicable

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

*We do not certify completion because:

Not applicable

External Auditor Name

Mazars LLP, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1DF

External Auditor Signature

Mazars LLP

Date

26 September 2023

Town Council Agenda 17/10/23

Agenda Item 12d

Flitwick & Ampthill Scout Group

As per the lease agreement, the Scouts are to erect a fence (design to be approved by Council) within 6 months of the lease being signed. Please find below options that we have received from the Scouts along with comments.

Option 1



Option 2



The choice is between a palisade (Option 1) that matches the existing fence around the allotments and our existing compound or a mesh fence (Option 2).

The fence would be 2 metres in height.

The Scouts preference would be the mesh fencing (Option 2) as it is a lot cheaper and also easier on the eye.

The Scouts have agreed to plant a hedge around the outside of the fence which will soften the impact and will erect the fence on the inside of the existing hedge line on Station Road so it will have little visibility from the road and the houses opposite.

Rolling Capital Fund Review 2023-24

(315)	Rolling Capital Programme	Opening Balance	£	202,062	
(5013)		PLUS RCF Current Year Funding	£	50,000	(£25k rec'd 01/04/23 with £25k due Nov 23 with precept)
(315)	Rolling Capital Programme	Closing Balance	£	137,217	

Last Updated: **30 September 2023**

PROJECT Details					RCF Details							23/24 FUNDING Details			Comments
Project Code		Project Description	Committee	Minute Ref	RCF Budget Committed	Previous Year's RCF Spend	23/24 RCF Spend to Date	Overspend Funded by RCP	Underspend Returned to RCP	RCF Commitment Remaining		Additional Project Spend	Funding Received (1177)	Project Budget Remaining	
4212	110	RCF - Nature Park	Community	Del. Auth	£ 3,000	£ -	£ 641	£ -	£ -	£ 2,359	0%	£ 1,550	£ 283,385	£ 281,835	<i>S106 monies remaining: Phase 1 £7,106.89, Phase 2 £274,728 & Plans £1,550 (CBC to be invoiced for S106 once works completed). SL 7/9/22. Planning Consultant RCF approved July 23.</i>
4215	110	RCF - Flit Valley Walk	Corporate & Community	None	£ 2,000	£ 1,169	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 831	42%				<i>Greensands grant of £2,405 received (1177/110) in 21/22 in addition to stated budget. 22/23 opening bal £1459. Awaiting final expense for leaflets (estimated at £628)</i>
4803	110	RCF - Manor Park Heritage	Community	809c	£ 28,000	£ 175	£ 27,825	£ -	£ -	£ -	0%	£ 75,885	£ 75,885	£ -	<i>S106 Grants monies approved from CBC - please see project schedule for full breakdown of costs.</i>
4819	110	RCF - Flitwick Town Sq Defib	Community	5213d	£ 1,770	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1,770	100%				
4823	110	RCF - Heritage Website	Corporate	753a 5252a)j	£ 3,800	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 3,800	100%				
4828	110	RCF - Skate Park Lighting	Community	1036d	£ 21,705	£ 2,359	£ 8,310	£ -	£ -	£ 11,036	51%	£ 10,500	£ 10,500	£ -	<i>Partially grant funded - received</i>
4831	110	RCF - Outdoor PA System	Community	5302	£ 1,118	£ 874	£ 129	£ -	£ -	£ 115	10%				
4833	110	RCF - Town Sq Benches/Plant/Bins	Community	1061	£ 12,102	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 12,102	100%	£ -	£ 5,600	£ 5,600	<i>31.08.23 - CBC S106 funding on invoice FTC8318 (funds not yet received) with a/c MAR05</i>
4836	110	RCF - CCTV Skate Park & Town Sq	Community	5329c	£ 12,612	£ 10,912	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 1,700	13%				<i>08.03.23: CBC annual monitoring and signal transmission expenditure invoice pending for £1,700</i>
4837	110	RCF - Rural Match Fund Benches	Community	5226e	£ 2,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 2,000	100%				<i>Resolution made at Council March 2022 confirmed March 2023 to be match funded by CBC - amount TBC</i>
4838	110	RCF - CCTV Data Impact Assess	Community	Del. Auth	£ 1,975	£ 1,625	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 350	18%				
4839	110	RCF - Rendezvous Mixer	Business	Del. Auth	£ 1,400	£ -	£ 1,400	£ -	£ -	£ -	0%				June 23 - RCF CLOSED
4840	110	RCF Avebury Representation	EO Meeting	5418a	£ 13,550	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 13,550	100%				
4841	110	RCF - Deployable CCTV Camera	Council	Del. Auth	£ 907	£ -	£ 907	£ -	£ -	£ -	0%	£ 1,500	£ 1,500	£ 1,500	<i>(FTC8170) CBC grant monies received 1177/110</i> August 23 - RCF CLOSED
4842	110	RCF - Replace Davis Equipment	Business	1453c	£ 4,488	£ -	£ 3,241	£ -	£ -	£ 1,247	28%				
4843	110	RCF - Rufus Room 3 & 17 Refurb	Business	TBC (Council)	£ 7,780	£ -	£ 7,780	£ -	£ -	£ -	0%				September 23 - RCF CLOSED
4844	110	RCF - Digital Signage	Business	1466b	£ 5,200	£ -	£ 3,485	£ -	£ -	£ 1,715	33%				
4845	110	RCF - Lockyer Flooring Works	Business	1466c	£ 4,800	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 4,800	100%				



