

# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday 22 February 2022



To the Members of Andover Town Council:

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of full **COUNCIL** to be held in **The Upper Guildhall, High Street, Andover on Tuesday 22 February 2022 at 6.30 pm** when it is proposed to transact the following business:-

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wendy R Coulter'.

Wendy R Coulter

**Town Clerk – 16 February 2022**

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Please find below the joining details for the Full Council Meeting on 22 February 2022 to enable members of the public to listen in to the meeting:

Watch the Council Meeting via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83511391318?pwd=ZWUrVTZDNERGd2FQYnZnRldTL3p6QT09>

Meeting ID: 835 1139 1318

Passcode: 547933

One tap mobile

+442034815240,,83511391318#,,,,\*547933# United Kingdom

+442039017895,,83511391318#,,,,\*547933# United Kingdom

# ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Tuesday 22 February 2022



**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ALL MEETINGS:** In line with Andover Town Council's "Recording at Meetings" Policy, Members and the public are requested to note that this meeting will be recorded by the Council, and may also be subject to the recording by members of the public.

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<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
	To <b>receive</b> and <b>accept</b> apologies for absence.
<b>2</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
	To <b>receive</b> and <b>note</b> any declarations of interest relevant to the agenda.
<b>3</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>
	The Town Mayor to sign as a correct record the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 25 January 2022, attached at <b>Appendix A</b> .
<b>4</b>	<b>TOWN MAYORS' ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>
	To <b>receive</b> the Town Mayors' Announcements
<b>5</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>
	There is an opportunity for members of the public to make statements or ask questions on items on the agenda or on other items relevant to the Town to which an answer may be given in the meeting and recorded in the minutes or, if necessary, a written reply will follow, or the questioner will be informed of the appropriate contact details. Each person is limited to 3 minutes and the total amount of time set aside will be 15 minutes.
<b>6</b>	<b>REPORTS FROM BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS FROM THE ANDOVER WARDS</b>
	<p>To <b>receive</b> any reports from Borough and County Councillors from the Andover Wards. For clarification: Reports are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and updates regarding Andover with which the Councillor has been involved</li> <li>• News from Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council committees which directly affect any of the Andover Wards.</li> </ul> <p>Reports are not;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments on the evening's meeting</li> <li>• Comments on Andover Town Council policies or procedures</li> <li>• Press releases.</li> </ul> <p>Items which are not reports can be forwarded to the Town Clerk for circulation.</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>QUESTIONS FROM THE ANDOVER TOWN COUNCILLORS TO THE BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS</b>
	To <b>receive</b> any Questions from Town Councillors to Borough and County Councillors for the Wards of Andover.
<b>8</b>	<b>INTERNAL AUDITOR'S INVESTIGATION INTO THE BUDGET 2022/2023</b>
	<p>To <b>receive</b> and <b>note</b> the report from the Internal Auditor following and investigation into the processes for agreeing the 2022/2023 Budget and the subsequent agreed budget, attached at <b>Appendix B</b>.</p> <p>To <b>note</b> that following this Full Council Meeting a Press Release will be made to the Andover Advertiser with the Internal Auditor's findings.</p>

<b>9</b>	<b>FINANCE</b>																				
	To <b>receive</b> and <b>approve</b> payments up to 15 February 2022 – attached at <b>Appendix C</b> . To <b>receive</b> the Cashbook up to 31 January 2022 – attached at <b>Appendix D</b> .																				
<b>10</b>	<b>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</b>																				
	To <b>receive</b> questions from Councillors, provided three clear working days' notice of the question has been given to the Town Clerk.																				
<b>11</b>	<b>COUNCIL OFFICES - OPTION 1 - FURTHER COSTINGS AND DATES</b>																				
	To <b>consider</b> and <b>approve</b> the recommendations in the attached report – attached at <b>Appendix E</b> .																				
<b>12</b>	<b>MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</b>																				
	<p><b>Special Motion: Reduction of 2022/23 Financial Reserves</b></p> <p><b><u>Proposed by Cllr D Coole and Seconded by Cllr C Ecclestone.</u></b></p> <p>Following the TVBC Section 151 Officer's decision to accept the Town Council's 2020/21 Financial Reserves as the basis for accepting the 2022/23 Budget and Precept Demand, rather than accepting the 2022/23 Financial Reserves approved by the Full Council, this Council Resolves to:</p> <p>1. Reduce its 2022/23 Financial Reserves to £436,970, which is based on the £596,970 held in its bank accounts as at 19th January 2022, less the planned expenditure of £160,000 to 31st March 2022 as identified by the Responsible Finance Officer at the 25th January 2022 Full Council Meeting.</p> <p>2. Agree the breakdown of the 2022/23 Financial Reserves as:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>£94,397.83</td><td>CIL Reserves</td></tr> <tr> <td>£8,275.80</td><td>Unallocated Reserves required to satisfy Full Council approved 2022/23 Reserves Virement to reduce 2022/23 Precept Demand</td></tr> <tr> <td>£185,038.75</td><td>Operational Reserves @ 6 months operating costs (Budget divided by two)</td></tr> <tr> <td>£149,257.62</td><td>Earmarked Reserves</td></tr> <tr> <td><b>£436,970.00</b></td><td><b>Total 2022/23 Financial Reserves</b></td></tr> </table> <p>3. Agree the breakdown of the Earmarked Reserves as:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>£70,000.00</td><td>Election costs</td></tr> <tr> <td>£50,000.00</td><td>Allotments</td></tr> <tr> <td>£2,000.00</td><td>HCC Grant for SIDs</td></tr> <tr> <td>£27,257.62</td><td>Christmas Lights</td></tr> <tr> <td><b>£149,257.62</b></td><td><b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b></td></tr> </table>	£94,397.83	CIL Reserves	£8,275.80	Unallocated Reserves required to satisfy Full Council approved 2022/23 Reserves Virement to reduce 2022/23 Precept Demand	£185,038.75	Operational Reserves @ 6 months operating costs (Budget divided by two)	£149,257.62	Earmarked Reserves	<b>£436,970.00</b>	<b>Total 2022/23 Financial Reserves</b>	£70,000.00	Election costs	£50,000.00	Allotments	£2,000.00	HCC Grant for SIDs	£27,257.62	Christmas Lights	<b>£149,257.62</b>	<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>
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<b>13</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION FROM ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE</b>
	To <b>approve</b> the recommendation from the Allotment Committee to increase the allotment rental and to change the billing period to 1 <sup>st</sup> October to 31 September. Report attached at <b>Appendix F</b> .
<b>14</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>
	To <b>note</b> the date of the next meeting: <b>Wednesday 23 March 2022</b> to be held in the <b>Guildhall, High Street, Andover</b> .

The Town Mayor will close the meeting.

