Banbury Town Council

Mark Hassall ACMA MA
Town Clerk & RFO

The Town Hall
Bridge Street
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 5QB

Tel: 01295 250340

Our Ref: A17062025
Please ask for: Helen Durkin
Email: helen.durkin@banbury.gov.uk

Date: 18 June 2025

To: All Members of the Town Council.
Others, for information.

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the **Town Council** to be held in the TOWN HALL, BRIDGE STREET, BANBURY on **Tuesday, 17 June 2025 at 6.30pm**, for the transaction of the following business: -

Mark Hassall
Town Clerk & RFO

<u>BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED</u>

1. **Apologies for absence**
   Contact Helen Durkin (01295 250340).

2. **Declarations of Interest**
   Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda, **and the nature of that interest**, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Banbury Town Council Code of Conduct and Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Please refer to the notes at the end of Agenda).

3. **Minutes of the last Meeting**
   To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13 May 2025 **(Enclosed**).

4. **Communications**
   To receive communications from the Town Mayors and/or Leader of the Council.

5. **Questions**
   a. Any Town Councillor may ask the Town Mayor, or the relevant Committee Chairman or the Town Clerk any questions concerning the business of the Council, provided notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed before the meeting begins, and a copy supplied to the Town Clerk.

   b. A period of up to 20 minutes is allocated, during which Members of the public may, at the discretion of the Town Mayor, ask questions of the relevant Committee Chairman on any matter relevant to some question over which the Council has power, or which affects Banbury.

   [You are requested to state your name and address before asking your question.]

6. **Minutes of Committees**
To consider the Minutes of Committees:

a) Planning Committee	-	14 May 2025 (Enclosed)
b) General Services Committee	-	03 June 2025 (Enclosed)
c) Resources Committee	-	10 June 2025 (Enclosed)

7. **Resolutions Moved on Notice**
None

8. **Internal Audit**
That the Annual Internal Audit Report (page 3 of the Annual Return) be received and noted

9. **Annual Return**
That the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) as attached as **Appendix 1** be approved, and signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader of the Council and the Town Clerk

10. **Accounting Statement**
That the Accounting Statements (Section 2 on the Annual Return – attached as (**Appendix 2**) for the year ended 31 March 2025 be approved and be signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader of the Council and the RFO;

11. **Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2025 (unaudited)**
The Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2025 (unaudited) attached as (**Appendix 3),** be approved, and signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader of the Council and the RFO.

12. **Approval of accounts and annual return for 2024/25**
To review and approve the Accounts & Annual Return as presented (attached in **Appendix 8)**

13. **Notice of Electors Rights**
That the Notice of Electors Rights (attached at **Appendix 4**) be approved

14. **Financial Regulations**
To review and approve the Financial Regulations as presented (attached in **Appendix 5**)

15. **Standing Orders**
To review and approve the Standing Orders as presented (attached in **Appendix 6**)

16. **Co-Option of Councillor**
To review any received applications of volunteers to fill the vacancy within the Neithrop North ward **(Appendix 7** *as applicable***)**, receive the proposer and seconder for each applicant, those candidates will then be voted upon.

Notes on declaration of interest

(i) Any Member arriving after the start of the meeting is asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests as necessary as soon as practicable after their arrival even if the item in question has been considered;

(ii) In such circumstances, the Member must withdraw from the meeting room, and should inform the Chairman accordingly.

It is not practical to offer detailed advice during the meeting.

Recording of Meeting

iii) *Please be aware that an audio recording of the meeting may be made, as an aide-memoire for the purposes of the Clerk to ensure minutes reflect the overall tone and content of meetings, and will be deleted following the first approval of the draft minutes by the committee chairman.*

BANBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Banbury Town Council held on **Tuesday 13 May 2025 at 6.30pm** in the Town Hall, Banbury.

Present: Mark Cherry (Town Mayor) and Kieron Mallon (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillors: Beere, Biegel, Brant, Crichton, Dhesi, Eaton, Elugwu, Harwood, Hussain, Mears, Okeke, Richards, Strangwood, Thornhill, Tohill-Martin, Urwick and Vaitkus.

Officers: Mark Hassall (Town Clerk & RFO)
Paul Almond (Director of Environment and Deputy Clerk)
Helen Durkin (Executive Officer)
Mark Perrett (Events Manager)
Simon Lewthwaite (Civic & Events Officer)
James Smith (Media & Communications Officer)

The Town Mayor, escorted by the Town Clerk processed into the Main Hall.

The Town Mayor briefly reviewed his year of office and thanked all those who had supported him during the year, especially his Deputy Town Mayor; Civic Cadets; fellow Members; the Town Clerk and Town Hall staff, particularly Simon Lewthwaite (Civic & Events Officer); and the people of Banbury.

C.1/25 Election of the Town Mayor for 2025/26

It was proposed by Councillor Harwood, seconded by Councillor Strangwood, and **WAS RESOLVED** that Councillor Mallon be elected Town Mayor of Banbury for the year 2025/2026.

C.2/25 Election of a Deputy Town Mayor for 2025/26

It was proposed by Councillor Hussain, seconded by Councillor Biegel, and **WAS RESOLVED** that Councillor Okeke be elected Deputy Town Mayor of Banbury for the year 2025/2026.

C.3/25 Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Town Mayor

Councillor Mallon then made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Town Mayor of Banbury, which was duly accepted by the Council.

Councillor Mallon then proposed and it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council express its thanks and sincere appreciation to Councillor Mark Cherry for the conscientious and zealous manner in which he had discharged the arduous duties of Town Mayor during the past year.

Members of the Council then pledged themselves, as leaders and members of the community of Banbury, to work with all their hearts, minds, and strength for the good of its people and the well-being of its society.

C.4/25 Apologies for Absence

Councillors Creed & Woodward

C.5/25 Declarations of Interest

None.

C.6/25 Minutes of the last Meeting
It was proposed by the Town Mayor, and **WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 01 April 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

C.7/25 Communications
The Town Clerk reported that there were no formal communications.

C.8/25 Appointment of Standing Committees
It was proposed by Councillor Hussain, seconded by Councillor Biegel, and WAS **RESOLVED** that the Appointments of Standing Committees as at **Appendix 1** be approved.

C.9/25 Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies
It was proposed by Councillor Hussain, seconded by Councillor Biegel, and **WAS RESOLVED** that the Appointments of Representatives to Outside Bodies as at **Appendix 2** be approved.

