

# 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](mailto:clerk@christchurchparishcouncil.org.uk)

Clerk: Dave Gibbs

To Members of the Public and Press

5 March 2025

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 10 March 2025 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

**Members are reminded that they need to declare any personal or prejudicial interest and reason before an item discussed at this meeting, under the Model Code of Conduct Order 2001 No 3576**

**177/24-25 Apologies for Absence**

**178/24-25 Chairman's Announcements**

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

**179/24-25 Public Time**

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

**180/24-25 Confirmation of Minutes**

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2025

**181/24-25 Matters Outstanding**

- a) Household items outside property in Upwell Road
- b) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan

**182/24-25 Police Report**

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

**183/24-25 County & District Councillors Reports**

To receive reports from Cllrs Count, French, Roy and Summers

**184/24-25 Clerk's Report**

To receive a report on meetings attended and correspondence received

**185/24-25 Members and Residents Issues**

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

- a) The Croft - sewage treatment plant
- b) Mobile telephone signal

**186/24-25 Recreation Ground Extension**

To receive a report on progress since the last meeting

**187/24-25 Bus Shelter Project**

To receive a report on progress since the last meeting

**188/24-25 Recreation Ground**

To receive a report on progress since the last meeting

**189/24-25 Annual Parish Meeting**

To confirm the date and agree the format of the meeting

**190/24-25 Planning**

To consider the following application and agree a response to the planning authority:

F/YR25/0122/F - Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing outbuilding to form a 3-bed annexe ancillary to existing dwelling (part retrospective) - Fincham Lodge, 58 Church Road, Christchurch

**191/24-25 Finance**

To consider and resolve on the following matters:

- a) To receive an updated financial statement for the period to the end of February
- b) To consider charitable donations under Section 137 of the Local Government Act.
- c) To note the following sums received:
  - NatWest Bank (interest) ..... £ 10.70
- d) To approve the following payments:
  - Clerk salary and home office allowance ..... £ 483.51
  - Clerk expenses..... £ 206.06
  - Cambridgeshire ACRE (subscription) ..... £ 72.00

**192/24-25 Policies and Procedures**

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

- a) Equality and Diversity Policy
- b) Homeworking Policy
- c) Expenses Policy

**193/24-25 Public Time**

To receive comments and suggestions from members of the public

**194/24-25 Matters for Next Meeting**

To discuss future agenda items from Councillors

**195/24-25 Date of Next Meeting**

To confirm the date of the next meeting of the Council as Monday 14 April

# CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 10 February 2025 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs J Hughes (Chairman), B Burfield, J Hayes, S Potter, A Sparrow, D Gibbs (Clerk), Cllr D Roy (FDC), one parishioner

### **161/24-25 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr J Bliss, Cllr S Count (CCC), Cllr M Summers (FDC)

### **162/24-25 Chairman's Announcements**

None.

### **163/24-25 Public Time**

None.

### **164/24-25 Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

### **165/24-25 Matters Outstanding**

- a) Household items outside property in Upwell Road - There has been a partial clearance of the site. Cllr Roy has arranged a meeting with the Clerk and Clarion Housing Group's Regional Operations Officer next week to discuss the situation.
- b) Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service visit - The Clerk will invite the Fire Service to attend the Annual Parish Meeting.
- c) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - The Clerk reported that he has received feedback from a resident of Tipps End reporting regular short power cuts in late afternoons. Several members confirmed that they too had experienced this. The Clerk offered to raise this matter with UK Power Networks. The resident also mentioned the poor mobile telephone signal in the area.
- d) Tiger bus service - The Clerk advised members that he had asked the Combined Authority whether the service would take residents to Upwell and had been told that this was outside the operating area for the service. There is no connection to the Go to Town bus services to Wisbech and Downham Market either. An email has been sent to the Combined Authority expressing the Council's concerns.