# APPENDIX A – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

# A

## Minutes Council

### Time and date

6.30pm on Wednesday 26 January 2022

### Place

Upper Guildhall, High Street, Andover

Cllr B Long - Town Mayor (P)		
Cllr R Hughes - Deputy Town Mayor (P)		
Cllr N Asamoah (P)	Cllr L Banville (A)	Cllr D Coole (P)
Cllr J Coole (P)	Cllr C Ecclestone (A)	Cllr L Gregori (P)
Cllr K Hughes (A)	Cllr N Long (P)	Cllr R Meyer (P)
Cllr M Mumford (P)	Cllr R Rowles (A)	Cllr J Sangster (P)
Cllr D Treadwell (P)	Cllr S Waue (P)	

### Officers Present:

Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk)

Tor Warburton (Deputy Town Clerk) (Taking the minutes & managing online streaming)

### County/Borough Councillors:

Councillor Zilliah Brooks

**Members of the Public:** 2

**Members of the Press:** 1

**Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic this meeting was held in the Guildhall following Coronavirus preventative measures. The Town Council made arrangements to stream the meeting virtually to allow as much public access as possible.**

Prior to the commencement of the Council meeting, the Town Mayor announced that Item 11 of the agenda would be moved to after Item 13, to allow for time sensitive items to be considered first.

<b>C138/01/22</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
	Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors C Ecclestone, K Hughes and R Rowles.
<b>C139/01/22</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
	A Declaration of Interest was made by all Members of the Council in Agenda Item 9.

<b>C140/01/22</b>	<b>MINUTES</b> <p>An amendment to the Council Minutes of 15 December 2021, reference C129/12/21 was requested.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor D Coole that the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 October 2021 and the amended Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15 December 2021 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.</p> <p>A vote was taken which was unanimous.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 October 2021 and the amended Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15 December 2021 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.</b></p>
<b>C141/01/22</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b> <p><i>The notes below are a precis of statements/questions. They are not recorded word for word.</i></p> <p><b>Member of Public 1:</b></p> <p>2021 not a great year for anybody. It was an appalling year for the Town Council. Allotments are in disarray and new opportunities are being ignored. The Christmas Lights were shambolic. We saw more threats of judicial Review than we saw of any real achievement. Now we find through the Andover Advertiser that the faith in the Andover Town Council, is at an all time low. It is time for the Andover Town Council to work for Andover and not just its members. Will we see the installation of the Speed Indicator Signs? The Council voted in favour of the creation of a Youth Community Worker. Let 2022 be the year it happens.</p> <p>Let the new allotment site be a priority. Let the proposal for a paper free environment be taken seriously and actually work towards it. Let us develop the Town Mayors idea for a Charter Stone. Let the Jubilee funding not just be a token gesture. Let the 2022 Andover Town Council have a “let’s do something” attitude. Can the Town Councillors here present, promise to make 2022 a year of achievement? Politics despite some claims, isn’t a game. Its serious. That doesn’t mean it can’t be fun. There’s an opportunity to do something, please do not waste it. Thank you.</p> <p><b>Town Mayor’s response:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p><b>Member of Public 2:</b></p> <p>I am here on behalf of the residents, who are not happy about the completion of the Augusta Park allotment site. I have a list of questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What action has taken place since October 2021, when Taylor Wimpy had already put up the fence, built the car park and put water to the gate? It doesn’t look like anything has been done since.</li> <li>2. Who is the Councillor or Staff Member, responsible for making the allotment sites ready and prepared for the tenants?</li> <li>3. How many meetings have taken place with Taylor Wimpy about the Augusta Park allotment site since January 2010?</li> <li>4. Is it possible for Taylor Wimpy to be instructed in what it is doing, to be completed, via email or video call to them? Does it have to be a face-to-face meeting, which always seems to get cancelled?</li> </ol>

	<p>5. What is an expected completion date for the allotment site at Augusta Park?</p> <p>6. The plots are not full sized, what is the anticipated cost per plot?</p> <p><b>Town Mayor's Response:</b></p> <p>I will answer some of those questions now.</p> <p>The expected completion date has not changed. The expected completion date is March. Taylor Wimpy have not come back and said it is expected to be any longer than that.</p> <p>We are waiting for the water pipes to be connected and we are waiting for the access path to be put down. They have agreed to put hard standing down for the sheds, which they haven't done as yet.</p> <p>Myself and Councillor Long have been joining a staff member in meetings at the site. To ensure things are going ahead.</p> <p>As far as I know only one face to face meeting has been cancelled, which was due to Christmas and Covid.</p> <p>Taylor Wimpy do know everything they are doing and we are expecting them to be delivering on time. We are due a meeting with them in the next two weeks. We are expecting them to deliver it in March, then it has to go to Legal to sign the paperwork, for us to then own the site. Legal with Ox Drove took months.</p> <p>The plots are the equivalent of a 5-rod plot, which in old terms would be classed as a half rod plot and the anticipated cost at the moment is 40 pence per square metre. We have had it confirmed the plots are 125 square metres. Water charges will be on top. That is the present cost of plots. The Allotment Committee are looking at whether that cost will need to rise or not. It will be discussed in the February meeting.</p> <p><b>Member of Public 2:</b></p> <p>Thank you.</p>
<b>C142/01/22</b>	<b>BACK TO BASICS</b>
	<p>Members received and considered a report on 'Back to Basics' and the way forward for the Town Council.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is noted that all requirements listed are included in the 'Back to Basics' plan.</li> <li>• Additional work i.e., Queen's Jubilee needs to be clearly listed researched and costed in Officers time and approved by Full Council if it is to be added to the 'Back to Basics' plan.</li> <li>• Once the above is noted, it is to be agreed that external contractors will be brought in to discuss with the Council, the next steps and who will be involved in implementing them.</li> </ul> <p>Members were reminded that the Council had suggested that an Extraordinary Council meeting be set up, with an external contractor, where the next steps would be discussed and who would implement them. The Town Mayor confirmed it was Ellis Whittam who would be invited back to talk to the Councillors and that an Extraordinary Council meeting date was needed.</p> <p>The Town Mayor asked who was in favour of agreeing that Ellis Whittam were invited to come to an Extraordinary Council meeting and talk to the whole Council.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 11, AGAINST – 1, ABSTENTIONS – 0</p>



