CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Parrock View, 358 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle, PE13 5HS Tel: 01945 870083 Mobile: 07932 191050 E-mail: clerk@christchurchparishcouncil.org.uk Clerk: Dave Gibbs

To Members of the Public and Press

7 March 2023

You are invited to attend a meeting of Christchurch Parish Council to be held in Christchurch Community Centre for the purpose of transacting the following business.

On Monday 13 March 2023 at 7.30pm

Members of the public and press are invited to address the Council at its Public Time from 7.35pm to 7.50pm

Yours truly

Dave Gibbs

(Clerk/Proper Officer)

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AGENDA

149/22-23 Apologies for Absence

150/22-23 Declarations of Interest

Councillors to declare any interests in respect of any item to be discussed at this meeting:-

- a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest
- b) Non-Pecuniary Interest
- c) Sensitive Pecuniary Interest

151/22-23 Chairman's Announcements

To receive such announcements as the Chairman may wish to make to the Council

152/22-23 Public Time

To receive representations from members of the public regarding issues pertinent to the Council

153/22-23 Confirmation of Minutes

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2023

154/22-23 Matters Outstanding

- a) Bus shelter improvement project update
- b) Pavement outside Field Lodge, Upwell Road update
- c) Affordable housing proposal update
- d) Padgetts Road repairs update
- e) Skate park repairs update
- f) Household items outside property in Upwell Road update
- g) Recreation Ground trees update
- h) The Coronation of The King and The Queen Consort

155/22-23 Police Report

To report on policing matters in the area over the last month

156/22-23 County & District Councillors Reports

To receive reports from Cllrs Count, French, Sutton and Tanfield

157/22-23 Clerk's Report

To receive a report on meetings attended and correspondence received

158/22-23 Members and Residents Issues

To consider any matters raised by Members of the Council and local residents

159/22-23 Recreation Ground Extension

To receive an update on developments since the last meeting

160/22-23 Planning

a) To consider the following applications: F/YR23/0177/F - Erect 1 x dwelling (2-storey 4-bed) and a detached garage, involving the removal of existing caravan and demolition of existing outbuilding - Cornfields, Euximoor Drove, Christchurch

161/22-23 Finance

- a) To receive a financial report from the Clerk as at 28.2.23
- b) To approve the following payments: Clerk salary and home office allowance £ 441.13
 Clerk expenses £ 407.19
- c) To consider grants to local charities and voluntary organisations under Section 137 of the Local Government Act
- d) To review and resolve on the Council's banking arrangements
- e) To review and approve the Governance and Management Risk Assessment

162/22-23 Policies and Procedures

To review the following policies and procedures and amend or re-adopt as required:

- a) Equality and diversity policy
- b) Homeworking policy
- c) Expenses policy

163/22-23 Annual Parish Meeting

To agree the format and content of the Annual Parish Meeting - 28 March

164/22-23 Local Council Elections

To report on the arrangements, process and timetable for the forthcoming elections

165/22-23 Matters for Next Meeting

To discuss future agenda items from Councillors

166/22-23 Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

To confirm the dates of the next two meetings. Due to bank holidays in April and May, the next two meetings will take place on the third Mondays, namely 17 April and 15 May.

CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 13 February 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs J Hughes (Chairman), S Aldridge, J Bliss, P Owen, A Sparrow, Cllr W Sutton (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), A Nason, M Sadler (Parishioners)

134/22-23 Apologies for Absence Cllrs R Gladwin, K Miller and M Tanfield (FDC)

- 135/22-23 Declarations of Interest None
- 136/22-23 Chairman's Announcements None

137/22-23 Public Time

Mr Sadler asked the Council to consider either removing or pollarding the lime tree in the Recreation Ground behind his property. Members agreed to consider this request. He also sought clarification on the rules relating to trees in neighbouring gardens. Cllr Sutton offered to contact the District Council for clarification.

Ms Nason asked whether the Council would support the planting of daffodils on roadside verges. Members felt this would enhance the appearance of the village. Ms Nason will discuss this with the Gardening Club. She also suggested Christmas lights on street lights, but the Clerk explained that whilst this might be possible on Parish Council owned lights, it would not be possible on other lights or utility poles.

138/22-23 Confirmation of Minutes

It was noted that item 125/22-23 implied that Cllr Sutton had reported in person, but his report had been delivered by the Clerk in his absence. With this amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2023 were correctly recorded as being a true record.

139/22-23 Matters Outstanding

- a) Bus shelter improvement project No progress.
- b) Pavement outside Field Lodge, Upwell Road The pavement and the vehicular crossover will be installed as separate projects.
- c) Affordable housing proposal The Clerk is making contact with landowners.
- d) Padgetts Road repairs Repairs will be considered when the budget for 2023-24 is confirmed.
- e) Skate park repairs Members resolved to accept the estimate of approximately £1,000 from FJS Services.
- f) Household items outside property in Upwell Road Members noted that more items have been added.

140/22-23 Police Report

The Clerk reported that no meetings have taken place. Cllr Sutton reported that there had been a domestic burglary in the village at the end of January. The Police had responded promptly.