### **166/24-25 Police Report**

The Clerk reported that no meetings have taken place. Members spoke about the recent major hare coursing incident affecting several local villages, including Christchurch. They agreed to invite the Police Rural Crime Action Team to the Annual Parish Meeting to talk about their work.

### **167/24-25 County & District Councillors Reports**

Cllr Roy thanked the Clerk for his strongly-worded email to the Combined Authority regarding the shortcomings of the bus service. He promised to continue to campaign for the right service for residents.

He reminded members about the ongoing consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and encouraged them to respond.

In connection with the power supply issues reported earlier, he explained that residents of Elm had similar experiences. Following discussions with a director of UKPN, a helicopter survey had identified faults to be rectified, particularly with trees affecting overhead power lines. A similar approach might be worthwhile for Christchurch.

Cllr Roy is working to compile a list of smaller voluntary organisations that might benefit from advice and support. Cllr Burfield was asked to provide details of groups using the Community Centre.

There is a new person overseeing Community Speedwatch and other police community initiatives. Amanda Large has transferred to Peterborough and Julie Clark is the new contact.

#### **168/24-25 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including a meeting with the new grounds maintenance contractor. Correspondence included the relaunch of the highways 20mph scheme, another successful fly-tipping prosecution, the relocation of the Wisbech Funfair to the Church Terrace car park, confirmation of the commitment to bus franchising and the Mayor's withdrawal from May's election, the dates of the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean and a programme update for the replacement of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

#### **169/24-25 Members and Residents Issues**

Cllr Hayes reported that there had been another incident involving Kimberlea in Crown Road. Neighbours continue to monitor the property.

Residents have expressed concern regarding the lack of visibility at the junction of Upwell Road and Church Road due to parked vehicles close to the corner narrowing the available road width. The Clerk asked members to provide details of the vehicles and to confirm whether they belong to residents or visitors.

Cllr Hughes reported that plans have been received for the Local Highways Improvements accident reduction scheme at the junction of Upwell Road and the Sixteen Foot Bank. Members reviewed and approved the plans.

The County Council street lights in Fen View have been replaced and the light at the rear entrance to the Recreation Ground has been moved to a less vulnerable position.

#### **170/24-25 Recreation Ground Extension**

The Middle Level Commissioners have agreed to allow a lower specification for the culvert as it is primarily for pedestrian use. Further quotations are expected for the installation.

#### **171/24-25 Bus Shelter Project**

Cllr Sparrow has not received any response from Cambridgeshire Highways regarding mapping options.

#### **172/24-25 Recreation Ground**

A date will be confirmed shortly for the Probation Service to bring Community Service teams to work on the Recreation Ground. Members discussed options for the disposal of the waste gathered by the team. Cllr Hughes offered a high-sided trailer. The Clerk suggested that the willow branches and similar material might be formed into a large bug and small mammal hotel similar to those on the Elm Canal footpath. He offered to bring further details to the next meeting.

**173/24-25 Finance**

- a) The management accounts as at 31.1.25 showed income of £21,638.83 and expenditure of £19,480.18, resulting in a surplus of £2,158.65 and total funds held of £44,578.48.
- b) Members noted the following sums received since the last meeting:
  - NatWest Bank (interest).....£ 12.57
- c) Members noted the following debit card payment:
  - Land Registry (searches).....£ 21.00
- d) Members approved the following account for payment:
  - Clerk salary and home office allowance .....£ 483.51

**174/24-25 Public Time**

None.

**175/24-25 Matters for Next Meeting**

Donations under Section 137.

**176/24-25 Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 10 March.

DRAFT

<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	184/24-25	<b>Christchurch Parish Council</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	10 March 2025	
<b>Report Title</b>	Clerk's Report	

### 1. Purpose of Report

To report on correspondence received.