	<p><b>RESOLVED: That:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is noted that all requirements listed are included in the 'Back to Basics' plan.</li> <li>• Additional work i.e., Queen's Jubilee needs to be clearly listed researched and costed in Officers time and approved by Full Council if it is to be added to the 'Back to Basics' plan.</li> <li>• Once the above is noted, it is to be agreed that external contractors will be brought in to discuss with the Council, the next steps and who will be involved in implementing them.</li> <li>• Ellis Whittam be invited to an Extraordinary Council meeting to talk to the whole Council.</li> </ul>
<b>C143/01/22</b>	<p><b>STAFFING APPRAISALS &amp; PAYROLL FOR INCLUSION IN BUDGET 2022/2023</b></p> <p>Members considered a report on the conclusion of Staffing Appraisals and recommendations for the Payroll Budget to be included in the Budget 2022/2023.</p> <p><b>Salary Scale Increments:</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the staff be awarded the 1 Salary Scale Increment for 2022/2023.</p> <p>Members went into a debate.</p> <p>Members were reminded that Budget and Staffing Committee was disbanded in May 2021, under a new format of how the Council was going to work this year. A Human Resources (HR) Panel was put together. The HR Panel had the Terms of Reference for doing the appraisals. Appraisals have never come to Full Council. They are confidential. They would have to do be done in Confidential Matters. It would not be able to be done in the Public.</p> <p>Councillor N Long made a motion that the Members move straight to a vote, which was seconded by Councillor L Gregori.</p> <p>The Town Mayor moved to a vote on the first recommendation.</p> <p>A vote was taken:</p> <p>FOR – 7, AGAINST – 5, ABSTENTIONS – 0.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the staff be awarded the 1 Salary Scale Increment for 2022/2023.</b></p> <p><b>Salary Scales:</b></p> <p>Members were asked to note that some of the staff had reached the top of the payscale as agreed in 2018 and that it needed to be referred back to the HR Panel to ensure funding was in the Budget, in order for the payscales to be reviewed.</p> <p>Councillor D Coole proposed a minor amendment to the recommendation to read "It is recommended that in line with the 'Back to Basics' review findings, a new Bench Marking exercise be carried out to ensure that the staff are being paid fairly and that any adjustments to salary scales can be made."</p> <p>It was seconded by Councillor R Meyer.</p> <p>A vote was taken:</p> <p>FOR – 9, AGAINST – 1, ABSTENTIONS – 2</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the recommendation be amended to read, "It is recommended that in line with the 'Back to Basics' review findings, a new Bench Marking exercise be carried out to ensure that the staff are being paid fairly and that any adjustments to salary scales can be made."</b></p>

	<p><b>Budget 2022/2023:</b> Members noted that it was agreed in the Council meeting of December 2021, that the payroll budget would be £215,000.00, which is what the current staffing structure required.</p>																																						
<b>C144/01/22</b>	<b>EARMARKED RESERVES 2022/2023</b>																																						
	<p>Members considered the levels of Earmarked Reserves and went into debate. Councillor D Coole proposed an amendment to the Earmarked Reserves which was seconded by Councillor R Meyer. However, it was pointed out that this proposal could not be allowed as it would negate the item and its original recommendations and would therefore be invalid.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council approves the costs of Elections to be taken from Earmarked Reserves.</li> <li>• The Legal Expenses Earmarked Reserves be removed and transferred back into Operational Reserves.</li> <li>• That Full Council approves the movements /amendments to Earmarked Reserves, with a final total (removing Legal Expenses) of £292,955.05.</li> </ul> <p>The Andover Town Council's Responsible Financial Officer, the Town Clerk, made the following statement: "I appreciate what Councillor Coole has said with regard to the movement of Earmarked Reserves, however, we can trace those Earmarked Reserves right back to when we very first started. Each one has been documented. There is a management file going all the way back to 2012. The Earmarked Reserves that Councillor D Coole has presented to you this evening starts again. I have gone through them and I have to confess I'm confused. I am concerned that they don't actually follow the Reserves Policy which states that they have to be documented, they have to be for specific reasons and they can not be held for ongoing expenditure. I just want to make that point clear that the Earmarked Reserves that you have had in your report can be traced right back to the beginning of 2012.</p> <p>The alternative ones appear to start again. That is a decision for Council to make but it was a point I want to point out to you."</p> <p>Members were reminded that the Earmarked Reserves can be moved and approved at another Council meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Members moved straight to a vote.</p> <p>A recorded vote was taken as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>COUNCILLOR</th><th>FOR</th><th>AGAINST</th><th>ABSTENTION</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>N Asamoah</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>D Coole</td><td></td><td>X</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>J Coole</td><td></td><td>X</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>L Gregori</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>R Hughes</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>B Long</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>N Long</td><td>X</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>R Meyer</td><td></td><td>X</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>			COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION	N Asamoah	X			D Coole		X		J Coole		X		L Gregori	X			R Hughes	X			B Long	X			N Long	X			R Meyer		X	
COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION																																				
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N Long	X																																						
R Meyer		X																																					

	M Mumford	X		
	J Sangster	X		
	D Treadwell		X	
	S Waue	X		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>RESOLVED: That:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Council approves the costs of Elections to be taken from Earmarked Reserves.</b></li> <li>• <b>The Legal Expenses Earmarked Reserves be removed and transferred back into Operational Reserves.</b></li> <li>• <b>That Full Council approves the movements /amendments to Earmarked Reserves, with a final total (removing Legal Expenses) of £292,955.05.</b></li> </ul>			
<b>C145/01/22</b>	<b>BUDGET 2022/2023</b>			
	<p>Members received and considered a report on the Budget for 2022/2023.  It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Budget 2022/2023 of £370,077.50 (three hundred and seventy thousand, seventy seven pounds and fifty pence), as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and approved.  No Members of the Council raised any questions or debate.  A vote was taken.  FOR – 7, AGAINST – 5, ABSTENTIONS – 0  <b>RESOLVED: That the Budget 2022/2023 of £370,077.50 (three hundred and seventy thousand, seventy seven pounds and fifty pence), as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and approved.</b></p>			
<b>C146/01/22</b>	<b>PRECEPT 2022/2023</b>			
	<p>Members received and considered a report on the Precept level for 2022/2023  It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Precept level for 2022/2023 be £361,801.70 (three hundred and sixty one thousand, eight hundred and one pounds and seventy pence) based on a tax base of 17,147 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, plus £8,275.80 from Operational Reserves, be accepted and approved.  A vote was taken:  FOR – 7, AGAINST – 4, ABSTENTIONS – 1  <b>RESOLVED: That the Precept for 2022/2023 be £361,801.70 (three hundred and sixty one thousand, eight hundred and one pounds and seventy pence) based on a tax base of 17,147 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, be accepted and approved.</b>  <b>That £8,275.80 be taken from Operational Reserves to make up the shortfall for the Budget 2022/2023.</b>  Councillor L Gregori gave his thanks to the Officers and Members of the Policy and Resources Committee for their hard work in relation to the Budget.</p>			