The Meeting ended at 7.00pm

Appendix 1

Standing Committee Membership
2025 – 2026

1. Resources Committee
(Seats allocated: Conservative/LD 1, Labour 5)

Conservative/Lib Dem	**Labour**
1. Mallon	1. Hussain (Chair)
	2. Eaton (Vice Chair)
	3. Beere
	4. Creed
	5. Vaitkus

[Alternate Members]

Conservative	**Labour**	**Labour**
1. Strangwood	1. Clarke	7. Elugwu
2. Harwood	2. Beere	8. Dhesi
	3. Crichton	9. Thornhill
	4. Richards	10. Elugwu
	5. Tohill-Martin	11. Woodward
	6. Urwick	12. Cherry
		13. Okeke

2. General Services Committee
(Seats allocated: Conservative/LD 1, Labour 5)

Conservative/Lib Dem	**Labour**
1. Strangwood	1. Cherry (Chair)
	2. Biegel
	3. Tohill-Martin
	4. Okeke
	5. Elugwu

[Alternate Members]

Conservative	**Labour**	**Labour**
1. Harwood	1. Hussain	8. Crichton
2. Mallon	2. Biegel	9. Woodward
	3. Vaitkus	10. Dhesi
	4. Eaton	11. Thornhill
	5. Mears	12. Cherry
	6. Clarke	13. Urwick
	7. Beere	

3. Planning Committee
(Seats Allocated: Conservative/LD 1, Labour 5)

Conservative/Lib Dem	**Labour**
1. Harwood	1. Beere (Chair)
	2. Woodward (Vice Chair)
	3. Dhesi
	4. Thornhill
	5. Tohill-Martin

[Alternate Members]

Conservative
1. Strangwood
2. Mallon

Labour
1. Hussain
2. Biegel
3. Vaitkus
4. Eaton
5. Mears
6. Clarke
7. Crichton

Labour
8. Woodward
9. Richards
10. Tohill-Martin
11. Urwick
12. Cherry
13. Okeke

4. Appeals Panel
(Seats Allocated: Conservative/LD 1, Labour 5)

Conservative/Lib Dem
1. Strangwood

Labour
1. Richards
2. Crichton
3. Tohill-Martin
4. Okeke
5. Biegel

[Note: Appeals Panel members cannot be members of Resources Cttee]

Appendix 2

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Organisation	Category	No	Appointment 2024/25	Nominations 2025/26
Banbury & District Air Training Corps	B	1	Cllr Elugwu (L)	Cllr Elugwu (L)
Banbury & District Samaritans	A	1	Cllr Crichton (L)	Cllr Crichton (L)
Banbury & District Twinning Association	A	1	Cllr Woodward (L)	Cllr Woodward (L)
Banbury Canal Partnership	P	1	Cllr Mallon (C)	Cllr Mallon (C)
Banbury Citizen's Advice Bureau	A	1	Cllr Crichton (L)	Cllr Crichton (L)
Banbury Civic Society	B	1	Cllr Eaton (L)	Cllr Eaton (L)
Banbury Regeneration Area Oversight Group	P	6	-	Cllr Hussain Cllr Eaton Cllr Cherry Cllr Biegel Cllr Beere Cllr Woodward
Banbury Sea Cadets	B	1	Cllr Mallon (C)	Cllr Mallon (C)
Banbury Traffic Advisory Committee	P	3	Cllr Biegel (L) Cllr Mears (L) Cllr Harwood (C)	Cllr Biegel (L) Cllr Tohill-Martin (L) Cllr Harwood (C)
Borough of Banbury Trust 2 (plus TM and DTM)	P	2	Cllr Hussain (L) Cllr Harwood (C)	Cllr Hussain (L) Cllr Harwood (C)
Chamber of Commerce	A	1	Cllr Thornhill (L)	Cllr Thornhill (L)
Cherwell Climate Change Partnership	P	1	Cllr Vaitkus (L)	Cllr Vaitkus (L)
Cherwell Community & Voluntary Service	A	1	Cllr Urwick (L)	Cllr Urwick (L)
Cherwell Crime Partnership: Banbury	P	1	Cllr Okeke (L)	Cllr Okeke (L)
Community Partnership Network	P	1	Cllr Hussain (L) Cllr Mallon (C) (sub)	Cllr Hussain (L) Cllr Mallon (C) (sub)
The Glebe Charity (Cricket Club)	B	1	Cllr Beere (L)	Cllr Beere (L)
The Hill	A	1	Cllr Cherry (L)	Cllr Cherry (L)
Sunshine Centre	B	1	Cllr Richards (L)	Cllr Richards (L)
Town Centre Partnership (3)	P	3	Cllr Hussain(L) Cllr Richards (L) Cllr Mallon (C)	Cllr Hussain(L) Cllr Richards (L) Cllr Mallon (C)

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, **14 May 2025 at 6.30pm** at the Town Hall, Banbury.

Present: Councillor Beere (Chairman)
Councillors: Dhesi, Harwood, Tohill-Martin and Woodward.

Other attendance: Cllr Richards for Cllr Thornhill

Officers: Robert Duxbury (Planning Officer)
Helen Durkin (Executive Officer)

PL.16/25 Apologies
Councillor Thornhill

PL.17/25 Declarations of Interest
Councillor Harwood declared personal interest as members of the Cherwell District Council Planning Committee.

PL.18/25 Minutes of the Last Meeting
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 26 February 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by Cllr Beere.

PL.19/25 Planning Applications to be Considered
The Committee considered various planning applications that had been referred to the Town Council for consideration by Cherwell District Council (CDC) and were matters that had been delegated to the Planning Committee or where a Ward Member had referred a delegated application.
Officers responded to a number of questions raised by Members.

- 25/00788/F - Steam House Bagels - Sainsbury's Local, Unit 1, Walker Road, Banbury - Use of site as cafe and proposed installation of extraction equipment.
  - **Banbury Town Council made no objection.**

- 25/00204/F - A2B Castle Cars Ltd - Land Opposite Banbury Station Car Park Station Approach, Banbury - RETROSPECTIVE - Change of Use of land and erection of outbuilding for Sui Generis Use for taxi company.
  - **Banbury Town Council object to the application on the grounds that the application still does not provide sufficient information to allow the proposed development to be fully assessed by OCC or us. Further information regarding the current use of the site and the use of the proposed development is required at this stage to enable the full assessment the impact of the development. The Members also expressed their concern about the apparent lack of sanitation facilities for this workplace. Please refuse the application and/or reconsult when the required information is available.**

- 25/00752/F - Mr Timothy Beckett - 2 Church View, Banbury - Conversion of existing dwelling to form two dwellings.
  - **Banbury Town Council object to this proposal on the grounds that the development impacts upon the neighbours. We understand that the extensions may be beyond permitted development tolerances. Therefore the substandard appearance and over-domination of the development can also be taken into account, and these matters add to the level of harm caused by the over-development of the site and possible on-street**

car parking, and all these considerations justify refusal of the application. If we are wrong about the "permitted development" matter we still consider that the over-development and parking justify refusal in any event.