### 2. Report

Correspondence received:

#### **Cambridgeshire County Council**

Roadworks and events bulletins  
Cambridgeshire Matters newsletter

#### **Fenland District Council**

The Fenlander newsletter  
Information re FACT transport services  
Volunteers needed to run free and low-cost exercise activities  
Grants to reduce fuel costs and keep homes warm  
Fenland Culture Fund awards  
New planning controls for houses in multiple occupation consultation  
Reopening of George Campbell Leisure Centre  
Multi million pound improvements planned for leisure centres  
Cost of Living Fair at March Library

**NALC** - Events update, Newsletter, Chief Executive's bulletin

**CAPALC** - Bulletin

**Cambridgeshire ACRE** - Staying in Touch newsletter, call for Community Cancer Champions

**Queen Elizabeth Hospital** - Modernising our hospital newsletter

**Steve Barclay MP** - Newsletter, Wisbech Community Diagnostic Centre campaign

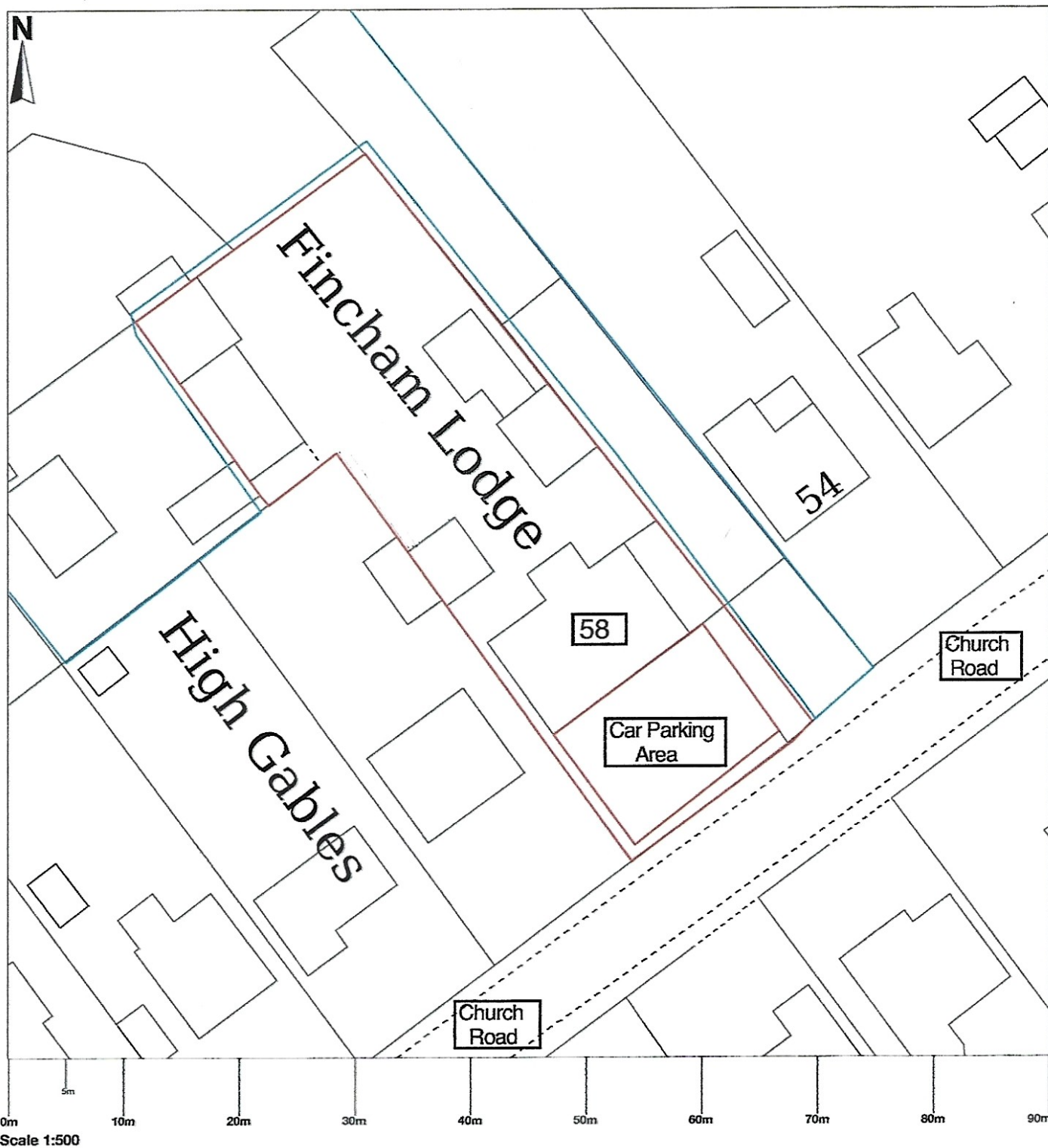