<b>C147/01/22</b>	<b>DELEGATED AUTHORITY IN EXTREMIS</b>
	<p>Members received and considered a Scheme of Delegation, which allowed the Town Council to continue to function “in extremis”.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Scheme of Delegation to the Town Clerk in Extremis, be accepted and approved.</p> <p>As a result of some Members debating the necessity of having this scheme in place, Councillor R Hughes proposed and Councillor B Long seconded that an amendment to the recommendation to read, ‘that the delegated authority is accepted with the proviso that it is reviewed every 12 months’, be accepted.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 6, AGAINST – 4, ABSTENTIONS – 2</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That an amendment to the recommendation to read, ‘that the delegated authority is accepted with the proviso that it is reviewed every 12 months’ be accepted.</b></p> <p>Members moved to vote on the original recommendation with the amendment.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 8, AGAINST – 3, ABSTENTIONS – 1</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Scheme of Delegation to the Town Clerk in Extremis, with the proviso that it is reviewed every 12 months, be accepted and approved.</b></p>
<b>C148/01/22</b>	<b>FINANCE</b>
	<p>Members received the list of payments up to 18 January 2022.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the List of Payments up to 18 January 2022 be approved.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 10, AGAINST – 0, ABSTENTIONS – 2</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the List of Payments up to 18 January 2022 be approved.</b></p>
<b>C149/01/22</b>	<b>COUNCIL OFFICES - OPTIONS</b>
	<p>Members received and considered a report on options for the future of the Town Council.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor J Coole that an amendment to include a fourth option of not to have an office be considered. It was felt that the previous almost 2 years, had shown that Officers had been working from home successfully and paying for office space would not be justified.</p> <p>Members debated the amendment.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 5, AGAINST – 7, ABSTENTIONS – 0</p> <p><b>Motion not carried.</b></p> <p>The Members returned to discuss the original options.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that Option 1, Serviced office in the town centre @ £21,572.16 per annum, be accepted and approved.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 9, AGAINST – 2, ABSTENTIONS – 1</p>

	<b>RESOLVED: That Option 1, Serviced office in the town centre @ £21,572.16 per annum, be accepted and approved.</b>
<b>C150/01/22</b>	<b>MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</b>
	<p>Members considered a motion on increasing the Standing Committee Membership numbers to 11 each, as proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor N Asamoah.</p> <p>A vote was taken: For – 4, AGAINST – 7, ABSTENTIONS – 1</p> <p><b>Motion not carried.</b></p>
<b>C150/01/22</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>
	Members noted the date of the next meeting: <b>Wednesday 23 February 2022</b> , at the <b>Guildhall, High Street, Andover, starting at 6.30pm.</b>
<b>C151/01/22</b>	<b>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b>
	<p>It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor D Coole that the Members of the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting at Agenda Item 16 due to consideration of Confidential personal details protected under Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR UK 2018.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 9, AGAINST – 3, ABSTENTIONS - 0</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Members of the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting at Agenda Item 16 due to consideration of Confidential personal details protected under Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR UK 2018.</b></p>
	<b>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</b>
<b>C152/01/22</b>	<b>FREEDOM OF TOWN CERTIFICATE</b>
	<p>Members considered the presentation of the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town posthumously to Mr Holloway's daughter.</p> <p>A vote was taken which was unanimous.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town is presented posthumously to Mr Holloway's daughter.</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor N Long that Officers ascertain whether Mr Holloway's daughter would prefer the presentation of the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town posthumously, to be in the public or in private. That Officers be delegated to arrange for the framing of the Certificate to match the colour of the historic Squires shop front.</p> <p>A vote was taken which was unanimous.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That Officers ascertain whether Mr Holloway's daughter would prefer the presentation of the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town posthumously, to be in the public or in private. That Officers be delegated to arrange for the framing of the Certificate to match the colour of the historic Squires shop front.</b></p>

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.20pm.

Town Mayor

Date



## MULBERRY & CO

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Our Ref: MARK/AND009

Mrs W Coulter  
68B High Street  
Andover  
Hampshire  
SP10 1NG

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

Dear Wendy

### **Re: Andover Town Council 2022/23 budget setting**

We have been asked to provide a review of the 2022/23 budget setting process, together with a highline review of the council's reserves and budget for the 2022/23 council year. I would like to thank the clerk for providing us with the underlying data and access to unpublished minutes.

#### **Summary**

We reviewed the councils own financial regulations, these are regulations set by the council that detail how the finance function should operate. These are based on a model set as published by the National Association of Local Councils and whilst based on an older version they remain fit for purpose for a council of this size.

In our review, we found no breach of the timescales or regulations as set by the financial regulations for preparing, setting and agreeing a budget and precept.

We are under no doubt that the council and committees were fully informed when they resolved to make their decisions and recommendations and we would go so far as to say that the briefing papers and back up documentation was extremely detailed and thorough and a model of good practice. Evidence from the voting by council and committee shows that votes were either unanimous or majority in favour of the budget and precept. Should councillors have issue with the budget they have had ample opportunity to review the data and bring this to the attention of the council.

We are not in a position to comment on the individual make up of any particular line item in the accounts, this is purely a council decision on what it wants to spend its resources on; however, we have been asked to comment on the overall financial viability of the budget and the council reserves and to this end we found no evidence to suggest that the council is running any sort of significant deficit, in fact all evidences points to a balance budget with the use of £8,275 from a reserve pool of over £500k.

In respect of reserves, rule of thumb calculations suggests that a general reserve of 50% of precept is adequate for a council of this size. Andover Town Councils general reserve at the time of writing was circa £174k. On a precept of £361k, this level of reserve is pretty much as it should be.

In summary, we are of the opinion that the council has robust practices in place, is in no financial distress, that the 2022/23 budget has been set in accordance with regulation, and set a such a level as to produce no surplus or deficit.

### **Detailed Findings**

According to the Town Council's published financial regulations para 3 "Annual Estimates (budget) and forward planning", the budget setting process shall commence with committees submitting proposals by no later than the end of October each year. The RFO must each year, by no later than November, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee before submission to Council. Full council shall then approve the precept/budget by the end of January.

### **Proposal Stage**

The minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> October for the P&R Committee show consideration of the budget, minute ref PR 011/10/21 & PR012/10/21. In summary, it was agreed further consideration was required. This clearly demonstrates the council is following its own financial regulations and timescales.

*PR 011/10/21*

*FINANCIAL PLAN FOR 2022/2023*

*Members noted the Financial Plan for 2022/2023 report.*

*It was agreed that consideration need to be given at the next meeting, whether Committees that had a responsibility for a budget line, needed to provide an outlined expenditure plan prior to the spending of the Earmarked Reserves to comply with the Auditor's requirements.*

*PR 012/10/21*

*POLICY AND RESOURCES DRAFT BUDGET 2022/2023*

*Members considered a Draft Budget for the Policy and Resources Committee for 2022/2023.*

*Due to the short period of time remaining before all Budget proposals needed to be submitted to Full Council, it was suggested that an informal meeting take place prior to the next Policy and Resources meeting to fully consider all financial requirements of the Committee and make any amendments and additions as necessary.*

A review of appendix E to agenda for this meeting shows a detailed briefing paper setting out the key points and timescales. This is a detailed and thorough document that demonstrates best practice procedure. Appendix F is the financial draft budget for 2022/23 showing estimated costs. This is followed by a further briefing paper on the considerations to note.

At this stage, from an internal audit perspective, there is no evidence to suggest the council is not following proper procedure, in fact quite the opposite is true, evidence shows the council has robust and thorough processes in place.

### **Detailed Estimates Stage**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 the Policies and Resources committee discussed the 2022/23 budget, Minute ref PR 024/12/21, PR 025/12/21 & PR 026/12/21. In summary it was unanimously agreed to put the budget forward to full council for approval. This clearly demonstrates again the council is following regulations and it is clear beyond reasonable doubt that there were unanimous decisions made regarding the budget.