141/22-23 County & District Councillors Reports

Cllr Sutton explained that he had reported a large pothole requiring immediate attention to Highways. It was repaired the following day, showing that the emergency repairs system works well. Cllr Owen had previously raised an issue regarding non-domestic rates for the Community Centre and the Bowls Club. Cllr Sutton reported that this had been checked and appeared to be in order and that the Community Centre would benefit from the enhanced discount under the new Retail, Leisure and Hospitality scheme. Cllr Connor, County Councillor for Whittlesey South, has arranged to accompany Stephen Moir, the new Chief Executive of the County Council, on a tour of rural villages to show him the state of rural Fenland roads.

142/22-23 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including a Community Led Housing webinar, the Combined Authority draft bus strategy, a forthcoming District Council briefing for election candidates, an invitation to an Armed Forces Covenant forum meeting, opportunities to work at May's elections, the NHS Feel Brighter campaign for elderly and isolated residents, and a Parks Partnership launch event.

143/22-23 Members and Residents Issues

- a) The Coronation of the King and the Queen Consort Cllr Owen reported that the Recreation Ground charity has no plans to organise an event at the present time. An article is to be inserted in The Heron asking for suggestions about ways to mark the occasion.
- b) Caravan behind Syringa House No action is to be taken in respect of the caravan until the planning application has been determined.

144/22-23 Recreation Ground Extension

A working party has cleared the rubbish lifted from the dyke. Cllr Gladwin has offered to prepare the field and sow grass. The tree and hedge pack will be delivered in mid-March, so this will be planted as a hedgerow along the northern boundary of the field. Quotes have been received for fencing to protect the hedgerow and for the dog run. Members agreed to delay the sowing of the grass until September to allow sufficient time to spray the whole field to remove perennial weeds. The fence around the hedgerow will be installed as soon as possible after the planting of the hedgerow, but the dog run will be deferred until further funding has been secured.

145/22-23 Finance

- a) The management accounts as at 31.1.23 showed income of £18,585.97 and expenditure of £17,281.78, resulting in a surplus of £1,304.19 and total funds held of £41,860.46.
- b) Members approved the following account for payment:
 Clerk salary and home office allowance£ 441.13
- c) The Clerk advised members that he had restarted the NatWest account opening procedure and asked them to follow the instructions from the bank regarding identity verification.

146/22-23 Communications

- a) Members agreed to defer discussion of the report compiled by Mr Brookes and resolved to consider the matter further when he is able to attend a meeting.
- b) The Clerk advised members that their new email accounts were ready for use and provided them with their passwords.
- c) Members discussed the format of the Annual Parish Meeting, due to take place on Tuesday 28 March. Members agreed to adopt the same format as last year and

discussed potential speakers. Cllr Sutton offered to approach the Middle Level Commissioners to talk about current dredging work. Members asked the Clerk to contact the Anglian Water reservoirs team, Cambridgeshire Police and Fenland District Council's Emergency Planning Officer.

147/22-23 Matters for Next Meeting None.

148/22-23 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 13 March 2023.

Agenda Item No.	157/22-23	Christchurch
Meeting Date	13 March 2023	Parish Council
Report Title	Clerk's Report	

1. Purpose of Report

To report on meetings attended and correspondence received.

2. Report

Meetings attended:

Fenland District Council election briefing - 27 February Wisbech Neighbourhood Policing Team - 10 March

Correspondence received:

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority – Multiply Bus roadshow

Cambridgeshire County Council – Roadworks and events bulletin, 20mph application process, Cambridgeshire Matters newsletter, Easter Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Fenland District Council – Reduction in Council Tax, Support Cambridgeshire survey, gas main upgrade in March, Community Safety survey, grants of up to £75,000 on offer to Fenland businesses, Golden Age 20th anniversary

National Association of Local Councils - newsletter, bulletin and events

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils – training schedule, monthly bulletin

Cambridgeshire ACRE – Home Energy Support Service Plus launch, Staying in Touch newsletter,