### 3. Recommendations

Members note the report.

<b>Report Author</b>	Dave Gibbs
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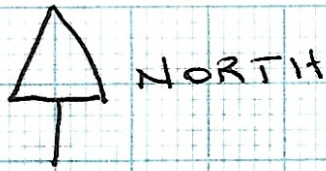


### 58 Church Road, Christchurch, Wisbech, PE14 9PQ



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025 OS 100054135. Map area bounded by: 549044,296338 549134,296428. Produced on 12 February 2025 from the OS National Geographic Database. Supplied by UKPlanningMaps.com. Unique plan reference: b90f/uk/1209150/1624110

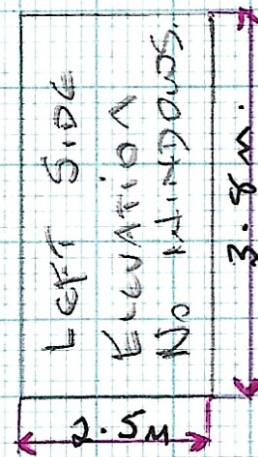
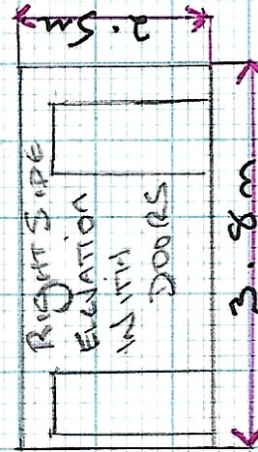
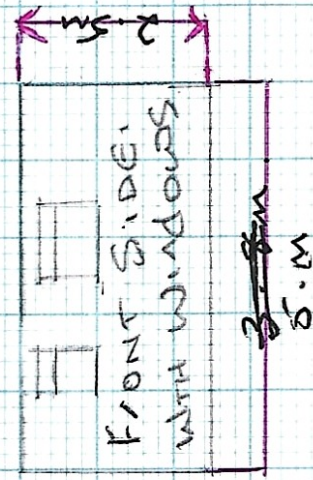
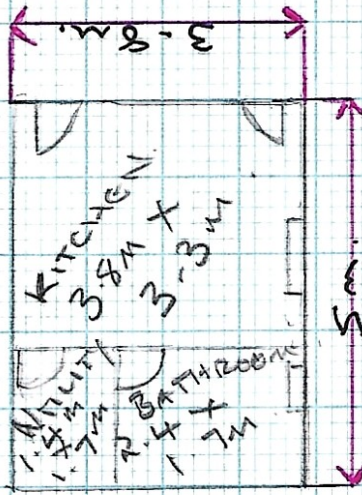
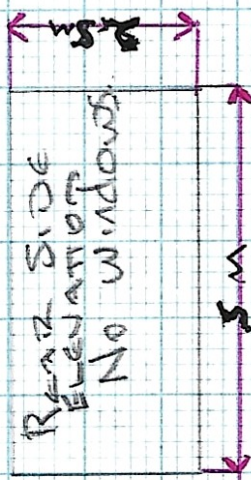
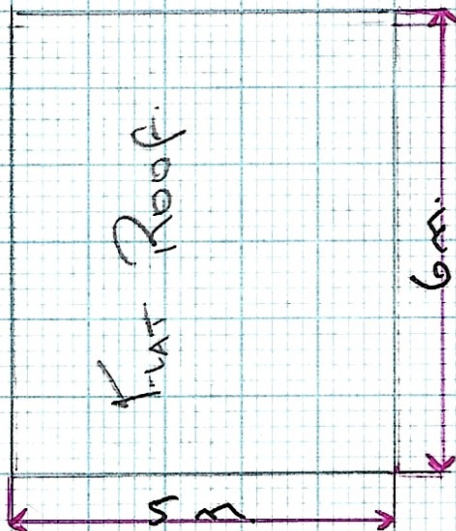