*PR 024/12/21*

*FINANCIAL PLAN FOR 2022/2023*

*Members noted the report on the Financial Plan for 2022/2023.*

*It was proposed by Councillor N Long and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that:*

*The Staffing Budget remain the same as 2021/2022 and be considered for inclusion in the final Budget.*

*The Policy and Resources Committee recommend to Full Council that the Operational Reserves be put back to 6 months.*

*The Draft Budget 2022/2023 be submitted to full Council on 15 December 2021 for further consideration prior to final approval at the full Council meeting to be held on 26 January 2022.*

*A vote was taken which was unanimous.*

*RESOLVED: That:*

*The Staffing Budget remain the same as 2021/2022 and be considered for inclusion in the final Budget.*

*The Policy and Resources Committee recommend to Full Council that the Operational Reserves be put back to 6 months.*



*The Draft Budget 2022/2023 be submitted to full Council on 15 December 2021 for further consideration prior to final approval at the full Council meeting to be held on 26 January 2022.*

*PR 025/12/21*

*POLICY AND RESOURCES DRAFT BUDGET 2022/2023*

*Members considered a Draft Budget for the Policy and Resources Committee for 2022/2023.*

*It was confirmed that there had been no requests from Members for any large expenditure. The following amendments were suggested; the Election costs be increased back to £10,000.00. and that the Office Rental Budget remains the same at £12,000.00.*

*It was proposed by Councillor M Mumford and seconded by Councillor N Long that the Policy and Resources Draft Budget 2022/2023 with the amendments, be accepted.*

*A vote was taken which was unanimous.*

*RESOLVED: That the Policy and Resources Draft Budget 2022/2023 with the amendments, be accepted.*

*PR 026/12/21*

*DRAFT BUDGET 2022/2023*

*Members considered the Draft Budget 2022/2023 as a whole.*

*It was suggested that Budget line for Pest Control be amended back to £700.00 per allotment site until a replacement contract is in place. The Budget line for the Queen's Jubilee 2022 be increased to £3,000.00.*

*It was proposed by Councillor N Long and seconded by Councillor M Mumford that the Draft Budget 2022/2023 with the amendments be recommended to Full Council for approval.*

*A vote was taken which was unanimous.*

*RESOLVED: That the Draft Budget 2022/2023 with the amendments be recommended to Full Council for approval.*

A review of appendix C to agenda for this meeting shows a detailed briefing paper setting out the key points and timescales. This is a detailed and thorough document that demonstrates best practice procedure. Appendix D is the financial draft budget for 2022/23 showing estimated costs at this stage. Appendix E is the draft budget with financial attached.

At this stage the draft budget shows regular income of £24,750 and costs of £366,342 the balance of £341,592 being the precept requested, from an internal audit perspective the council is presenting a balanced budget within timescales, with further recommendations to full council.

#### **Full Council Consideration**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 Full Council discussed the 2022/23 budget, Minute ref C130/12/21. In summary it was agreed to accept the policy and resources committee recommendations but to return the budget and plan with some recommended changes, with 5 voting in agreement 3 against and 1 abstention.

*C130/12/21 BUDGET 2022/2023 Members received and noted the Explanation Report and Draft Budget 2022/2023. Consideration was given to which items needed to be removed or included. £500 to be included for Services at Saxon Heights Allotment Site. Queens Jubilee to be removed and the funding to be taken from CIL monies. £3,000 to be moved to Emergency Funding £3,000 to be moved to Website Rents/Rates – New Equipment - £0 £1,500 into Allotments It was proposed by Councillor N long and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that the following Policy and Resources recommendations be approved: • That the Staffing Budget remain the same as 2021/2022 and be included in the final Budget. • That the Operational Reserves be put back up to 6 months. • That the Draft Budget 2022/2023 be recommended to Full Council for further consideration prior to final approval at the Full Council meeting to be held on 26 January 2022.*

*RESOLVED: That the following Policy and Resources recommendations be approved: • That the Staffing Budget remain the same as 2021/2022 and be included in the final Budget. • That the Operational Reserves be put back up to 6 months. • That the Draft Budget 2022/2023 be recommended to Policy & Resources Committee for further consideration prior to final approval at the Full Council meeting to be held on 26 January 2022.*

### **Final Revision Stage**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 the Policies and Resources committee discussed the 2022/23 budget, Minute ref PR 037/01/22, & PR 038/01/22. In summary it was unanimously agreed to accept the full council considerations.

*PR 037/01/22*

#### **FINANCIAL PLAN (BUDGET PLAN) FOR 2022/2023**

*Members considered a financial plan for 2022/2023, including the consideration of Council Reserves and CIL Monies. It was questioned why Youth Council, Provision of Facilities in Vigo Park and Public Conveniences were still showing in the Earmarked Reserves, if the Town Council was going back to basics. It was clarified that these items would be removed once Full Council had agreed the Earmarked Reserves, as well as all other items with zero against them. It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor N Long that the current Earmarked Reserves be accepted and the Staffing Budget of £215,000, be included in the final Budget 2022/2023 and be recommended to Full Council for approval.*

*A vote was taken which was unanimous.*

*RESOLVED: That the current Earmarked Reserves be accepted and the Staffing Budget of £215,000, be included in the final Budget 2022/2023 and be recommended to Full Council for approval.*

*PR 038/01/22*

#### **DRAFT BUDGET 2022/2023**

*Members considered the Draft Budget 2022/2023 to be recommended to Full Council on 25 January 2022 for final consideration.*

*Members felt that an inflation rate of 5% should be factored into the calculation of the Draft Budget 2022/2023.*

*It was proposed by Councillor N Long and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that it be recommended for approval to Full Council, that the Town Clerk apply a 5% inflation increase on the previous year's budget, which would bring the Budget 2022/2023 to £370, 077.50 and the difference between that and the precept set at £21.10, be taken from General Reserves.*

*A vote was taken which was unanimous.*

*RESOLVED: That it be recommended for approval to Full Council, that the Town Clerk apply a 5% inflation increase on the previous year's budget, which would bring the Budget 2022/2023 to £370, 077.50 and the difference between that and the precept set at £21.10, be taken from General Reserves.*

### **Approval by Full Council**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 Full Council discussed the 2022/23 budget, minute ref C145/01/22 and C146/01/22. In summary the precept level and budget was agreed.