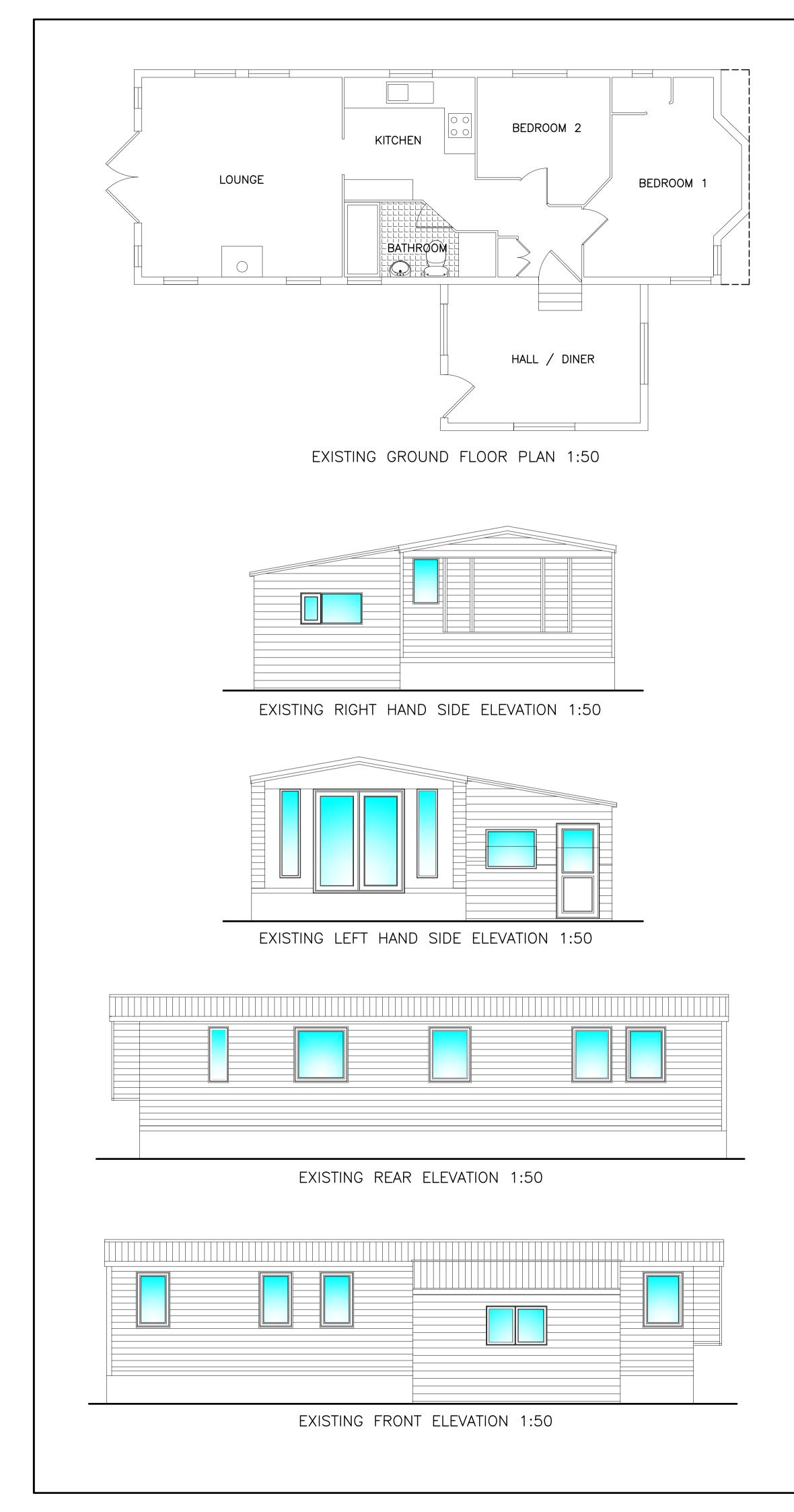
Queen Elizabeth Hospital - modernisation newsletter

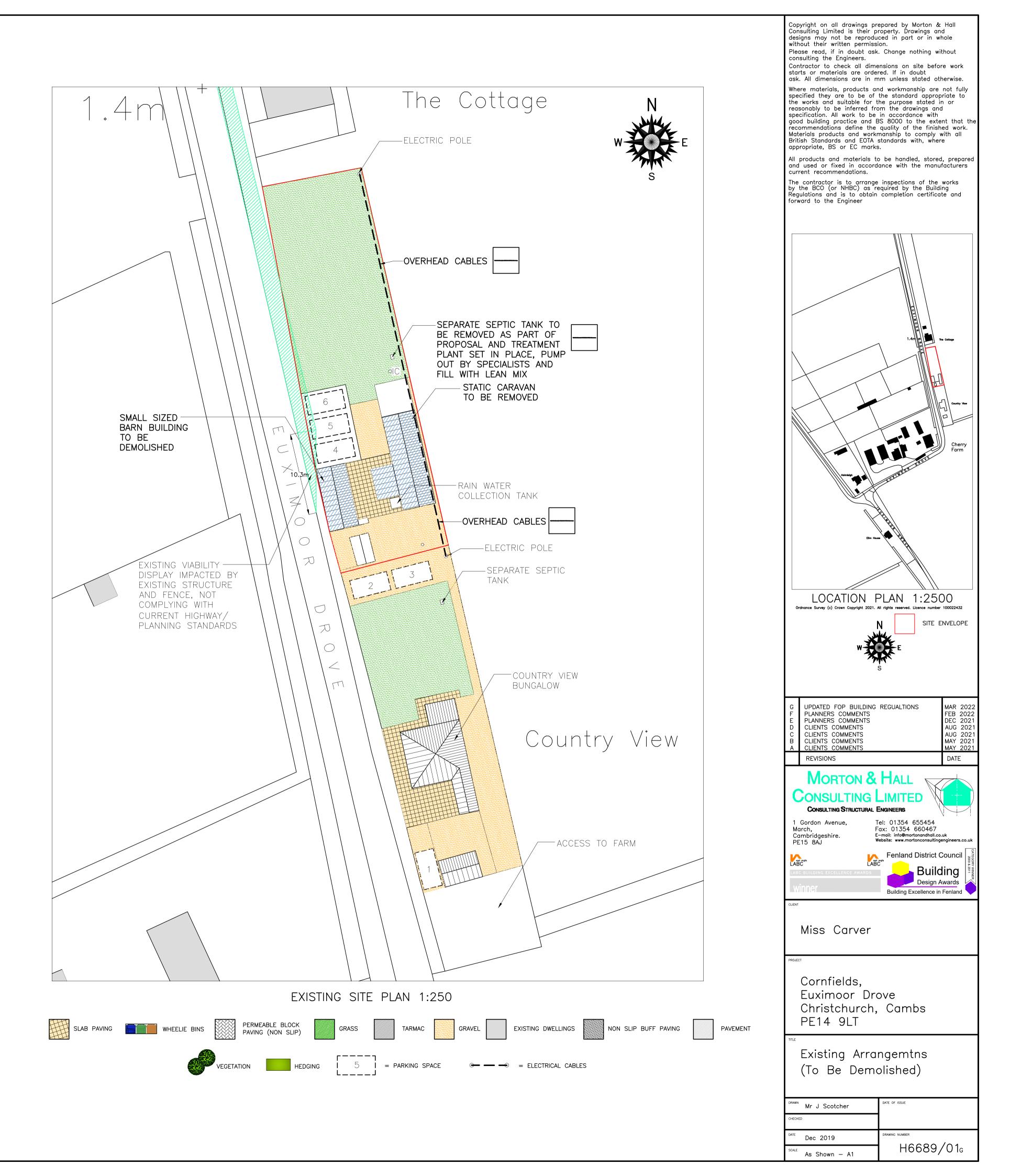
Keep Britain Tidy – Great British Spring Clean