- 25/00802/F - Mr M Hassan - 25 Harlech Close, Banbury - Conversion of garage to habitable accommodation and subdivision of dwelling to form studio flat at ground floor level.
  - **Banbury Town Council object to this proposal, on the grounds that in the light of deficiencies in garden space and car parking, this is considered to be overdevelopment of the building which will result in harm to the character and amenity of the area.**

- 25/00801/F - Ms Shofia Mumtaz - 28 Orchard Way, Banbury - Erection of new two bedroom dwelling and creation of new access.
  - **Banbury Town Council object to the proposal on the grounds that this site is too small to accommodate this house without causing undue harm to the amenity of the adjacent house in Beesley Road and to the character and amenity of the area. As such the proposal is contrary to Cherwell Local Plan policy. Access to the side road is also in a dangerous position likely to be detrimental to highway safety.**

- 25/00203/F - Mr Diljeet Singh - Unit 4, Plot 9C Thorpe Close, Banbury - Change of Use from Class E commercial to Class F2 local community use to provide a Gurdwara Sahib - a place of worship –
  - **Banbury Town Council note the withdrawal of the application.**

- 25/00813/F - Detail Property Ltd - Shoezone, 1 High Street, Banbury - Change of Use of 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors to create 2 no. flats and reconfiguration of ground floor to 2 no. commercial units.
  - **Banbury Town Council made no objection.**

PL.20/25 **Planning Applications Delegated to the Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk had submitted a schedule containing details of planning applications which had been delegated to him in consultation with the Chairman, setting out the observations that had been forwarded to Cherwell District Council.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the report be noted.

PL.21/25 **Decision Notice**

The Town Clerk had submitted a schedule containing details of decision notices which had been sent by Cherwell District Council which were contrary to the recommendations of the Town Council.

- 19/01047/OUT - Land North East Of Oxford Road West Of Oxford Canal and East Of Bankside Banbury – Approved by CDC (Section 106).

- 24/03271/F - 11 Farmfield Road, Banbury - Approved after receipt of amended plans reducing impact up neighbour

IT WAS RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Date of next meeting – **Wednesday 11 June 2025 at 18:30pm**

The meeting ended at **7.39 pm**

GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the General Services Committee held at **6.30pm on Tuesday 03 June 2025** at the Town Hall, Banbury.

Present: Councillor Cherry (Chair), Councillor Biegel (Vice Chair)
Councillors: Elugwu, Strangwood.

Alternate Members: Cllr Beere for Cllr Okeke

Other Members: Councillor Mallon

Officers: Mark Hassall (Town Clerk & RFO)
Paul Almond (Environment Director)
Helen Durkin (Executive Officer)

Members of Public: 3

GS.11/25 Apologies for Absence
Councillor Okeke

GS.12/25 Declarations of Interest
None.

GS.13/25 Minutes of the Last Meeting
IT WAS RECOMMENDED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 March 2025 be referred to the Full Council meeting on the 17 June 2025 for signing.

GS.14/25 Income & Expenditure Report
The Committee considered a report prepared by the Town Clerk & RFO comparing year-to-date income and expenditure with the projected annual budget for the financial year. The report showed all expenditure incurred up to 23 May 2025.
Officers responded to a range of questions from Members relating to various budget codes and financial procedures. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that overall the Committee's expenditure was within forecast versus the projected budget.

General Services variances were principally

- Staffing costs remain within budget, subject to central government annual salary increases agreed with trade unions.
- Timing of invoicing for grounds maintenance works impacted by timing of May invoice across Parks, including the first weed spray application to street edging. Building M&R includes funding of lampposts at PDP which has successfully attracted funding from CDC, and progress will now move to Chandos Park.
- Tree works orders have largely been completed and with the final few days currently being undertaken, balancing available resources with recommendations from scheduled independent arboriculture inspections over an ongoing three-year timeframe.
- Park Ranger team is now fully staffed following a retirement and successful recruitment.
- Sports facilities works to get facilities reviewed ahead of the football season in September is currently being scheduled.

- Additional expenditure will be incurred to secure and upgrade the lighting of the Banbury Cross and Fine Lady statues, which will be secured within budget parameters following successful grant applications via CDC from central government UK SPF fund (Capital – Park Refurb).
- Improvements to bus shelters providing Green Roofs (in partnership with Bauer Media Outdoor (nee Clear Channel), and Real Time Info (in partnership with OCC).

Underspends on Resources Committee, principally

- Corporate, Central Administration and Civic continue to be well controlled.
- Town Council Events are currently within acceptable budget parameters, including successful and well attended VE Day events, attracting partnership sponsorship resulting in no additional burden to taxpayers.
- Town Hall – includes utility costs to be recharged to OCC under the lease of first floor.
- Other services to the Public include timing of small grants (including Warm Welcome grant scheme).
- Other Costs & Income are in line with projected budget, with reserves being invested to achieve interest income target.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Income and Expenditure report.

GS.15/25 Parks and Cemeteries Service

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment providing an update for Members on:

Parks & Cemeteries Team.
4th Corner Landscape Contract.
Ranger Service / Play Areas.
Sports Surface
Cleansing Service.
Parks Lighting.
PlayZone Schemes.
Hardstanding Refurbishment.

Parks & Cemeteries Team

- The team are up to date with all scheduled work.
- Following the end of the football season, the grounds team have transferred their efforts to the preparation and maintenance of the cricket and bowls facilities.
- The spring bedding has been removed and the ground prepared, from People's Park and the two Cemeteries, in preparation for the bedding delivery and the planting day in the park with the schools on the 18th of June 2025.
- The Team have been busy undertaking burial duties in our cemeteries and have delivered the service in line with funeral bookings.
- The start of the mowing season has gone well, the new mowers have helped the team stay on top of the grass growth.

4th Corner Landscape Contract

- The start of the contract extension with 4th Corner has started well.
- Graeme Makin's role has changed and has been introduced as a permanent manager based on the Banbury Contract, to help support the team on a full time basis.
- 4th Corner have also started the mowing season well, maintaining standards in line with the contract specification.
- Following the end of the football fixtures post season renovations are underway.
- The street weed control treatment of roadside kerbs has been undertaken and was complete by the end of May.

Park Ranger Service / Play Area Update

- The new Senior Park Ranger, Simon Millward, has joined the team and started work for the Council on the 06th May 2025. He is settling into the role well.
- The Rangers continue to carry out weekly visual Health & Safety inspections formally recording utilising the new mobile PSS Live software package.
- The team continue to undertake repair work on the findings made as a result of the inspection reports.
- Unfortunately, the trim trail unit at People's Park had to be removed due to structural failures in the timbers. Three quotations were obtained for a replacement unit. Following evaluation a the replacement equipment has been ordered and will be installed before the School Summer Holidays.
- A picnic bench will be installed next to Merton Street MUGA, following a request from users last summer after the Rangers removed some domestic sofas that were brought onto site by the teenagers. To be installed by the Rangers before the Summer Holidays.

Cleansing Service Update

- Cleaning of public toilets is ongoing, no problems to report.
- The monthly cleaning of all sports pavilions continues, with the exception of the weekly cleaning at the Cricket Pavilion at Hanwell Fields following fixtures.
- Parks & Open Spaces Cleansing – The service provided by Cherwell District Council continues to be delivered in line with the Service Level agreement, no issues to report.
- The Big Litter Pick took place on the 17th May 2025. The event was a great success with 40 volunteers taking part who cleaned four routes in and around the Town. The assistance of Cherwell District Council to help with staff and equipment on the day was much appreciated.