#### **C145/01/22 BUDGET 2022/2023**

*Members received and considered a report on the Budget for 2022/2023.*

*It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Budget 2022/2023 of £370,077.50 (three hundred and seventy thousand, seventy seven pounds and fifty pence), as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and approved.*

*No Members of the Council raised any questions or debate.*

*A vote was taken.*

*FOR – 7, AGAINST – 5, ABSTENTIONS – 0*

*RESOLVED: That the Budget 2022/2023 of £370,077.50 (three hundred and seventy thousand, seventy seven pounds and fifty pence), as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and approved.*

#### **C146/01/22 PRECEPT 2022/2023**

*Members received and considered a report on the Precept level for 2022/2023*

*It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Precept level for 2022/2023 be £361,801.70 (three hundred and sixty one thousand, eight hundred and one pounds and seventy pence) based on a tax base of 17,147 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, plus £8,275.80 from Operational Reserves, be accepted and approved.*

*A vote was taken:*

*FOR – 7, AGAINST – 4, ABSTENTIONS – 1*

*RESOLVED: That the Precept for 2022/2023 be £361,801.70 (three hundred and sixty one thousand, eight hundred and one pounds and seventy pence) based on a tax base of 17,147 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, be accepted and approved.*

*That £8,275.80 be taken from Operational Reserves to make up the shortfall for the Budget 2022/2023.*

*Councillor L Gregori gave his thanks to the Officers and Members of the Policy and Resources Committee for their hard work in relation to the Budget.*

#### **Financial review**

In the years ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the council's precepts were £319,378 and £344,204 respectively and in both those years the council reported net surpluses. In addition to this, in both years the council had reserves in excess of £430k as supported by bank balances at the time. There is no indication that the council was in anyway in any financial distress or showing signs of financial mismanagement.

For the 2020/23 council year Andover Town Council has applied for a precept of £361,801.70. This was submitted to the district council on the 27/01/22 and is based on gross expenditure of £395,330, less expected revenue of £25,254 and use of reserves of £8,275. At the time of writing, the council has circa £561k of reserves as supported by bank balances £564k. Therefore, the use of £8,275 from reserves is not in my opinion excessive.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



**Mark Mulberry**



# APPENDIX C – PAYMENTS UP TO 15 FEBRUARY 2022

# C

## Andover Town Council

### Expenditure transactions - approval list

Start of year 01/04/21

Tn no	Cheque	Gross	Heading	Invoice date	Details	Cheque Total
1690	BACS	£617.40		31/01/22	A1 Loo Hire - Toilet Hire for 7 allotment sites	£617.40
1691	DDCOBWE BFEB2022	£283.02	4000/1	02/02/22	Cobweb Solutions Ltd - Provision of emails and Office 365 February 2022	£283.02
1692	BACS:	£35.94	4000/6/2	01/02/22	Custom Studio Ltd - Website Hosting February 2022	£81.84
1693	BACS:	£45.90	4000/6/1	10/02/22	Custom Studio Ltd - Investigation into Grant Form issues	£81.84
1697	BACS	£156.66		31/01/22	Southern Electric - Energy provision 68B High Street 20.10.2021 - 27.01.2022	£156.66
1698	BACS:	£400.00		01/02/22	M B Pest Services - Pest Control for 7 allotment Sites January 2022	£400.00
1699	BACS:	£282.47	4210/15	27/01/22	Moore's Cleaning Services Ltd - Office Cleaning January 2022	£282.47
1700	BACS:	£216.00	4000/4	04/02/22	Mulberry & Co - Investigation into Budget Setting Process for 2022/2023	£216.00
1701	BACS	£600.00	4000/3	31/01/22	Surrey Hills Solicitors - General Advice Retainer December 2021 & January 2022	£600.00
1702	BACS	£145.90	4100/4	14/02/22	Test Valley Borough Council - Hire of Guildhall 22 February 2022	£928.23
1703	BACS	£201.60	4100/4	07/02/22	Test Valley Borough Council - Room Hire The Lights 11, 18, 4, 31 January 2022	£928.23
1704	BACS	£278.33	4100/4	28/01/22	Test Valley Borough Council - Hire of Guildhall 13 April, 11 May 2022	£928.23
1705	BACS	£302.40	4100/4	20/12/21	Test Valley Borough Council - Room Hire - The Lights 15.11.2021 06.12.2021 4&9/11.21 & 2&7.12.21	£928.23
1706	BACS	£49.99	4210/8	07/02/22	Michelle Young - Reimbursements for printing costs Jan&Feb 2022	£49.99
		£531.40			Confidential	
<b>Total</b>						£4,147.01

Signature

Date

16/02/22 10:24 AM Vs: 8.68.03

Signature

Page 1

## Financial Statement - Cashbook

Statement of receipts and payments between 01/04/21 and 31/01/22 inclusive. This may include transactions with ledger dates outside this period.

Balances at the start of the year

### Ordinary Accounts

Co-Operative Bank/ Unity Trust Bank	£367,242.89
Deposits Unity Trust	£85,222.78
Petty Cash Account	£0.00
Petty Cash Card Unity	£40.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>£452,505.89</b>

RECEIPTS	Net (£)	Vat (£)	Gross (£)
Events & Projects			
3025 Town Development	7,124.22	0.00	7,124.22
Events & Projects Total	7,124.22	0.00	7,124.22
Policy & Resources			
36 Business Rates Refund	0.00	0.00	0.00
99 Heating & Lighting	0.00	0.00	0.00
3000 Precept	349,584.80	0.00	349,584.80
3001 TVBC Tax band Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00
3010 Bank Interest	5.25	0.00	5.25
3011 Insurance Premium	79.15	0.00	79.15
3020 Grants Received	0.00	0.00	0.00
3021 CIL Monies	14,050.94	0.00	14,050.94
3100 VAT Refund	21,508.40	0.00	21,508.40
3110 VAT Overclaim	0.00	0.00	0.00
3115 VAT Write Off	0.00	0.00	0.00
3116 IT Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00
3339 Mayors Events	0.00	0.00	0.00
3998 Funds held for Youth Council	0.00	0.00	0.00
3999 Funds held for Neighbourhood Plan	0.00	0.00	0.00
4000 Defibrillator	0.00	0.00	0.00
4210 Waste Removal	0.00	0.00	0.00
4211 Photocopying	0.00	0.00	0.00
4212 Payroll	0.00	0.00	0.00
Policy & Resources Total	385,228.54	0.00	385,228.54
Allotments			
3050 Allotment Rents	24,620.53	0.00	24,620.53
3051 Allotment Rents	50.00	0.00	50.00
3052 Deposit Credit Interest	0.00	0.00	0.00
3053 Deposit direct payment	0.00	0.00	0.00
Allotments Total	24,670.53	0.00	24,670.53
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>417,023.29</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>417,023.29</b>
PAYMENTS	Net (£)	Vat (£)	Gross (£)
Events & Projects			
4190 Grants	1,990.00	0.00	1,990.00
4700 Town Centre Development	23,528.36	4,554.28	28,082.64
Events & Projects Total	25,518.36	4,554.28	30,072.64

## Financial Statement - Cashbook

Statement of receipts and payments between 01/04/21 and 31/01/22 inclusive. This may include

### Policy & Resources

400 IT Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00
4000 Corporate Management	21,857.30	4,875.72	26,733.02
4100 Democratic Representation	3,087.21	504.37	3,591.58
4180 Other Services to the Public	14,328.11	1,644.36	15,972.47
4200 Administration Rechargeable Staffing	152,383.62	1,585.05	153,968.67
4204 New Building Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
4205 Bus Shelters	0.00	0.00	0.00
4210 Administration Rechargeable	30,346.69	1,745.56	32,092.25
Policy & Resources Total	222,002.93	10,355.06	232,357.99