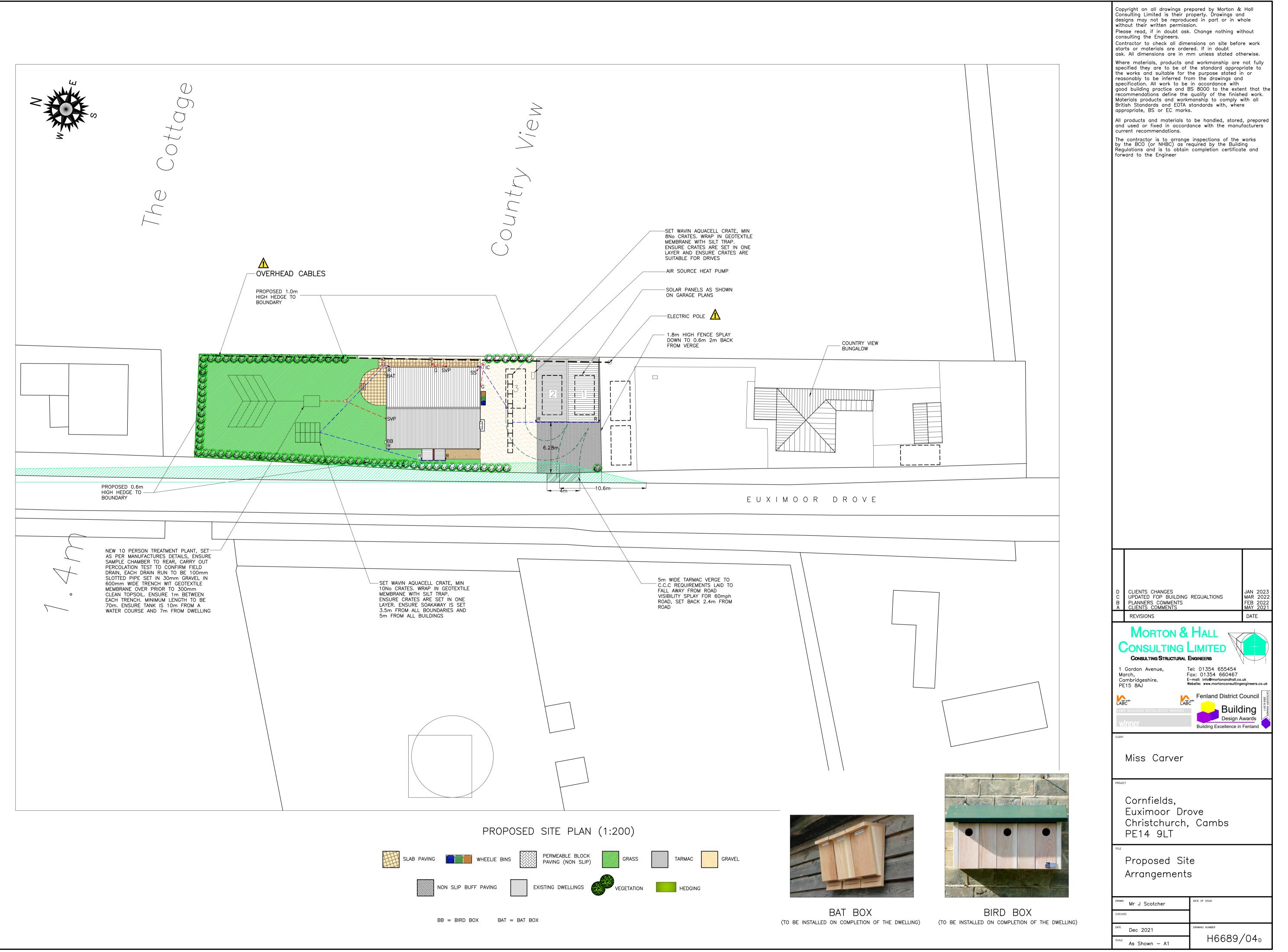
Middle Level Commissioners - Enforcement of unregistered and abandoned boats Environment Agency - Ouse Washes Update