Parks Lighting Update

- The replacement of the lighting columns in Princess Diana Park and the new run of lights to serve the PlayZone is now all complete.
- The new lighting for Banbury Cross and the Fine Lady Statue has been delivered, however, the installation has been delayed due to the requirement for additional infrastructure. This was identified as a result of electrical safety testing at a pre-contract meeting with the engineers.

PlayZone Scheme Update

- Contracts for the installation of Chandos Close Play Zone have been agreed and signed work is to commence on the 02 June 2025 and be completed by the 22nd August 2025. Affected local residents have been informed of the project by means of letter drop.
- Planning permission has been granted by Cherwell District Council for the Princess Diana Park subject to the clearance of a condition, which requires a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan to be submitted and approved before work can start on site.
- The Football Foundations Consultants have submitted a proposal and are awaiting the response from Cherwell District Council Planning Officers. Once the condition clearance is achieved a start date can be set.

Recommendations

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and;

To note the Parks and Cemeteries Service Update.
To note the 4th Corner Landscape Contract Update.
To note the Ranger Service / Play Area Update.
To note the Cleansing Service Update.
To note the Lighting Update.
To note the PlayZone Scheme Update

GS.16/25 Sports Facilities

Tennis - People's Park

- Following refurbishment of courts in 2024, delivered through the grant received from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) - Parks Investment Programme, there was an obligation to work with the LTA towards the delivery of "Free Park Tennis" sessions at the venue on Saturday mornings.
- To run these sessions it was necessary to attract volunteer Tennis Activators who would receive training through the LTA Activator Programme. As a possible route to recruit the activators the LTA suggested contacting other established tennis clubs, your District Council's sports development team and local colleges. Unfortunately, this did not result in anyone showing an interest, so we carried out some direct marketing to existing users and advertising at the venue which

resulted in four people coming forward interested in undergoing the training to become activators at People's Park.

- I am pleased to inform members following the completion of the training and receipt of the equipment form the LTA to run the sessions, we held our first "Free Tennis" session on Saturday 24th May 2025.

- The first session was well attended with 25 participants of mixed ages ranging from young children to adults.

Tennis – Horton View

- Background

2003 - Banbury Town Council took over a 99 year Lease for Horton View Sports Ground from Oxfordshire County Council, previously held by Cherwell District Council.

2008 - Banbury Town Council agreed the signing of a Sub-Lease for 21 years with Banbury Tennis Club.

2010 - Banbury Town Council made a grant to the club of £4,000, towards the installation of new flood lighting.

2011 - Banbury Town Council made a financial contribution of £1,000 (1 sixth of the total cost) to refurbish the public court only.

2024 – Banbury Town Council, following a meeting with Banbury Tennis Club, received representations on a number of issues:

1. The Club would like to explore some security of tenure as the current lease expires on 1st March 2029. This short term period hinders the options for the club to assess funding options for development.
2. In the Clubs opinion the courts at Horton View were in poor condition, confirming that the club does not have sufficient funds to refurbish them and in their view this was the landlords responsibility to resurface them.
3. The club would like to replace the flood lighting heads to LED's from the current halogen lighting.
   The fencing surrounding the courts needed refurbishment or replacement.

- To assess the condition of the courts Officers commissioned an independent assessment of the court surfaces from a professional sports surfacing contractor.

The recommendations of the report and cost associated are:

1. Courts 1-4
   These courts are nearing the end of their usable life, however, the Council may want to consider localised resin and grit repairs and binding and colour spray would extend their safe and playable life for 2-3 more years.

   Budget cost repair £9,940 or Budget Cost to resurface & paint £60,000

2. Court 5
   The surface of this court has reached the end of its life cycle, binding and painting will not work on this court, therefore, a fully resurface and paint is required.

   Budget cost to resurface and paint £16,420

3. Court 6
   The surface of this court has reached the end of its life cycle, binding and painting will not work on this court, therefore, a fully resurface and paint is required, however, the edging also need replacing. In addition there is a major problem with roots under the court and would need to be addressed by others before undertaking refurbishment works.

Budget Cost to install new edges, resurface and paint £19,650

- Officers recommendations to the committee are:

1. Courts 1-4
   The recommendation for the repairs to extend the playing surface for 2-3 years be accepted, which would allow options for full resurfacing to be reviewed and negotiated alongside a new lease proposal.
2. Court 5 & 6
   The Council go out for formal tender as per the recommendation.
3. Court 6
   Banbury Town Council work with Sanctuary Housing to ensure they fell the tree which is causing damage to the court surface so there is no issues when resurfacing works are undertaken.
4. Tenders obtained to undertake necessary repairs to the court fencing where needed.
5. New lease be drawn up with longer term and costs identified for further discussions with Banbury Lawn Tennis Club.

Tennis Fees and Charges Proposal

- Following the refurbishment of Peoples' Park tennis courts the Council has experienced an increase in appropriate use of the facility by tennis players, however, we have received complaints from genuine bookers that there is still an element of inappropriate use of the courts.

- The Rangers have also had to challenge youths in the court playing ball games who have admitted they gain access by booking the court to get a code to enter the court to play football.

- The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) recommended that there should be a charge for all tennis, not only to stop anti-social behaviour, but more importantly to ensure the sustainability of maintenance and upkeep of the court and gate entry system.

- The recommendation is to introduce a modest hourly booking fee for Banbury Town Council Courts in line with the fees charged on the leased courts at Banbury Lawn Tennis Club of £4.00 per hour.

PlayZone Fees and Charges Proposal

- In preparation for the completion of the PlayZones construction, agreeing slots for targeted community, youth and sports groups as well as general casual users and prior to going live with the online booking system a pricing structure is required to be approved.

- Officers have worked in partnership with the Football Foundation and Cherwell District Council to compare charges made by other Local Authority run PlayZones in areas of deprivation across the country.

The recommendation for charges are:

1. Formal Adult Group Hire (Sports Clubs etc) - £20.00 per hour.
2. Targeted Partner Community Group/Under 18 years of age - £10.00 per hour.
3. General Public Pay & Play - £2.50 per hour.

MUGA Refurbishment Costs

- Following the independent assessment of the hard surfaces within the Councils MUGA facilities the identified work requirements are:

1. Chandos Sports Ground – Power Wash/Repaint, – Budget Estimate £1,500
2. Easington Recreation Ground - Power Wash/Repaint Budget Estimate £2,000
3. Hanwell View – No Work Required
4. Hastings Park – Power Wash/Repaint Budget - Estimate £1,500
5. Hill View Park – Power Wash/Repaint Budget - Estimate £2,000
6. Ironstones Park - Power Wash/Repaint Budget - Estimate £2,000
7. People’s Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
8. Merton Street - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
9. Princess Diana Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
10. Ruscote Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
11. Standbridge Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
12. Trinity Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £1,500

Due to extensive tree root damage the following facilities require more substantial works:

13. Bankside Park
    Remove existing surface/Resurfacing/Repainting - Budget Estimate £15,000
14. Moorfields Recreation Ground
    Remove existing surface/Resurfacing/Repainting - Budget Estimate £15,000

- Total Project Budget Estimate to undertake all refurbishments is £50,500.