### Allotments

3052 Deposits Expenditure	0.00	0.00	0.00
4500 Allotment Service	0.00	0.00	0.00
Allotments Total	30,222.01	2,948.70	33,170.71

### Planning/Highways

4300 Planning/Highways	0.00	0.00	0.00
Planning/Highways Total	0.00	0.00	0.00

Total Payments	277,743.30	17,858.04	295,601.34
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### Closing Balances

#### Ordinary Accounts

Co-Operative Bank/ Unity Trust Bank	£488,659.59
Deposits Unity Trust	£85,228.03
Petty Cash Account	£0.00
Petty Cash Card Unity	£40.22
Total	<u>£573,927.84</u>

**Not all the accounts have been reconciled exactly to the end date on this statement.**

## APPENDIX E – PROVISION OF NEW OFFICES

# E

**Produced for:**

Full Council

**Date of Report:**

14 February 2022

**Summary of Key Issues**

In the Full Council meeting on 25 January 2022 the following resolution was carried:

It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that Option 1, Serviced office in the town centre @ £21,572.16 per annum, be accepted and approved.

A vote was taken:

FOR – 9, AGAINST – 2, ABSTENTIONS – 1

**RESOLVED: That Option 1, Serviced office in the town centre @ £21,572.16 per annum, be accepted and approved.**

Officers were asked to explore the full costs of closing and moving the office to the approved Option and present them back to Full Council (as Policy and Resources was cancelled).

**Current Situation**

The office space that Andover Town Council currently rents is not 'fit for purpose' in the present climate. It was originally hoped that all Committee Meetings and Full Council meetings could be held in the offices, however, this has not been possible and Full Council Meetings continue to be held at the Guildhall at an additional cost. It is impossible to make the office Covid safe at a reasonable cost and without employing more cleaners or paying additional overtime to staff.

The current costs per month are as follows\*:

Rent:	£967
Rates:	£465.20
Electric:	£490.75
Telephone and broadband:	£244
Photocopying:	£359.34
Postage:	£157.34
Office maintenance:	£391.67
Waste removal:	£247.50

*(\* figures taken from year when office was fully operational)*

**Total per month:       £3,570.30**

**Total per annum:       £42,843.60**

**Purpose of the report**

To further explore all indicative costs involved in closing and moving the Office with proposed time frames.

### **Serviced office in town centre per month:**

#### **IncuHive office 108 (room for 5/6 desks, a breakout area, and some filing storage).**

Rent:	£750
Rates:	£0 (inc in rent)
Electric:	£0 (inc in rent)
Telephone and broadband:	£244
Photocopying:	£359.34
Postage:	£157.34
Office maintenance:	£80.00 (comes with cleaner for the building)
Waste removal:	£207.00 (would not need to pay for general waste just confidential)

**Total per month:                   £1,797.68**

For this cost the Council would get a serviced office which would take 5/6 desks, a small break out area/desk for meetings with Allotment holders and Members, and room for filing storage. The use of a meeting room which would suffice for meetings and committee meetings at £20 per hour, all electricity, 24 hrs access, cleaner, loos, kitchen.

Current furniture would ideally need to be replaced and smaller more compact desks purchased:

An ideal desk for the space would be:

[www.ikea.com/gb/en/p/micke-desk-white-80213074/](http://www.ikea.com/gb/en/p/micke-desk-white-80213074/) at £70 per desk.

These can be extended over time if more space is required, and room is available for extension.

4 desks would be needed ( $70 \times 4 = £280$ ), the Town Clerk could retain her current desk.

Alternatively, the very basic desks that make up the current conference table could be used.

This space can be rented monthly and can be terminated with short notice if Andover Town Council consider it necessary.

There is a lift and there will be 24-hour access along with a Ring doorbell that could be controlled via mobile phone from the office.

There will be ample space for filing storage and current units can be used.

IncuHive, require a month's rent in advance to hold the office as their offices are in high demand. This deposit will be fully refundable (minus an admin charge of £50), should it be decided not to move offices.

Comes with an external post box that can be accessed by Members to collect printed agendas.

### **IncuHive**

Members should note that the decision to move to IncuHive is compliant with the ethos of the Town Council, by taking an office amongst local businesses and supporting the regeneration of Andover Town



Centre. IncuHive also run an environmentally friendly space using, where possible green solutions to provide office services. This is in line with the ideal practices of the Town Council.

It should also be noted that by taking up a serviced office Andover Town Council will no longer have to mitigate for lone working.

Incuhive: <https://incuhive.co.uk/our-locations/andover>

### **Storage for Council equipment that is still required:**

There are several options that can be used:

On site storage (160 sq ft) within the building to store any furniture or files that are not needed daily at a cost of £370 per month, the obvious benefit being that all is easily to hand. This would be available in 4/6 months. If this option is undertaken only contents insurance would be required therefore, no additional costs.

Two quotes have also been obtained for off-site storage on the outskirts of Andover with 24 access, although, there is very limited availability (please note that if this option is undertaken additional insurance will be required and added to the monthly cost):

- 1: 160sq ft (1 available) for **£205** per month (additional insurance would need to be sought)
- 2: 150sq ft (currently none available) **£305** per month (limited availability on smaller units 100 sq ft for **£215** per month.

### **Moving Costs:**

Quotes have been obtained for moving the office

- 1: **£425**

Two further quotes have been sought but unavailable at time of publication, update will be provided at the meeting.

No companies have had a site visit so these may increase/decrease once it is decided what furniture is to be retained and if they are delivering to two addresses or one.

A company has been found who will purchase any excess furniture in any condition to off-set moving costs.

### **Time Scales:**

- **Notice is given on current office in March 2022 with end of tenancy in September 2022.**
- **Tenancy is undertaken with IncuHive from April 2022.**
- **April 2022, basic office furniture can be transferred to IncuHive and work can commence in the new office from May 2022. Voip system transferred to new offices.**
- **May 2022 - Committee meetings commence at IncuHive.**
- **April - September - Officers decide what furniture is to be retained and ready it for move to storage/new office and sell what is not needed. Officers prepare paperwork and other items to be moved.**
- **End of July 2022 - notice is given on all utilities.**

- **End of August 2022 – remaining items are moved from current offices to IncuHive.**

### **Legal and Policy Implications**

The Town Council has a duty of care to provide the Town Council staff with the equipment to enable them to carry out their jobs efficiently and safely.

The Guidelines and the Law on the Coronavirus is changing daily. At the time of writing this report a new variant, Omnicron, has taken hold and its infection rate is high. The recommendation from central government is to work from home, if possible, this is due to be debated on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in Parliament, but whatever the decision we must make provision for the presence of Covid in day to day living going forward. It is imperative that The Council takes its duty of care to its staff and members of the public seriously and invests in an office that allows a working environment that not only saves money but offers safety for all. Whilst Omnicron appears to be less severe than previous variants because of its high transmissibility staff shortages is the current concern amongst businesses and the public sector. It is important to factor this in when thinking about future office space to allow mitigation for this which will include flexible working and shift working.