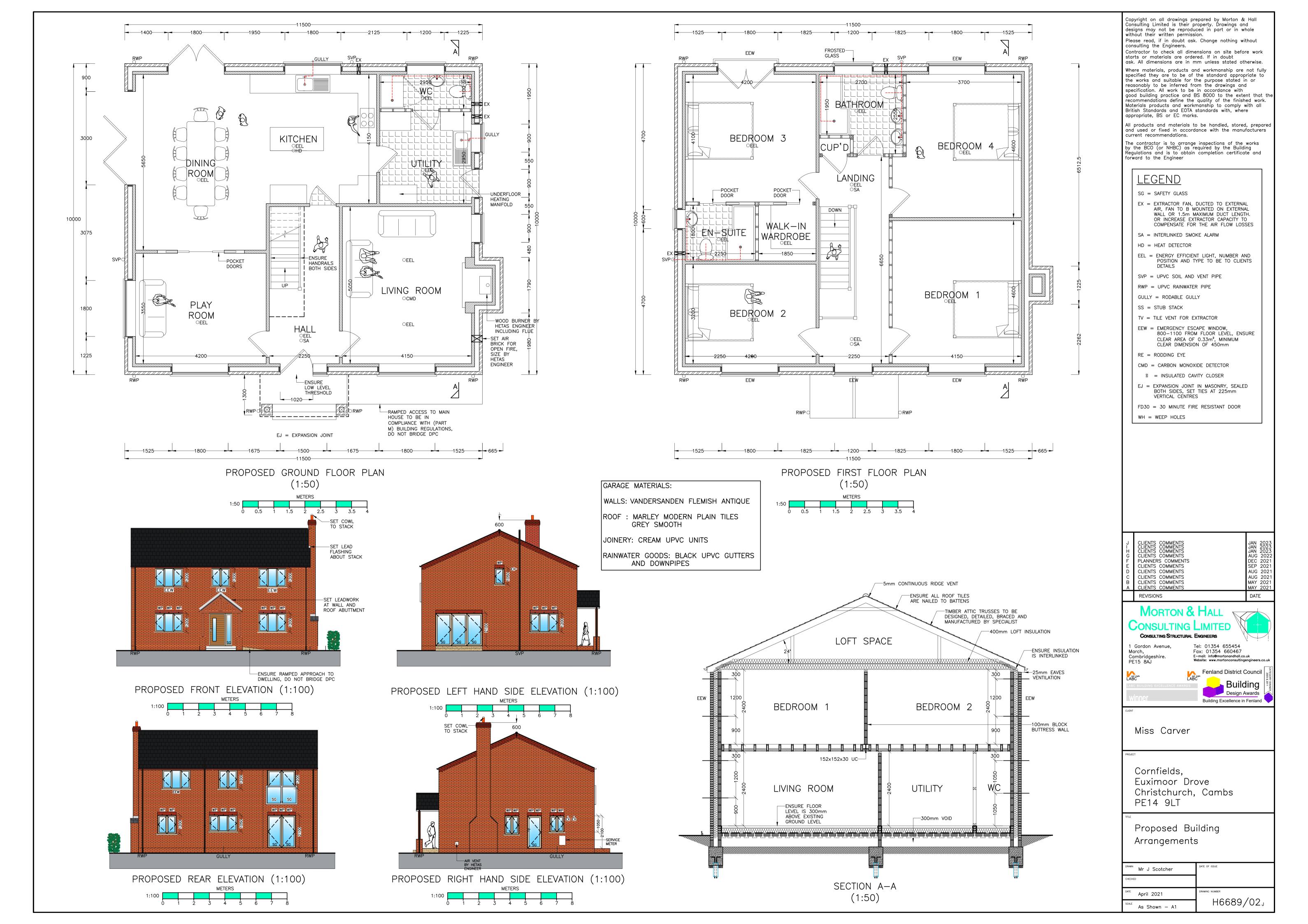
3. Recommendations

Members note the report.









Christchurch Parish Council - Receipts & Payments Summary as at 28.2.23

Income	Y	'ear to Date		Budget	%
FDC Precept	£	16,000.00	£	18,500.00	86.49
FDC Concurrent Functions Grant	£	2,567.00	£	2,567.00	100.00
Allotment Rents	£	-	£	-	0.00
Allotment Rates	£	-	£	-	0.00
Community Centre	£	-	£	-	0.00
Grants	£	-	£	-	0.00
Donations	£	-	£	-	0.00
Recycling Credits	£	-	£	-	0.00
Bank Interest	£	18.97	£	20.00	94.85
VAT Refunds	£	-	£	1,700.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	£	810.00	£	-	######
Total Income	£	19,395.97	£	22,787.00	85.12
Expenditure					
Clerk's Salary	£	5,805.26	£	5 <i>,</i> 350.00	108.51
Fees	£	375.00	£	400.00	93.75
Subscriptions	£	406.03	£	500.00	81.20
Admin Expenses	£	371.14	£	700.00	53.02
Insurance	£	1,247.40	£	700.00	178.20
Drainage Rates	£	82.11	£	85.00	96.59
Recreation Ground	£	2,418.00	£	11,800.00	20.49
Churchyard	£	245.00	£	745.00	32.89
Community Centre	£	-	£	2,000.00	0.00
Street Lights	£ £	3,495.09 290.00	£ £	3,500.00	99.86
Section 137 Payments Highways	r f	290.00 1,666.67	r £	1,000.00 2,000.00	29.00 83.33
Recoverable VAT	£	1,321.21	£	2,000.00	######
Tree Works	£	-	£	1,000.00	0.00
Total Expenditure	£	17,722.91	£	29,780.00	59.51
Summary					
Total Income	£	19,395.97			
LESS Total Expenditure	£	17,722.91			
Net Surplus or Deficit	£	1,673.06			
Balance Sheet					
Balance B/fwd	£	40,556.27			
Surplus or Deficit	£	1,673.06			
Balance C/fwd	£	42,229.33			
Represented by					
Barclays Community Account	£	22,062.21			
Barclays Business Premium Account	£	20,167.12			
Cash / Cheques	£	-			
		42 220 22			
	£	42,229.33			