- The recommendation to the committee is that:
  1. The tree works are ordered to remove the offending trees causing the surface damage.
  2. Tenders are sort for works as identified by the independent professional sports surfacing contractor.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and to note the Sports Facilities report and;

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and to note the update report on Tennis – People's Park

IT WAS RESOLVED that the General Services Committee **RECOMMEND;**

To recommend to Resources committee the Recommendations to 6.3 Tennis – Horton View
To recommend to Resources committee the Recommendations in 7.3 Tennis – Fees and Charges
To recommend to Resources committee the Recommendations in 8.3 PlayZone – Fees and Charges
To recommend to Resources committee the Recommendations in 9.3 MUGA – Refurbishment Costs.

The meeting ended at 7:34pm

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Resources Committee held at **6.30pm on Tuesday 10th June 2025** in the Town Hall, Banbury.

Present: Councillor Eaton (Chair)
Councillors: Beere, Mallon and Vaitkus.

Alternate Members: Councillor Richards for Cllr Hussain

Officers: Mark Hassall (Town Clerk & RFO)
Paul Almond (Director of Environment)

Members of Public: The Hive – Bernadette Cummings and Mark Macaulay

R.20/25 Apologies for Absence
Cllr Hussain

R.21/25 Declarations of Interest
None.

R.22/25 Minutes of the last Meeting

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 March 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

R.23/25 Income & Expenditure Report
The Committee considered a report prepared by the Town Clerk & RFO comparing year-to-date income and expenditure with the projected annual budget for the financial year. The report showed all expenditure incurred up to 23 May 2025.

Officers responded to a range of questions from Members relating to various budget codes and financial procedures. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that overall the Committees' expenditure was within forecast versus the projected budget.

General Services variances and points to note were principally:

- Staffing costs remain within budget, subject to central government annual salary increases agreed with trade unions.
- Timing of invoicing for grounds maintenance works impacted by timing of May invoice across Parks, including the first weed spray application to street edging. Building M&R includes funding of lampposts at PDP which has successfully attracted funding from CDC, and progress will now move to Chandos Park.
- Tree works orders have largely been completed and with the final few days currently being undertaken, balancing available resources with recommendations from scheduled independent arboriculture inspections over an ongoing three-year timeframe.
- Park Ranger team is now fully staffed following a retirement and successful recruitment.
- Sports facilities works to get facilities reviewed ahead of the football season in September is currently being scheduled.

- Additional expenditure will be incurred to secure and upgrade the lighting of the Banbury Cross and Fine Lady statues, which will be secured within budget parameters following successful grant applications via CDC from central government UK SPF fund (Capital – Park Refurb).
- Improvements to bus shelters providing Green Roofs (in partnership with Bauer Media Outdoor (nee Clear Channel), and Real Time Info (in partnership with OCC).

Underspends on Resources Committee, principally:

- Corporate, Central Administration and Civic continue to be well controlled.
- Town Council Events are currently within acceptable budget parameters, including successful and well attended VE Day events, attracting partnership sponsorship resulting in no additional burden to taxpayers.
- Town Hall – includes utility costs to be recharged to OCC under the lease of first floor.
- Other services to the Public include timing of small grants (including Warm Welcome grant scheme).
- Other Costs & Income are in line with projected budget, with reserves being invested to achieve interest income target.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Income and Expenditure report.

R.24/25 Employee Policies
To consider the new policies for Disciplinary and Harassment & Bullying and an associated training programme, alongside recommendation for an Employee Assistance programme.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Employee Policy report.
IT WAS RESOLVED to agree the policies with 1 abstention.

R.25/25 Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025 (Unaudited)
To receive and note the accounts for the twelve months to 31st March 2025.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Annual Accounts.

R.26/25 Presentation by The Banbury Hive
To consider the presentation outlining the desire for accommodation/facilities within Castle Quay. Councillor Mallon undertook to take this to full council on 23 September 2025 in the form of a motion to be provided by councillors.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Banbury Hive Presentation, the Resources Committee **resolved** to support and advocate the idea of the plan and to work in partnership where possible to achieve the objectives outlined by Banbury Hive.

R.27/25 Sports Facilities Report

<u>Tennis - People's Park</u>

- Following refurbishment of courts in 2024, delivered through the grant received from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) - Parks Investment Programme, there was an obligation to work with the LTA towards the delivery of "Free Park Tennis" sessions at the venue on Saturday mornings.

- To run these sessions it was necessary to attract volunteer Tennis Activators who would receive training through the LTA Activator Programme. As a possible route to recruit the activators the LTA suggested contacting other established tennis clubs, your District Council's sports development team and local colleges. Unfortunately, this did not result in anyone showing an interest, so we carried out some direct marketing to existing users and advertising at the venue which resulted in four people coming forward interested in undergoing the training to become activators at People's Park.

- Members were informed that following the completion of the training and receipt of the equipment from the LTA to run the sessions, our first "Free Tennis" session was held on Saturday 24th May 2025.

- The first session was well attended with 25 participants of mixed ages ranging from young children to adults.

Tennis – Horton View

- Background

  2003 - Banbury Town Council took over a 99 year Lease for Horton View Sports Ground from Oxfordshire County Council, previously held by Cherwell District Council.

  2008 - Banbury Town Council agreed the signing of a Sub-Lease for 21 years with Banbury Tennis Club.

  2010 - Banbury Town Council made a grant to the club of £4,000, towards the installation of new flood lighting.

  2011 - Banbury Town Council made a financial contribution of £1,000 (1 sixth of the total cost) to refurbish the public court only.

  2024 – Banbury Town Council, following a meeting with Banbury Tennis Club, received representations on a number of issues:

  1. The Club would like to explore some security of tenure as the current lease expires on 1st March 2029. This short term period hinders the options for the club to assess funding options for development.
  2. In the Clubs opinion the courts at Horton View were in poor condition, confirming that the club does not have sufficient funds to refurbish them and in their view this was the landlords responsibility to resurface them.
  3. The club would like to replace the flood lighting heads to LED's from the current halogen lighting.
     The fencing surrounding the courts needed refurbishment or replacement.

- To assess the condition of the courts Officers commissioned an independent assessment of the court surfaces from a professional sports surfacing contractor.

The recommendations of the report and cost associated are:

1. Courts 1-4
   These courts are nearing the end of their usable life, however, the Council may want to consider localised resin and grit repairs and binding and colour spray would extend their safe and playable life for 2-3 more years.

   Budget cost repair £9,940 or Budget Cost to resurface & paint £60,000

2. Court 5
   The surface of this court has reached the end of its life cycle, binding and painting will not work on this court, therefore, a fully resurface and paint is required.

   Budget cost to resurface and paint £16,420

3. Court 6
   The surface of this court has reached the end of its life cycle, binding and painting will not work on this court, therefore, a fully resurface and paint is required, however, the edging also need replacing. In addition there is a major problem with roots under the court and would need to be addressed by others before undertaking refurbishment works.