Our ref: FLIPF/Consult
Date: 12 October 2023

Dear Councillors and Parish Clerks

Highways Act 1980 – S.119, S.118 and S.26 - proposed legal works to Divert and Create parts of Flitwick Footpaths No's 13, 14 and 22 and Westoning Footpath No. 13 at Priestley Farm in the parishes of Flitwick and Westoning

Central Bedfordshire Council is consulting you on the following proposal.

- stop up part of Flitwick Footpath No. 13 and to subsequently create a new part of Footpath No. 13 and to divert parts of Flitwick Footpaths No 14, No. 22 and Westoning Footpath No. 13 at Priestley Farm. This will move the footpaths onto the walked routes, resolving a dead end path anomaly and allow the legal lines of Flitwick Footpath No. 22 and Westoning Footpath No. 13 to cross the footbridges.

The proposal is shown on the enclosed plan, the routes have been walked by the public for many years. We are now seeking to progress the legal orders to amend them on the Definitive Map and Statement.

The Council considers there is a need to amend the footpaths at Priestley Farm to benefit the public and enhance the public right of way network, it will also allow the legal lines of the paths to cross the footbridges one of which is due for replacement.

I would be grateful if you could please review the enclosed plan and provide me with any comments you have by **23rd October 2023**. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Please reply to: Email clare.wild@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk (preferred option), or by post, Clare Wild, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds. SG17 5TQ