	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Severity	Control Action Internal Controls	Review Frequency	Alternative review Trigger/Internal Audit Assurance	Responsible Person
1	Lack of forward planning and budgetary controls	Lack of direction and Prioritisations	M	Н	In year budget reviews	Quarterly	Unexpected expense	Clerk
2	Poor reporting to Council	Poor quality decision making Council becomes ill informed	М	Н	Timely and accurate financial reporting	Quarterly	Matter raised at meeting	Clerk
3	Loss of key staff	Failure in budgetary controls Correspondence backlog	M	Н	Clear office procedures. Clear budgetary procedures	Annually	Loss of staff member	Council
4	Failure to respond to electors wish to right of inspection	Loss of confidence Loss of reputation	L	L	Clear Standing Orders and Operating Protocols. Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public	Annually	Approach by elector to Auditor	Clerk
5	Poor document control	Information not passed on in a timely manner. Deadlines missed	М	М	Clear Standing Orders	Annually	Major incident complaints	Clerk

	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Severity	Control Action Internal Controls	Review Frequency	Alternative review Trigger/Internal Audit Assurance	Responsible Person
6	Ensure Council complies with law in particular Health and Safety Equal Opportunities Data Protection Human Rights Disability And Discrimination Employment Law	Fines and penalties from regulation bodies. Employee action for negligence of grievance. Loss of reputation.	Μ	Н		Bi-annually	Following incident	Clerk
7	Ensuring all business activities are within legal power	Illegal expenditure	L	H	Recording in the minutes the precise power under which expenditure is being approved	Monthly	Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are in place, recorded and correctly applied.	Clerk
8	Council becomes dominated by one or two individuals or cliques form	Conflicts of interest Pursuit of personal agendas Decisions made outside Council	L	Н	Clear Standing Orders regarding conduct of meeting and conflict of interests	Annually	Complaints Incidents at meetings	Chairman
9	Councillors benefiting from being on the Council	Affect reputation Conflicts of interest	L	М	Clear Standing Orders Open system of payment	Annually All meetings	Complaints from public	Council

	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Severity	Control Action Internal Controls	Review Frequency	Alternative review Trigger/Internal Audit Assurance	Responsible Person
10	Failure to register members interests	Member could make inappropriate gains	L	М	Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members Interests	All meetings	Complaints about members	Councillors
11	Lack of maintenance of Council owned property	High cost of repair Injury to third party leading to claims Damage to property	Μ	H	Regular routine maintenance Insurance cover	Weekly	Unexpected incident	Councillors
12	Damage to third party, property or individual due to Service of Amenity provided	Claim against Council	L	L	Public Liability Insurance. Regular checks of facilities. Ensure all amenities/facilitie s are maintained to appropriate levels	As required	As reported Review of Insurance Cover Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided	Council
13	Loss of cash through fraud of dishonesty	Reduction in available funds	L	Н	Clear financial procedures Adequate insurance cover	Annually	On a Loss Review Insurance Cover (fidelity guarantee)	Clerk

	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Severity	Control Action Internal Controls	Review Frequency	Alternative review Trigger/Internal Audit Assurance	Responsible Person
14	Inadequacy of Precept Ensuring the adequacy of the annual precept is within sound budgeting arrangements	Lack of confidence in Council Inability to carry out functions Insufficient funds for contingencies	L	Μ	Regular in-year budget progress reports	Every meeting	Unexpected event i.e. flooding	Clerk

Adopted March 2023



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CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Our commitment

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

This policy is intended to assist the council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

The law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics."

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Types of unlawful discrimination

<u>Direct discrimination</u> is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

<u>Indirect discrimination</u> is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

<u>Harassment</u> is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

<u>Associative discrimination</u> is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

<u>Perceptive discrimination</u> is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

<u>Third-party harassment</u> occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

<u>Victimisation</u> occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Equal opportunities in employment

The council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working practices

The council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Equal opportunities monitoring

The council will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The council treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the council's privacy notices.

Dignity at work

The council has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

People not employed by the council

The council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the council.

You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the council who will take appropriate action.

Training

The council will raise awareness of equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

The council will raise the awareness of all staff engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored periodically by the council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Adopted by the Council - April 2022 To be reviewed annually



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CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

HOMEWORKING POLICY

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Policy

The Council recognises the advantages of home-based working although it doesn't suit everyone, and some job roles may not be appropriate to undertake at home.

This policy describes the working arrangements and expectations that will apply if you work from home.

Scope of this policy

It applies to all staff who are home-based whether full time, part time or fixed term. It does not apply to office-based staff who work from home on an ad-hoc basis.

Safe working environment

Health and safety for home-based staff applies in the same way as office-based staff, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that you work in a safe manner and that you follow all health and safety instructions issued by us.