Budget Cost to install new edges, resurface and paint £19,650

- Officers recommendations to the committee are:

1. Courts 1-4
   The recommendation for the repairs to extend the playing surface for 2-3 years be accepted, which would allow options for full resurfacing to be reviewed and negotiated alongside a new lease proposal.
2. Court 5 & 6
   The Council go out for formal tender as per the recommendation.
3. Court 6
   Banbury Town Council work with Sanctuary Housing to ensure they fell the tree which is causing damage to the court surface so there is no issues when resurfacing works are undertaken.
4. Tenders obtained to undertake necessary repairs to the court fencing where needed.
5. New lease be drawn up with longer term and costs identified for further discussions with Banbury Lawn Tennis Club.

Tennis Fees and Charges Proposal

- Following the refurbishment of Peoples' Park tennis courts the Council has experienced an increase in appropriate use of the facility by tennis players, however, we have received complaints from genuine bookers that there is still an element of inappropriate use of the courts.

- The Rangers have also had to challenge youths in the court playing ball games who have admitted they gain access by booking the court to get a code to enter the court to play football.

- The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) recommended that there should be a charge for all tennis, not only to stop anti-social behaviour, but more importantly to ensure the sustainability of maintenance and upkeep of the court and gate entry system.

- The recommendation is to introduce a modest hourly booking fee for Banbury Town Council Courts in line with the fees charged on the leased courts at Banbury Lawn Tennis Club of £4.00 per hour.

PlayZone Fees and Charges Proposal

- In preparation for the completion of the PlayZones construction, agreeing slots for targeted community, youth and sports groups as well as general casual users and prior to going live with the online booking system a pricing structure is required to be approved.

- Officers have worked in partnership with the Football Foundation and Cherwell District Council to compare charges made by other Local Authority run PlayZones in areas of deprivation across the country.

The recommendation for charges are:

1. Formal Adult Group Hire (Sports Clubs etc) - £20.00 per hour.
2. Targeted Partner Community Group/Under 18 years of age - £10.00 per hour.
3. General Public Pay & Play - £2.50 per hour.

MUGA Refurbishment Costs

- Following the independent assessment of the hard surfaces within the Councils MUGA facilities the identified work requirements are:

1. Chandos Sports Ground – Power Wash/Repaint, – Budget Estimate £1,500
2. Easington Recreation Ground - Power Wash/Repaint Budget Estimate £2,000
3. Hanwell View – No Work Required
4. Hastings Park – Power Wash/Repaint Budget - Estimate £1,500
5. Hill View Park – Power Wash/Repaint Budget - Estimate £2,000
6. Ironstones Park - Power Wash/Repaint Budget - Estimate £2,000
7. People's Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
8. Merton Street - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
9. Princess Diana Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
10. Ruscote Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
11. Standbridge Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £2,000
12. Trinity Park - Power Wash/Repaint - Budget Estimate £1,500

Due to extensive tree root damage the following facilities require more substantial works:

13. Bankside Park
    Remove existing surface/Resurfacing/Repainting - Budget Estimate £15,000
14. Moorfields Recreation Ground
    Remove existing surface/Resurfacing/Repainting - Budget Estimate £15,000

- Total Project Budget Estimate to undertake all refurbishments is £50,500.
- The recommendation to the committee is that:
  1. The tree works are ordered to remove the offending trees causing the surface damage.
  2. Tenders are sort for works as identified by the independent professional sports surfacing contractor.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and to note the Sports Facilities report and;

The Resources Committee **RESOLVED**

11.1 To note the recommendations of the General Services committee and Approve the Recommendations for the Tennis – Horton View
11.2 To note the recommendations of the General Services committee and Approve the Recommendations for the Tennis – Fees and Charges
11.3 To note the recommendations of the General Services committee and Approve the Recommendations for the PlayZone – Fees and Charges
11.4 To note the recommendations of the General Services committee and Approve the Recommendations for the MUGA – Refurbishment Costs

Background Papers: Nil

The meeting ended at 8.13pm

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

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

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

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices.*
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
   - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
   - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
   - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025.**
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025.** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
   - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
   - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
   - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
   - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
   - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

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

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

Publication Requirements

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

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

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

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

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

BANBURY TOWN COUNCIL

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			✓
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✓		

	Yes	No	Not applicable
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	✓		

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

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

11/10/2024 05/02/2025 14/05/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

A C Shepherd-Roberts

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit [signature]

Date 14/05/2025

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

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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

BANBURY TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

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

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

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

17/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

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

Chair

Clerk

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

BANBURY TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	4,584,781	4,659,690	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	2,113,471	2,230,520	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	346,685	796,413	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	920,417	959,994	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	1,464,829	1,580,615	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	4,659,690	5,146,015	*Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).*

8. Total value of cash and short term investments	4,861,839	5,436,019	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March –* ***To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,755,617	6,796,330	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			*The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.*
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			*The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

Date 17/06/2025

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

17/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

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

Banbury Town Council

Statement of Accounts

(Not Subject to Audit)

31 March 2025

Banbury Town Council

Index

Page No(s).

Banbury Town Council

Council Information

Town Mayor

Cllr Mark Cherry

Councillors

Cllr Andrew Beere
Cllr Rebecca Biegel
Cllr Chris Brant
Cllr Becky Clarke
Cllr Isabel Creed
Cllr Andrew Crichton
Cllr Balbir Dhesi
Cllr Andrew Eaton
Cllr Henry Elugwu
Cllr Ian Harwood
Cllr Shaida Hussain
Cllr Kieron Mallon
Cllr Helen Mears
Cllr Chukwudi Okeke
Cllr Barry Richards
Cllr Jayne Strangwood
Cllr Kerrie Thornhill
Cllr Sian Tohill-Martin
Cllr James Urwick
Cllr Dom Vaitkus
Cllr Wendy Woodward
Vacancy

Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer

Mark Hassall ACMA CGMA MA

Auditors

Moore

Banbury Town Council

Introduction to Accounting Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

The Accounting and Audit Regulations governing the production of the Council's accounts were amended on 31 March 2012. Prior to this date the Council were obliged to prepare its accounts under the 2008 FRSSE and these accounts were subject to a full code audit.

The new regulations allow the Council to adopt the Limited Assurance Audit Regime, the principal advantage being a considerable saving in audit fees and a less arduous audit regime.

The Council's statutory accounts are now produced in the form of the Annual Return. The Statements of Accounts which are not subject to audit provides background workings and explanations of the figures declared in the Annual Return.

The following items are included:

The Statement of Accounting Policies

This statement details the legislation and the accounting principles on which the financial statements are prepared.

The Statement of Responsibilities

This statement identifies the Council's responsibilities and identifies the officer who is responsible for the Council's financial affairs.

The Income and Expenditure Account (Unaudited)

This document shows the income generated and the total expenditure on the services provided by the Council for the year. If required, this document includes capital expenditure and the capital element of loan repayments.