1:100 SCALE PLANS

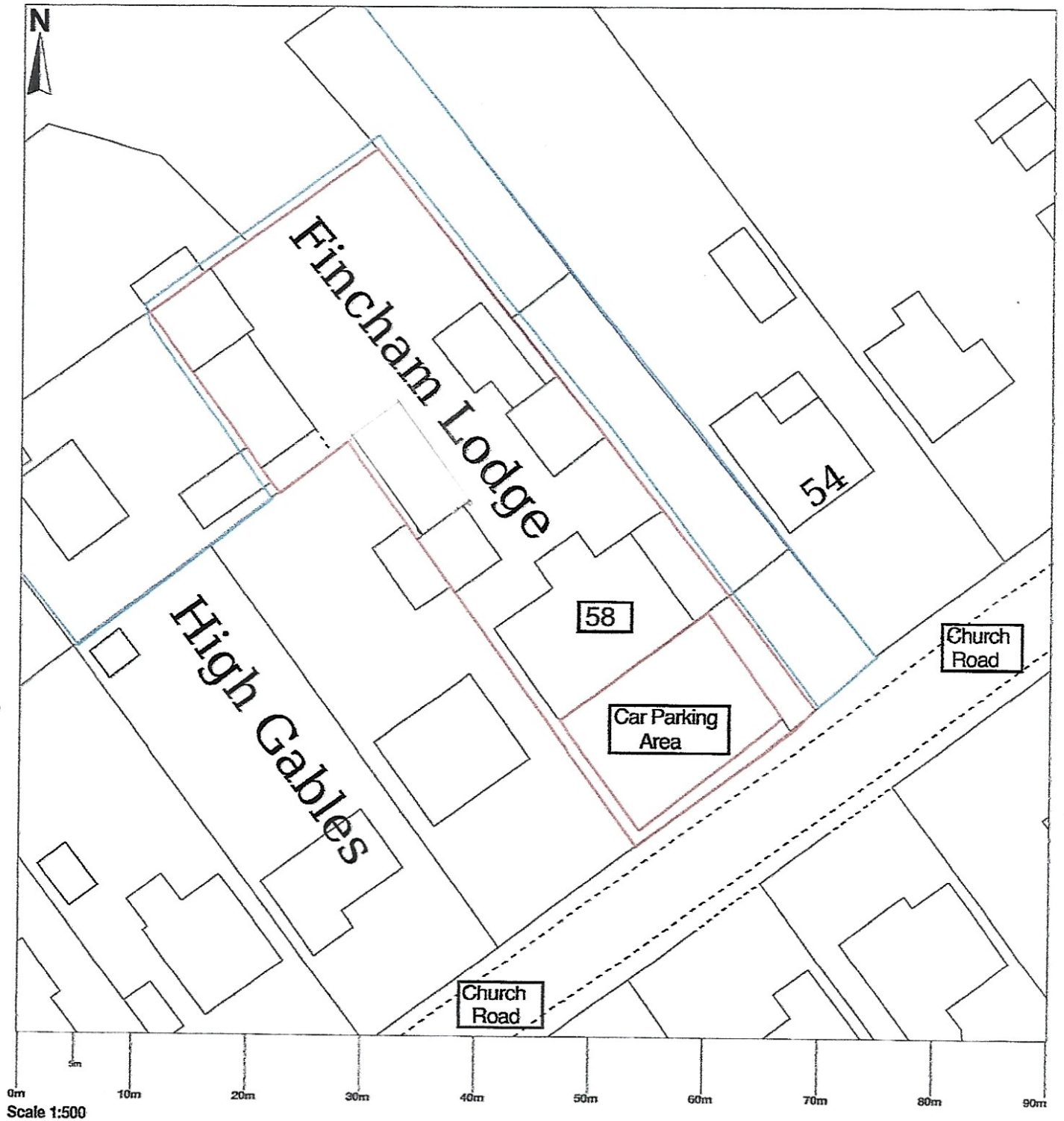
FINCHAM LODGE  
58 CHURCH ROAD  
CHRISTCHURCH  
PC14 9 PQ

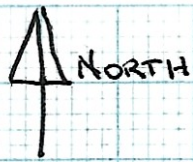
EXISTING ANNEXE  
WITH ROOF AND ALL SIDE  
ELEVATIONS





## 58 Church Road, Christchurch, Wisbech, PE14 9PQ

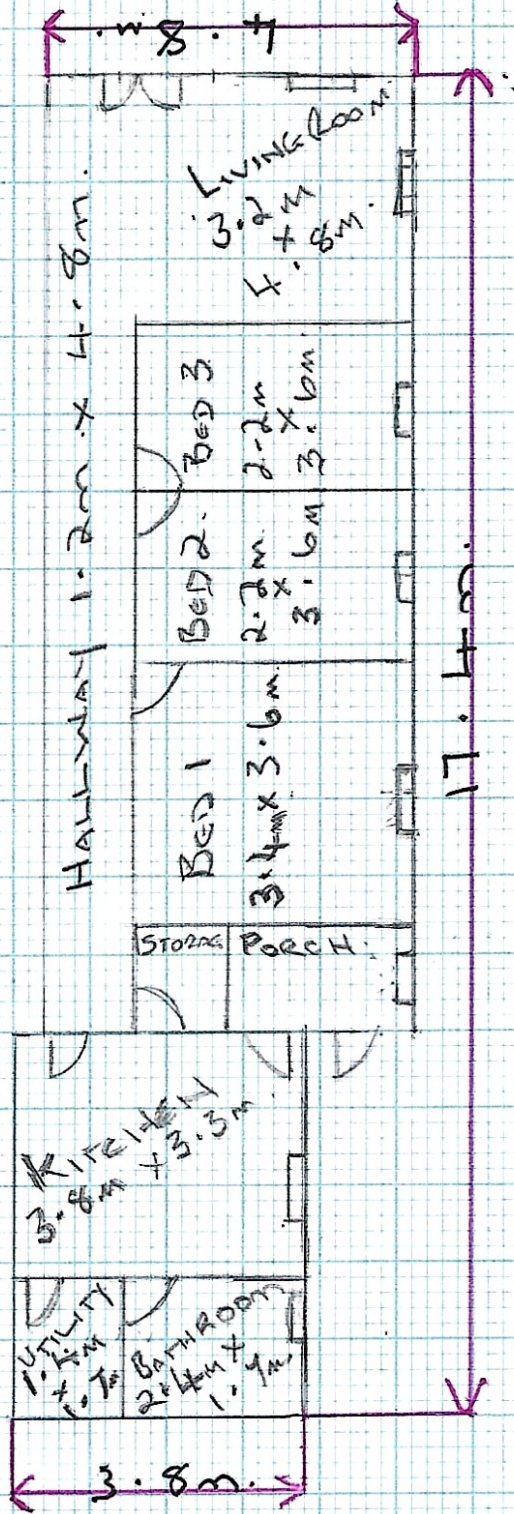




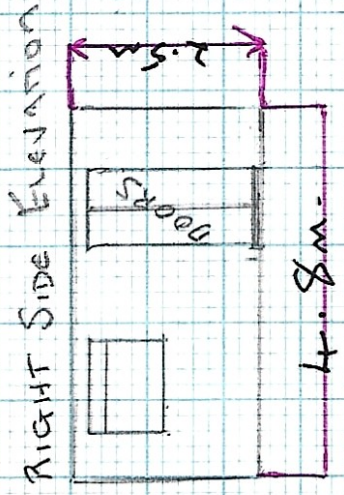
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Plan 1

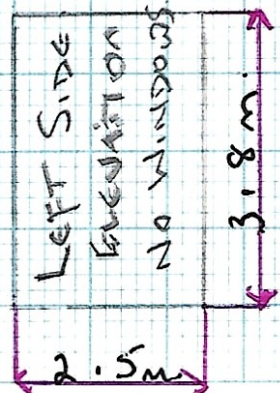
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GARDEN ANNEXE: FLOOR PLAN



LEFT + RIGHT SIDE ELEVATIONS



## Christchurch Parish Council - Receipts & Payments Summary as at 28.2.25

Income	Year to Date	Budget	%
FDC Precept	£ 18,500.00	£ 18,500.00	100.00
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	£ 185.00	£ -	#####
Recycling Credits	£ -	£ -	0.00
Bank Interest	£ 397.53	£ 200.00	198.77
VAT Refunds	£ -	£ 2,711.72	0.00
Miscellaneous	£ -	£ -	0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 21,649.53</b>	<b>£ 23,978.72</b>	<b>90.29</b>

### Expenditure

Clerk's Salary	£ 5,318.61	£ 5,885.00	90.38
Fees	£ 360.00	£ 400.00	90.00
Subscriptions	£ 512.74	£ 550.00	93.22