Regards,

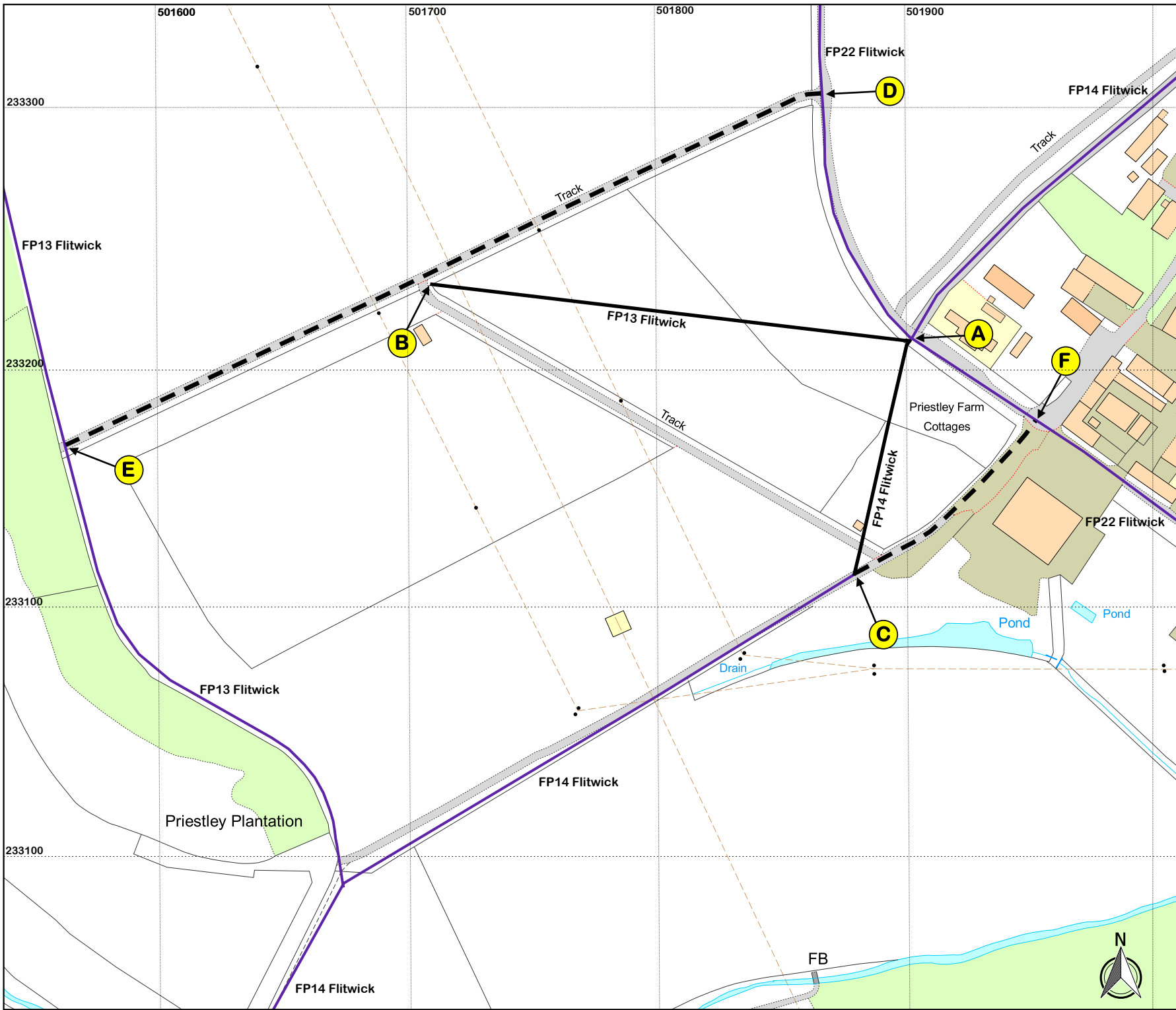
Clare

Clare Wild

Definitive Map Officer

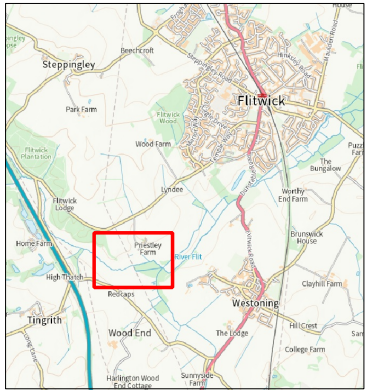
Direct telephone no. 0300 300 5122

Email clare.wild@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Extinguishment of parts of Flitwick Public Footpaths Nos 13 and 14 and the creation of new lengths of Public Footpaths 13 and 14 Flitwick