The Income and Expenditure Account Reconciliation (Unaudited)

This document reconciles the figures shown in the Income and Expenditure Account to the Annual Return.

The Balance Sheet (Unaudited)

This sets out the financial position of the Council on 31 March. It shows the value of its assets, the value of its cash and bank values, how much it is owed and how much it owes and the balance of reserves at its disposal.

Notes to the Accounts

These provide further information on the amounts included in the financial statements.

Budget Comparison for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Council's policy is to estimate the total expenditure for the year, which may contain capital expenditure not financed via the precept. Any such expenditure of this type is included within the actual revenue expenditure for the year.

The budget out-turn is summarised below :

	Net Expenditure	Net Budget	Variance
SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC			
Litter and Dog Bins	(167,523)	(170,523)	3,000
Cemeteries	(262,676)	(269,646)	6,970
Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation	(1,029,951)	(1,160,319)	130,368
Cultural and Heritage	(2,834)	(9,288)	6,454
Bus Shelters and Grit Bins	(2,124)	(13,275)	11,151
Capital Costs	(17,794)	(60,405)	42,611
	(1,482,902)	**(1,683,456)**	**200,554**
DEMOCRATIC, CIVIC AND CENTRAL COSTS			
Civic and Events	(280,767)	(319,536)	38,769
Service Support Costs	(368,974)	(390,275)	21,301
Town Hall	(86,545)	(70,610)	(15,935)
Swimming Pool and Other Grants	(101,257)	(108,028)	6,771
Capital Costs	(6,406)	-	(6,406)
Interest and Other Income	235,446	227,970	7,476
	(608,503)	**(660,479)**	**51,976**
Developer Contribution under S106 agreements	113,583	113,583	-
Precept	2,230,520	2,230,520	-
Net surplus/(deficit)	**252,698**	**168**	**252,530**

It is the Council's policy to provide full information about its affairs. Interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed. The availability of the accounts for inspection is advertised on the Council's notice boards and website.

Further information about the accounts is available from The Town Hall, Bridge Street, Banbury, OX16 5QB. This is part of the Council's policy of providing full information about its affairs.

Statement of Accounting Policies

31 March 2025

Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England).
These accounts have been prepared having regard to the fundamental accounting concepts of: Going Concern, Prudence, Accruals, Relevance, Consistency, Reliability, Comparability, Understandability and Materiality.
The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.
Prior to 1 April 2012 the Council's accounts were prepared in line with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (FRSSE 2008). The change from the FRSSE has resulted in a review of accounting policies, with changes in respect of the treatment of Fixed Assets.

Fixed Assets

All expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets above the Council de-minimus (currently £5,000) is written off to the Council's Income and Expenditure Account in the year of acquisition. Expenditure on fixed assets is then included in the Balance Sheet with a corresponding transaction shown in the Capital Financing Reserve to balance the transaction.
Fixed Assets are included in the balance sheet at carrying value current on 31 March 2009 together with subsequent acquisitions and enhancements at cost.

Depreciation Policy

All assets are held at cost on the balance sheet, in line with the accounting regulations.

Disposals

Where an asset is disposed of at a value above the de-minimus level (currently £10,000), the proceeds of the capital receipt within the meaning of the Local Authorities (Capital Financing and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2011, are included in the Income and Expenditure Account and carried to the Useable Capital Receipts Reserve.

Grants or Contributions from Government or Related Bodies

Capital Grants

Where a fixed asset has been acquired or improved with the financing either wholly or in part by a grant or contribution from government or a related body, e.g. Sports Council, the full amount of the grant has been included in the Income and Expenditure Account to off-set the cost of purchasing the relevant asset.

Revenue Grants

Whether paid on account by instalment or in arrears grants and third party contributions are recognised as income on the date the Council receives the payment. Revenue grants are matched in revenue accounts with the service expenditure to which they relate and are shown under a separate heading in the Statutory Income and Expenditure Account.

Capital Receipts

Capital receipts arising from the disposal of fixed assets are taken to the Capital Receipts Reserve until such time as they are used to finance new capital expenditure.

Investments

Investments over one year in length are not included in the balance sheet and realised gains or losses are taken into the Income and Expenditure account as realised.

Stocks and Work in Progress

Stocks where relevant are being constantly replaced and their value is not material to assessing the Council's state of affairs, as a result, stock is written off directly to revenue expenditure.

Debtors and Creditors

The revenue accounts of the Council are maintained on an accruals basis in accordance with the regulations. That is, sums due to or from the Council during the year are included whether or not the cash has actually been received or paid in the year. Exceptions to this are payment of regular quarterly and other accounts (e.g. telephones, electricity). This policy is applied consistently each year. Therefore, it will not have a material effect on the year's accounts or on the Council's annual budget.
The Council reviews the level of its commercial debtors on a regular basis and provisions are made, as required, where the likelihood of amounts proving ultimately collectable is in doubt.

Value Added Tax

Income and Expenditure excludes any amounts related to VAT, as all VAT suffered/collected is recoverable from or payable to HM Revenue and Customs. Any amounts not so recoverable are treated as a separate expense.

External Loan Repayments

When required, details of the Council's external borrowings are shown in the notes.
The Council shows external borrowings in its Balance Sheet. However the capital element of loan repayments is included in the Income and Expenditure Account and transferred to the Balance Sheet via the Capital Financing Account.

Leases

The Council has no commitments under finance leases. Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to revenue on an accruals basis.

Reserves

The Council maintains certain reserves to meet general and specific future expenditure. The purpose of the Council's reserves is explained in the notes.
The Capital Financing Reserve is maintained to manage the accounting processes for tangible fixed assets. It does not represent usable resources for the Council:
Capital receipts arising from the disposal of fixed assets are taken to the Useable Capital Receipts Reserve until such time as they are used to finance new capital expenditure.

Interest Income

All interest receipts are credited initially to general funds.

Interest is reallocated to certain reserves based on the level of their fund balance.

Cost of Support Services

The costs of management and administration have been apportioned to services on an appropriate and consistent basis.

Pensions

The pension costs that are charged against precept in the Council's accounts, in respect of its employees, are equal to the contributions paid to the funded pension scheme for those employees.
These contributions are determined by the fund's actuary on a triennial basis and are set to meet 100% of the liabilities of the pension fund, in accordance with relevant government regulations.
The Local Government scheme is accounted for as a defined benefit scheme.

Banbury Town Council

Statement of Responsibilities for the Accounts

31 March 2025

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required:

to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs

to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. At this Council, that officer is the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets

to approve the Annual Return

The Responsible Financial Officer's Responsibilities

The RFO is responsible for the preparation of the Council's statement of accounts as contained in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils (Part 3) - A Practitioners Guide England "The Guide"* , to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at 31 March 2025 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

In preparing the statements of accounts, the RFO has:

selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently

made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent, and complied with the guide.

The RFO has also:

kept proper accounting records which were up to date, and

taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Responsible Financial Officer's Certificate

I hereby certify that the statement of accounts presents a true and fair view of the position of Banbury Town Council at 31 March 2025, and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025

Signed: ……………………………………………
Responsible Financial Officer - Mark Hassall

Date: ………………….