### **Recommendations**

- **To receive and note the report.**
- **To instruct Officers to terminate tenancy on current office from September 2022.**
- **To instruct Officers to pay deposit of one month's rent (£750 + VAT) to IncuHive for Office 108 to start tenancy from April 2022.**
- **To instruct Officers to take one of the storage options.**
- **To instruct Officers to take one of the removal costs.**
- **To agree suggested time frames.**

Note: The people to contact about this report are Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) and Tor Warburton (Deputy Clerk), Andover Town Council, 68B, High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG.

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## APPENDIX F – ALLOTMENT RENTAL INCREASES

# F

**Produced for:**

Allotment Committee and Full Council

**Date of Report:**

27 January 2022

**Background:**

Over the past 2 years Town Council member have expressed their concern at the costs of running the allotments and the fact that it appears that the allotments are subsidised by the Town Council.

Costs of Allotments over the past 5 years:

2017/2018

Income from Allotment Rental: £20,157.54

Expenditure: £30,763.02

2018/2019

Income from Allotment Rental: £25,570.22

Expenditure: £32,318.45

2019/2020

Income from Allotment Rental: £23,512.76

Expenditure: £31,479.50

2020/2021

Income from Allotment Rental: 23,636.93

Expenditure: £29,496.41

2021/2022 (as @ 31.12.2021)

Income from Allotment Rental: £24,020.56

Expenditure: £26,984.89

It should be noted that during 2020 and 2021 the Covid-19 Pandemic has severely restricted the maintenance that has been carried out due to various factors such as lockdowns, shortage of staff and shortage of equipment and materials.

Detail of costs have not been provided in this report as Members have requested a plan as to how the allotment increases can be carried out, therefore, the costs are an illustration.

It shows that the Town Council is subsidising the allotment service by an approximate average of £6830.00 per year.

The allotment committee has been tasked with reviewing the costs of running the allotments and considering whether an increase in allotment rental should be considered by full Council.

This report will provide information on the costs of running the allotments for the past 5 years, the income received over the past 5 years and if Members are so minded, a plan of how the allotment rental could be increased for the next 4 years, as indicated in the agreed budget for 2022/2023.

Previous Rental Increase: The allotment rents were last increased in 2012. A review of the rental costs has not taken place since.

In 2012, the Town Council owned and ran 7 allotment sites.

Current situation: The Town Council now owns and runs 8 allotment sites with 2 new sites being handed over during 2022.

Due to the Covid -19 Pandemic and other factors affecting the National Economy, it is predicted that during 2022 Interest Rates will rise steeply. The Town Council has already factored in an increase of 5% on its Budget for 2022/2023.

However, the allotment rental has not increased since 2012 therefore the Town Council faces **a fiscal lag** and the shortfall between Allotment Income and Expenditure will grow. This burden at the moment, is borne by the taxpayer.

#### **Allotment Committee Recommendation (2 December 2021):**

At its meeting on 2 December 2021, the Allotment Committee members discussed a 10% increase on the current allotment rental.

Currently the rent is 0.40p per square metre. Most allotment plots in Andover are 126 square metres, giving an average allotment cost of £50.40

A 10% increase would bring the cost per square metre to 0.44p per square metre, making the average allotment cost for 126 square metres £55.44.

It is suggested that to keep the allotment rental in-line with increasing costs, a 10% increase should be added to the rent each year for the next 4 years.

Forecast:

2023/2024 – Rental cost 0.48p per square metre @ 126 sqm = £60.48

2024/2025 – Rental cost 0.52p per square metre @ 126 sqm = £65.52

2025/2026 – Rental cost 0.57p per square metre @ 126 sqm = £71.82

2026/2027 – Rental cost 0.62p per square metre @ 126 sqm = £78.12

IF ALL allotment plots are tenanted as of 1<sup>st</sup> September the following rental could be received:

2023/2024 - Total Allotment sqm = 73,110.92 = £35,093.24

2024/2025 - Total Allotment sqm = 73,110.92 = £38,017.68

2025/2026 - Total Allotment sqm = 73,110.92 = £41,673.22

2026/2027 - Total Allotment sqm = 73,110.92 = £45,328.77

#### **Advice from National Allotment Society, Legal Department:**

- As the allotment sites are all statutory, the allotment legislation applies to them. Section 1 of the Allotments Act 1922 (as amended by the 1950 Act) provides that 12 months notice outside of the

growing season (6<sup>th</sup> April-29<sup>th</sup> September) must be given for any significant changes to the tenancy agreement. As the rent is a fundamental part of the agreement, 12 months notice must be given to effectively terminate the current tenancy agreement to commence with the new agreement under the new rent.

- However, you could look to introduce a rent revision clause into the tenancy agreement to provide a shorter notice period. I would still recommend providing a fair amount of notice (3-6 months would be good). To introduce such a clause, you would need to provide 12 months notice outside of the growing season.
- As your rents are handled in September, you could issue the notice for the increase now and the increase would be effective for the 2023-2024 tenancy.
- Any new tenants, including any on new sites being established, will not need 12 months notice. Those tenants can be put straight on to the new tenancy agreement.

### **Plan to increase the rental:**

Considering the advice above the following outline process is proposed for actioning:

- To agree a 10% increase for the next 4 years or propose an alternative increase.
- Once increase is agreed recommend to Full Council for approval.
- Once Full Council approval is received, consult with Allotment holders
- In order to explore cost cuttings within the consultation further in depth surveys could be carried out ie toilet provision
- Receive, collate, and report responses to Allotment Committee.
- Make final recommendation to Full Council including a change to the billing period to allow time to make the increase in 2023.
- Full Council approve any increases and billing period change.
- All Allotment tenants to be notified in their invoice of 1 September 2022 that the billing period will be changed from 1<sup>st</sup> September – 31 August, to 1 October – 31 September, this then moves the billing period outside of the growing period and in line with other Allotment Authorities.
- On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, all tenants are sent a letter informing them of the rental increase and why, from 1 October 2023 and ending their tenancy on 30 September 2023 with a new tenancy agreement incorporating the new rental charge being issued on the 1 October 2023.
- Send out new Tenancy agreements with agreed increase on 1 October 2023.

### **Financial Implications**

The financial implications are addressed within the report.

### **Legal and Policy Implications**

Allotment Legislation applies to Andover Town Council owned allotment sites as they are Statutory Allotments: Section 1 of the Allotments Act 1922 (as amended by the 1950 Act)

The growing season is 6<sup>th</sup> April – 29<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Recommendations**

- **To agree a rental increase of 10% per year for the next 4 years**
- **To agree a billing period change to 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31 September.**
- **To agree the plan for increasing rental as outlined above.**

Note: The person to contact about this report is Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk), Andover Town Council, 68B, High Street, Andover, Hampshire. SP10 1NG.

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