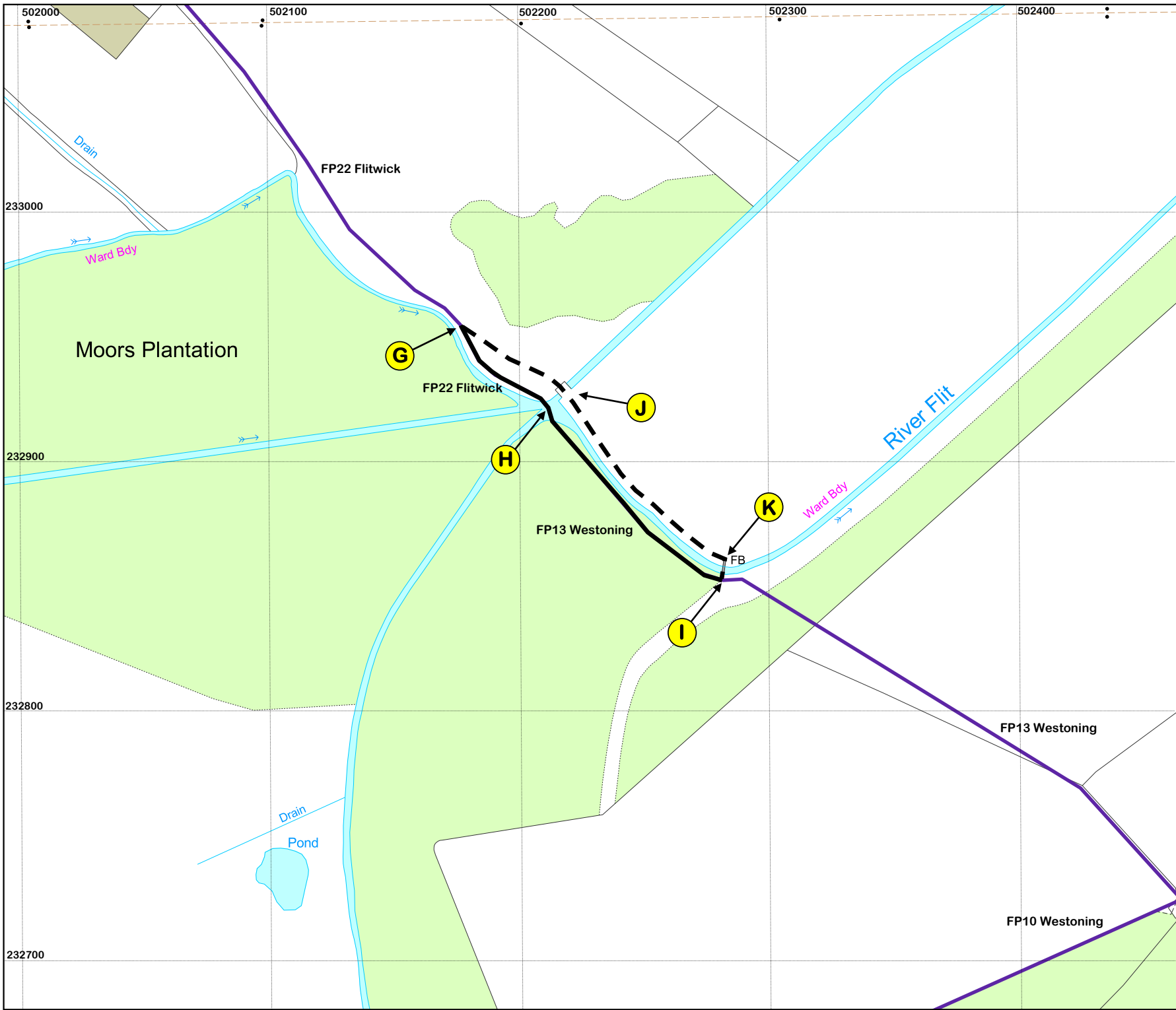
- FP13 to be extinguished A - B
- FP14 to be extinguished A - C
- FP13 to be created D - B - E
- FP14 to be created F - C
- Unaffected Footpath



Date : August 2023
Scale : 1 : 2000 @ A3
Chris Wilson

Produced by Central Bedfordshire Council
Based on Ordnance Survey Mapping
Crown Copyright. All rights reserved
OS Licence Number 100049029





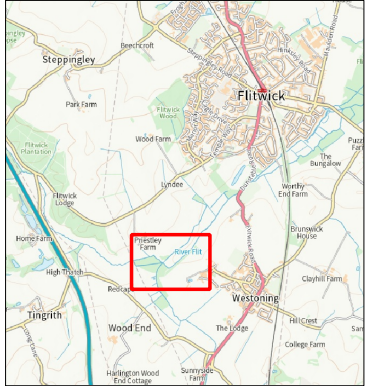
Extinguishment of parts of Flitwick Public Footpath 22 and Westoning Public Footpath No 13 and the creation of a new length of Public Footpath 22 Flitwick

FP22 to be extinguished G - H

FP13 to be extinguished H - I

FP22 to be created G - J - K - I

Unaffected Footpath



Date : August 2023
Scale : 1 : 2000 @ A3
Chris Wilson

Produced by Central Bedfordshire Council
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Flitwick Town Council Financial Summary 23/24

01 April to 30 September 2023

	YTD Income	Income Budget	% Budget Achieved		YTD Expenditure	Expenditure Budget	% Budget Spent
Corporate Services	£ 1,106,986	£ 1,080,059	102%		£ 310,214	£ 532,529	58%
Business Improvement & Development Board	£ 417,385	£ 660,300	63%		£ 291,467	£ 646,010	45%
Community Services	£ 52,645	£ 84,152	63%		£ 284,682	£ 645,972	44%
Whole Business	£ 1,577,016	£ 1,824,511	86%		£ 886,363	£ 1,824,511	49%

