



Andover Town Council

Item No.

Back to Basics project – To review the **Back to Basics Project Table and to agree amendments.**

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Produced for: P & R Committee

By: Town Clerk.

Date of Report: 14 Nov 2023

BACK TO BASICS – SUMMARY (from October 2021 Full Council Meeting)

It was recommended that Council agree a strategic direction for the immediate and medium term. We supported the idea that the council restricts its activities to a ‘Back to Basics’ programme in order to give time and space to address its HR and structural issues. If we did not introduce a steady state or stability in the work of the town council, we would never be able to start to fix our problems.

Defining Back to Basics

To add clarity ‘Back to Basics’ was defined as:

Statutory responsibilities/essential

- Allotments
- Planning - statutory consultee

Highly desirable

- Christmas tree and lights
- Grants

Others (supported by motions and funded)

- SIDs (Speed Indicator Signs)(partially funded)

Administrative Functions (in support)

- Clerk council meetings and committees
- Council administration (including Proper Officer and RFO)
- Town Council offices
- Manage allotment estate
- Run website and social media
- Budget and Precept Council Meetings minimum of 4 times a year (including Annual Council Meeting)
- Electors Meeting
- Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR)
- Annual Audit Corporate (incl. Financial risk assessment, Review and approval of Council Assets, Employment of staff – annual appraisals, contracts, record holiday allowance and use, payroll, pensions, sickness, and absence.)
- Statutory Policy creation and maintenance e.g Equality Policy.

The above list can be simplified into a **BACK to BASICS TABLE** as below. It is colour coded in terms of progress:

| MUST DO | SHOULD DO | COULD DO | TRAINING REQUIRED |
|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Allotments | SIDS – 2 purchased units | Property purchase | Project Management |
| Planning | SIDS/ASW new units ¹ | Events | |
| Council meetings | Christmas Tree & Lights | Picket Piece Land Purchase | Councillor Training |
| Council Administration | Grants | Work with other local organisations | Deputy Clerk CiLCA |
| Allotment estate management | Andover Levy discussion with TVBC ² | | |
| Website ³ | | | Website updates |
| Social Media | | | |
| Budget & Precept | | | |
| Electors Meeting | | | |
| Governance and AGAR | | | |
| Annual Audit Corporate | | | |
| Financial Risk Assessment | | | |
| Review of Assets ⁴ | | | |
| Employment of Staff ⁵ | | | HR Management |
| Staff Structure & Baseline setting ⁶ | | | |
| Statutory Policy creation & review ⁷ | | | |
| Co-operation with TVBC | | | |
| Co-operation with HCC | | | |
| Working Well Currently. (Continual review of effectiveness is ongoing) | Adequate (meets legal requirements), but would benefit from enhancement. OR Project underway / in progress. | Still requires improvement to meet adequate standard or has not yet been implemented. | Training for Staff and/or Councillors |

¹ The Town Clerk is continuing to work with the Police and HCC regarding the approval of Autospeedwatch.

² A meeting was held on 30th November with TVBC to start this review.

³ The Current website is functional but not inspiring. A basic site map has been drawn up and sent to contractors to quote for design, migration and training for staff in order that it can be maintained economically. Councillors will be asked to review once quotes are received.

⁴ The Asset Register was reviewed, but the method for reporting / updating needs work.

⁵ Annual Reviews have not taken place and contracts need to be updated.

⁶ Following the redundancy of one of the Allotment Officers, the roles of the other Officers are under review and discussions have been started with the Officers involved.

⁷ The Deputy Clerk has very recently taken over the responsibility for the Policy Drafts and Reviews and these will be reviewed with Working Groups as fast as possible.