You must complete and submit a 'Home Based Workers Risk Assessment' to the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk). This is a checklist for you to identify any possible hazards in your home working area. Following completion of the checklist, measures may need to be taken to control any risks identified. This checklist should be completed annually, or more frequently if there are any changes to your arrangements such as new equipment or changes to your home-office space.

You must complete and submit a workstation risk assessment and ensure that this remains up-to-date. If you have any questions about the risk assessment, or if you identify any potential risks when carrying out the assessment, you should refer these to the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk) in the first instance.

Some of the most important considerations include: -

- If possible, an area should be set aside from the rest of your living space to ensure that you are able to work from home without distractions,
- Your home office should have adequate space for you to work safely and comfortably,
- Your desk should be large enough to accommodate your equipment and paperwork,
- You should have sufficient storage and your workspace should be organised so equipment is close to hand,
- Your work area should be well lit, with natural lighting if possible,
- Equipment and sockets should be situated to avoid potential trip hazards, and,
- You must also ensure that you visually check the cables of any electronic equipment supplied to you regularly (and at least every 6 months) and report any defects.

We reserve the right to visit you at home at agreed times for work-related purposes, including health and safety matters and to inspect, service or repair equipment (e.g. for PAT testing).

Facilities and equipment

The Council will provide you with the following equipment for you to work from home and we will maintain and replace these items when necessary.

- Printer/scanner
- Laptop computer

It is your duty to ensure that proper care is taken of the equipment provided to you and to let the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk) know of any need to maintain or replace the equipment. Should the risk assessment identify any further equipment that is necessary, please discuss this with the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk).

All equipment provided by the Council is for you to work safely and effectively at home and cannot be used for personal use by you or your family.

All equipment will belong to the Council and you will be required to return it to us promptly should you leave our employment. If we are unable to make suitable arrangements, we may collect the equipment and any documents before your last day.

Hours of work

As a home-based worker, your contract of employment will specify the hours when we expect you to be at work and contactable by telephone or email. There may be times during the working day when you are not available in which case these should be flagged to the Clerk (or the Chair of the Council) with prior authorisation.

You must be mindful to take adequate rest breaks which should be, as a minimum:

- A break of at least 20 minutes during each working day over 6 hours,
- A daily rest break of at least 11 continuous hours, i.e. the time between stopping work one day and beginning work the next day, and,
- At least one complete day each week when no work is done.

Potential conflicts of interest

During your hours of work, the Council expects that your work environment enables you to work effectively and that you are not distracted by domestic matters. It is not appropriate to combine homeworking with caring for a dependent.

If there is an emergency and you need to attend to a non-work matter, then you should notify the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk).

Data protection

As a home-worker you are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with the Council secure at all times. Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

- Keep filing cabinets and drawers locked when they are not being used,
- Keep all documentation belonging to us in the locked filing cabinet at all times except when in use,
- Set up and use a unique password for the laptop computer, and

• Ensure that documents are saved to the server rather than the laptop computer's hard drive.

Furthermore, the laptop computer and other equipment provided by us must be used only for work-related purposes and must not be used by any other member of the family at any time or for any purpose.

If you have a telephone conversation where you are discussing confidential work matters, you should ensure that such calls take place in privacy to avoid inadvertent breach of confidentiality.

Visits to work premises

On occasions you may need to attend other locations for training, performance assessment meetings, team briefings etc. This will normally not be frequent, and the dates and times of such visits will be agreed in advance.

Insurance, mortgage or rental agreements

Whilst our Employer's Liability Insurance extends to home based staff, and any Council equipment installed in your home will also be covered, you should ensure that any agreement with your landlord or mortgage lender allows you to work from home, and that your house buildings and contents insurance will not be invalidated by you working from home.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Adopted by the Council - April 2022 To be reviewed annually



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CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

EXPENSES POLICY

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Meals	4
Entertainment/gifts	4
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Expenses that will not be reimbursed	5
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Purpose

This policy sets out the Council's rules on how employees can claim for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Council. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees are properly reimbursed for legitimate business expenses and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes. It does not apply to councillors.

General procedure

The Council will reimburse you for actual expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties that you undertake in the course of your employment. To claim for expenses, you must use the Council's expenses claim forms and set out the reasons why the expense was incurred on the claim form. If you are unsure whether an expense can be claimed, you must seek prior written authorisation from the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk).

Expenses will not be paid unless supporting evidence is provided, together with a completed expense claim form. This should include original receipts or invoices with the date and time of the transaction (unless you are claiming for mileage). When claiming for travel expenses on public transport, you should enclose the tickets showing the departure point and destination of your journey, where possible. Credit and debit card statements will not be accepted. Where you are submitting a VAT receipt, you should set out:

- the name and VAT registration number of the retailer or service provider;
- the goods and services provided; and
- the amount of VAT payable.

Once completed and signed, you should submit your expense claim form to the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk) for approval. Once approved the claim form should be submitted to the RFO for payment.

Expenses claims must be submitted within 3 months of the expense being incurred. If this is not practical, written approval for any extension will be required from the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk). The Council reserves the right to withhold any payment where prior written approval has not been given.

The Council may return an expense claim form to you without payment if it is completed incorrectly or lacks supporting evidence.

The Council will pay claims for authorised expenses by cheque or BACS transfer into the same bank account into which your salary is paid.