TOLERANCES: spend against budget		
Income	0% to 24%	RED
	25% to 74%	AMBER
	75% to 100%+	GREEN
Expenditure	0% to 74%	GREEN
	75% to 99%	AMBER
	100%	BLACK
	101%+	RED

Accepted budget variance 15% (or £100)

Investments 23/24

CCLA Summary Year to Date

(230, 1190/111)

Account balance: **£ 1,511,000**
 Cumulative Dividends: **£ 22,090**

Loans 23/24

PWLB Lending Facility Year to Date *

(4061/422, 4062/422)

Principal Opening Balance 23/24 **£ 866,892**
 Capital paid year to date **£ 27,985**
 Interest paid year to date **£ 1,806**

*** July 23: Please Note;**

Public Works loan PW494544
 Commenced July 2009 for play
 equipment
 Now complete and **CLOSED**.

10/10/2023

Flitwick Town Council Current Year

08:53

Balance Sheet as at 30th Sept 2023

31st March 2023

31st March 2024

Net Value	Fixed Assets	Cost of Asset	Depreciation	Net Value
0		0	0	0
	Long Term Assets			
0			0	
	0			0
	Current Assets			
47,898	DEBTORS	106,115		
0	DEBTORS CNTRL-FUNCTIONS	2,074		
8,151	BURIAL GROUND & CEMETRIES	381		
42,906	PREPAYMENTS	0		
0	Mthly Business Prepays	22,209		
3,204	Bank Interest Accrued	0		
2,500	Bar Stock	2,506		
4,500	Rendezvous Foodstuffs Stock	5,155		
1,500	GRANT DEBTORS	0		
28,716	GRANT DEBTORS CAPITAL	28,716		
5,317	Current Bank Ac Barclays 009	5,129		
169,934	Barclays Business Reserve 106	115,836		
1,411	PDQ Account	30,451		
400	Petty Cash Control	400		
400	Float - Main Safe	400		
400	Float - Cafe Safe	400		
15	Float - Reception Safe	15		
0	Float - Cafe Till Drawer	80		
853,000	CCLA PSDF Account	1,511,000		
1,170,252			1,830,866	
1,170,252	Total Assets			1,830,866
	Current Liabilities			
1,195	DEBTORS CNTRL-FUNCTIONS	0		
1,803	VAT DUE/REPAYABLE	13,705		
5,806	CREDITORS	8,244		
9,016	ACCRUAL - LOAN INTEREST	0		
18,584	ACCRUALS	0		
13,737	PAYE/NI DUE	13,714		

10/10/2023

Flitwick Town Council Current Year

08:53

Balance Sheet as at 30th Sept 2023

31st March 2023

31st March 2024

16,753	LGPS Pension Control	13,776
0	NEST Pension Control	496
6,335	INCOME IN ADVANCE	0
6,983	TM Income to be donated	0
41,425	RENT DEPOSITS	45,010
3,346	Barclaycard Year End balance	0
124,984		94,945
1,045,268	Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	1,735,921
	Long Term Liabilities	
0		0
1,045,268	Total Assets Less Long Term Liabilities	1,735,921
	Represented By	
718,139	GENERAL RESERVE	1,473,931
29,000	EMR Youth Provision	29,000
5,000	EMR Community Involvement	5,000
202,062	Rolling Capital Programme Fund	137,217
3,704	EMR Election Costs	3,704
22,641	EMR Allotments	22,641
5,294	EMR Cost of Living	0
0	EMR Land Legal Fees	5,000
500	EMR Youth HUB	500
15,814	EMR Community Events	15,814
28,514	Capital Financing Reserve	28,514
14,600	Capital Receipts Reserve	14,600
1,045,268		1,735,921

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 30th Sept 2023 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :

Chairman

Date : _____

Signed :

Responsible
Financial

Date : _____

Date :- 12/10/2023

Observations on the following Planning Applications

<u>Application No</u>	<u>Date Recd</u>	<u>Case Officer</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Support (Delegated Decision) on the following applications;				
23/00331/FUL	07/09/2023	Joanna Baker	n/a	24a Hampden Road Flitwick Beds MK45 1HX

Proposal : Works to trees protected by TPO.
Observations : FTC - Support

23/00342/TRE	09/08/2023	Joanna Baker	n/a	10 The Croft Flitwick Beds MK45 1DL
---------------------	------------	--------------	-----	--