Admin Expenses	£ 117.07	£ 700.00	16.72
Insurance	£ 1,559.30	£ 700.00	222.75
Drainage Rates	£ 106.66	£ 100.00	106.65
Recreation Ground	£ 6,300.30	£ 7,025.00	89.68
Churchyard	£ 245.00	£ 745.00	32.89
Community Centre	£ -	£ 2,000.00	0.00
Street Lights	£ 3,433.09	£ 10,000.00	34.33
Section 137 Payments	£ 10.00	£ 1,500.00	0.67
Highways	£ -	£ 1,000.00	0.00
Recoverable VAT	£ 2,002.32	£ 400.00	500.57
Tree Works	£ -	£ -	0.00
Miscellaneous	£ -	£ 500.00	0.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 19,965.09</b>	<b>£ 31,505.00</b>	<b>63.37</b>

### Summary

Total Income	£ 21,649.53
LESS Total Expenditure	£ 19,965.09
<b>Net Surplus or Deficit</b>	<b>£ 1,684.44</b>

### Balance Sheet

Balance B/fwd	£ 42,419.83
Surplus or Deficit	£ 1,684.44
<b>Balance C/fwd</b>	<b>£ 44,104.27</b>

### Represented by

Barclays Community Account	£ 6,965.23
Barclays Business Premium Account	£ 20,236.87
NatWest Current Account	£ 5,730.00
NatWest Deposit Account	£ 11,172.17
Cash / Cheques	£ -
	<b>£ 44,104.27</b>

## **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**

Direct discrimination 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.

Indirect discrimination 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.

Harassment 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.

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

Perceptive discrimination 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.

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

Victimisation 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

## **CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **HOMEWORKING POLICY**

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Data protection	3
Visits to work premises	4
Insurance, mortgage or rental agreements	4



## **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 dependant.

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

## **CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **EXPENSES POLICY**

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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](http://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).

### Taxis

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

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