In general, you should not incur expenses other than in the categories listed below. However, if you have claims for expenditure other than for those categories listed below, you should seek written approval from the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk) before incurring the expense. The Council will accept email as written approval where it is required in this policy.

Any queries in relation to this policy should be directed to the RFO or the Chair.

Homeworkers

If you are a Homeworker, your normal place of work as stated in your contract will be your home. The council will reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred by homeworkers in the course of their duties upon receipt of satisfactory claims.

The council will provide the following equipment necessary to enable homeworking employees to do their job.

- Laptop or personal computer
- Printer

Alternatively, the council will agree with homeworkers a suitable sum to cover use of their own equipment.

The council should also pay the employee for the costs associated with heating, lighting, etc. HMRC rules allow for some of these expenses to be paid tax-free (see HMRC guidance: www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-homeworking/whats-exempt).

Training

When attending training courses all employees and be able to claim travel expenses for the difference in the usual home to work costs. Where the training takes place outside contracted daily hours, part-time employees should be paid on the basis as time spent on training is working time.

Some training can be very expensive and as a condition for funding training, the council requires full repayment of all costs incurred for any training course in excess of £500 should an employee not complete the training or leave the council within a year of completion. Repayment of costs reduces to 50% reimbursement in the second year.

Travel

Employees and managers should consider whether or not travel is necessary or if there are more appropriate means (for example tele-conferencing or video-conferencing).

Rail

You may claim for standard class rail fares only. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

Use of your own car

It may be appropriate and cost-effective to use your own car when travelling on business, for example if you are travelling with other staff or councillors or, where there is limited public transport to your destination, or the journey time is significantly shorter than using public transport. Any use of your own car on business is subject to you:

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring that your car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for business use.

Prior authorisation should be sought from the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk), before using your own car on business. The Council accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage or claim arising out of any journey that you make on business. The Council will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on your own car.

To claim for petrol expenditure, you should set out the distance of the journey undertaken on your expenses claim form. The Council will pay you a mileage allowance of 45p per mile for mileage under 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for mileage over 10,000 miles, or such other rate as set out from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs. The Council will pay for tolls, congestion charges and parking costs incurred, where applicable.

Use of bicycle or Motorcycle

If use of your bicycle or motorcycle is approved, you can claim a mileage allowance of 20p or 24p per mile respectively. Any use of your own motorcycle on business is subject the same requirements as a car (see above).

<u>Taxis</u>

Any use of taxis will require prior approval and only in limited circumstances. These are:

- where taking a taxi would result in a significantly shorter travel time than using public transport;
- where there are several employees travelling together; or
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue, for example taxis may be permitted after 9.30pm.

You must obtain a receipt with details of the date, place of departure and destination of the journey.

Overnight accommodation

As a guideline for travel on council business you should book accommodation equivalent to three-star standard or less. You may book hotel accommodation of up to £120 maximum in a major city and £100 elsewhere. It is your responsibility to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

Meals

If you are required to be away from home on council business, you may claim up to:

- £10 for breakfast (if this is not included in the hotel room rate);
- £15 for lunch;
- £20 for dinner

The maximum amounts above are inclusive of drinks. Alcohol cannot be reclaimed under any circumstances.

You should supply receipts and invoices for all hotel and meal expenses other than for the daily allowance, where no receipt is required.

Entertainment/gifts

The Council has strict rules about offering or receiving both entertainment and gifts. Any gifts, rewards or entertainment offered to you should be reported immediately to the Clerk (or the Chair in the case of the Clerk). As a general rule, small tokens of appreciation, for example flowers or a bottle of wine, may be retained by employees.

Annual events

The Council may decide to hold a staff event, such as a Christmas meal or other celebration. Except where agreed to the contrary, attendance is not compulsory, and you will remain responsible for any expenses you incur.

Expenses that will not be reimbursed

The Council will not reimburse you for:

- the cost of any travel between your home and usual place of work (except in exceptional circumstances for early morning/late night transport as set out above);
- the cost of any travel undertaken for personal reasons;
- the cost of any travel for your partner or spouse;
- any fines or penalties incurred while on council business for whatever reason, including penalties for not paying for a rail ticket in advance of boarding the train and penalties or fines associated with motoring offences, including speeding or parking fines, clamping or vehicle recovery charges;
- alcohol; and
- cash advances or withdrawals from an ATM machine.

You are required to pay for any travel costs incurred by your partner or spouse in the event that he or she accompanies you on business. Your spouse or partner must have adequate travel insurance for that journey.

False claims

If the Council considers that any expenditure claimed was not legitimately incurred on behalf of the Council, it may request further details from you. The Council will thoroughly investigate and check any expenses claim as it sees fit. It may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided. Where payment has been made to you prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, it may deduct the value of that claim from your salary.

Any abuse of the Council's expenses policy will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to:

- false expenses claims;
- claims for expenses that were not legitimately incurred;
- claims for personal gain;
- claims for hospitality and/or gifts without them having been declared; and
- receipt by you of hospitality and/or gifts from contacts that may be perceived to influence your judgment.

The Council will take disciplinary action where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may treat a breach of this policy as gross misconduct, which may result in your summary dismissal. In addition, the Council may report the matter to the police for investigation and criminal prosecution.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Adopted by the Council - April 2022 To be reviewed annually