Proposal : Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: Reduce the lateral extent of the canopy by approx 2m to Oak Tree (T1) to suitably manage the tree within its location. Fell tree shown as (T2) due to terminal decline, pronounced necrosis and dysfunction on the main stem. The trees are listed as T9 and T8 respectively within TPO 30/2001
Observations : FTC - Support

23/00373/FUL	07/09/2023	Joanna Baker	n/a	3 Salisbury Road Flitwick Beds MK45 1UD
---------------------	------------	--------------	-----	--

Proposal : Works to tree protected by a TPO.
Observations : FTC - Support

23/02181/FUL	07/09/2023	n/a	n/a	2 Minden Close Flitwick Beds MK45 1FD
---------------------	------------	-----	-----	--

Proposal : Change of use: proposed two storey side extension and internal alterations. Demolition and replacement of existing boundary wall in new location (including change of use of amenity space to provide private garden).
Observations : FTC - Support

23/02318/FUL	09/08/2023	Luke Burgess	n/a	16 Millfield Close Flitwick Beds MK45 1LB
---------------------	------------	--------------	-----	--

Proposal : Single storey front extension
Observations : FTC - Support

Date :- 12/10/2023

Observations on the following Planning Applications

<u>Application No</u>	<u>Date Recd</u>	<u>Case Officer</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
23/02464/FUL	07/09/2023	n/a	n/a	10 Millfield Close Flitwick Beds MK45 1LB
<p>Proposal : Single storey side extension to incorporate existing front porch, rear flat roof replaced with new pitched roof.</p> <p>Observations : FTC - Support</p>				
23/02523/FUL	09/08/2023	Sarah Fortune	n/a	8 Naseby Place Flitwick Beds MK45 1FB
<p>Proposal : Single storey side extension following change of use of side amenity land to residential garden.</p> <p>Observations : FTC - Support</p>				
23/02594/FUL	07/09/2023	n/a	n/a	26 Sheepfold Hill Flitwick Beds MK45 1BT
<p>Proposal : Erection of detached 3 bedroom dwelling on land to side of 26 Sheepfold Hill.</p> <p>Observations : FTC - Support</p>				
23/02785/FUL	07/09/2023	n/a	n/a	77 Ampthill Road Flitwick Beds MK45 1BD
<p>Proposal : Change of use from C3 dwelling house to C4 HMO.</p> <p>Observations : FTC - Support</p>				
23/02819/FUL	07/09/2023	n/a	n/a	Pine Lodge 25 Hampden Road Flitwick MK45 1HX
<p>Proposal : Change of use from residential dwelling to residential care home.</p> <p>Observations : FTC - Support</p>				
23/02885/FUL	13/09/2023	Ellie Simmonds	n/a	3 Vicarage Hill Flitwick Beds MK45 1HZ
<p>Proposal : Single storey rear extension, installation of kitchen extract and external mounted air filtration system and flue, and access ramp to front entrance.</p> <p>Observations : FTC - Support</p>				

Date :- 12/10/2023

Observations on the following Planning Applications

<u>Application No</u>	<u>Date Recd</u>	<u>Case Officer</u>	<u>Applicant Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
23/02907/VOC	02/10/2023	Elis Edmonds	n/a	2 High Street Flitwick MK45 1DS

Proposal : Proposal: Variation of condition number 11 of planning permission CB/18/04312/FULL (Development involving the subdivision of the existing dwelling house at 9 Station Square to create 2 self-enclosed flatted units, in addition to the erection of 6 self-enclosed flatted units, parking provision and associated ancillary works). Variation sought to vary the approved plans.

Observations : FTC - Support

Signed _____ Date _____

Stacie Lockey Miss

NOTIFICATIONS OF PLANNING DECISIONS FROM Central Bedfordshire Council

Minute Ref

Thu 12 October 2023

District Ref

' C ' Contrary to District 'CD' Contrary Delegated
' D ' Delegated
' E ' Endorsed by District 'ED' Endorsed Delegated

Page No : 1

GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSIONS

E 23/01543/FUL	Approved	42 High Street
E 23/02181/FUL	Approved	2 Minden Close
E 23/02318/FUL	Approved	16 Millfield Close
E 23/02382/FUL	Approved	11 Oak Road
E 23/02464/FUL	Approved	10 Millfield Close