Banbury Town Council

Income and Expenditure Account

for the year ended 31 March 2025

Prior Year £ Net Expenditure		2025 £ Gross Expenditure	2025 £ Income	2025 £ Net Expenditure
	SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC			
(160,236)	Litter and Dog Bins	(167,523)		(167,523)
(222,473)	Cemeteries	(363,302)	100,626	(262,676)
(1,013,247)	Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation	(1,100,498)	70,547	(1,029,951)
(1,266)	Cultural and Heritage	(2,834)		(2,834)
(6,342)	Bus Shelters and Grit Bins	(2,124)		(2,124)
(11,041)	Capital Costs	(17,794)	-	(17,794)
-	Developer Contribution under S106 agreements		347,209	347,209
	DEMOCRATIC, CIVIC AND CENTRAL COSTS			
(252,221)	Civic and Events	(310,570)	29,803	(280,767)
(305,795)	Service Support Costs	(368,974)		(368,974)
(104,684)	Town Hall	(99,327)	12,782	(86,545)
(95,598)	Swimming Pool and Other Grants	(101,257)	-	(101,257)
(21,572)	Capital Costs	(6,406)	-	(6,406)
155,914	Interest and Other Income	-	235,446	235,446
(2,010,292)		(2,540,609)	796,413	(1,744,196)
2,113,471	Precept			2,230,520
7,619	**Net Surplus/(Deficit)**			**486,324**

Balances at Prior Year	RESERVES	Balances at 31 March 2024	Movement in Year	Balances at 31 March 2025
1,498,352	General Fund	1,498,352	32,699	1,531,051
2,516,902	Earmarked Reserves	2,516,902	220,000	2,736,902
644,435	Land transfer maintenance	644,435	233,625	878,060
4,584,779	**Total**	**4,659,689**	**486,324**	**5,146,013**

Banbury Town Council

Income and Expenditure Account and Annual Return Reconciliation

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Income			Expenditure			
	Box 2	Box 3		Box 4	Box 5	Box 6	
Annual Return Box Numbers	Precept	Other Income	Total	Staff Costs	Loans Repaid	Other Costs	Total
Sevices to the Public							
Litter and Dog Bins		-	-	-		(167,523)	(167,523)
Cemeteries		100,626	100,626	(242,947)		(120,355)	(363,302)
Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation		70,547	70,547	(353,056)		(747,442)	(1,100,498)
Cultural and Heritage		-	-	-		(2,834)	(2,834)
Bus Shelters and Grit Bins		-	-	-		(2,124)	(2,124)
Capital Costs		-	-	-		(17,794)	(17,794)
Democratic, Management and Civic							
Civic and Events		29,803	29,803	(102,518)		(208,052)	(310,570)
Service Support Costs		-	-	(232,036)		(136,938)	(368,974)
Town Hall		12,782	12,782	(29,437)		(69,890)	(99,327)
Swimming Pool and Other Grants		-	-	-		(101,257)	(101,257)
Capital Costs		-	-	-		(6,406)	(6,406)
Interest and Other Income		235,446	235,446	-		-	-
Precept	2,230,520	-	2,230,520	-		-	-
S106 Developer Contributions		347,209	347,209				
Totals Carried to Annual Return	2,230,520	796,413	3,026,933	(959,994)	-	(1,580,615)	(2,540,609)

Banbury Town Council

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2025

Previous Year £		Box	2025 £	2025 £
	Current Assets			
142,381	Debtors	8	123,654	
4,861,839	Cash at Bank and In-hand		5,436,016	
5,004,220			5,559,670	
	Current Liabilities			
(344,530)	Creditors and accrued expenses	9	(413,660)	
0	Commuted Sums received in advance	11	0	
			(413,660)	
4,659,690	**Net Current Assets**			5,146,010
	Financed by:			
	Reserves available to the Council			
1,498,352	General Reserve		1,531,051	
	Earmarked Reserve	14		
2,516,904	- Future Projects		2,736,900	
644,434	- Land transfer maintenance		878,060	
				5,146,010
	Reserves Not Available to Council: Represents the Council's Net Investment in Fixed Assets less Outstanding Loans			
4,659,690				5,146,010

These accounts have been approved by the Council.

	…………………………………
Leader of the Council	**Responsible Financial Officer**
Date: ………………………….	Date: …………………………

1 **Interest and Investment Income**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Interest Income - General Funds	235,446	155,914
	235,446	62,705

2 **Audit Fees**

Fees payable covering the year 2024/2025 for the services carried out by the Council's auditors, Moore Stephens LLP in the year are £2,520 (2023/2024 £2,520).

3 **Employees**

The average weekly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Full-time	16	16
Part-time	9	9
	25	25

All staff are paid within nationally agreed pay scales

Number of employees whose remuneration excluding employers pension contributions was over £50,000 in bands of £10,000 was:

Band	Number of Employees 2024/2025	Number of Employees 2023/2024
£50,000 to £59,999	1	1
£70,000 to £79,999	1	1

4 **Participation in Pension Scheme**

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers and other employees, the Council offers retirement benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Council has a commitment to make the payments that needs to be disclosed at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme for civilian employees, administered locally by Oxfordshire County Council - this is a defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.

5 **Tangible Fixed Assets**

	Freehold Land and Buildings	Leasehold Buildings	Community Sites	Other Assets	Heritage Assets	Total
Cost	£	£				£
At 31 March 2024	2,621,057	145,000		3,187,905	801,654	6,755,617
Additions	14,391	-		26,322	-	40,713
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2025	2,635,448	145,000		3,214,227	801,654	6,796,330

Although classified as capital expenditure, certain minor equipment purchases are not included above as they are not material in overall value (subject to a £5k de-minimus).

Banbury Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2025

6 Financing of Capital Expenditure

	2025	2024
	£	£
The following capital expenditure during the year:		
Fixed Assets purchased	40,713	76,916
	40,713	207,782
was financed by:		
Useable Capital Grants	-	-
Earmarked Projects Reserve	-	-
Precept and Revenue Income	40,713	76,916
	40,713	207,782

7 Information on Assets Held

Fixed assets owned by the Council include the following:

Operational Land and Buildings
- Town Hall Buildings
- Cemetery Buildings
- Sports Grounds and Pavilions

Vehicles and Equipment
- Town Hall Furniture and Fittings
- Council Offices Furniture and Fittings
- Playground Equipment

Infrastructure Assets
- Bus Shelters
- Litter and Dog Litter Bins

Community Assets
- Allotment Sites
- Cemeteries
- Play Areas and Open Spaces
- Spiceball Country Park
- Recreation grounds
- Town Signs
- Civic Regalia
- Council Artifacts

8 Debtors & Accrued Income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade Debtors - amounts falling due under one year	29,475	32,212
Accrued Income	118	118
Prepayments	4,982	9,344
Land Deposit	-	-
Less: Provision for bad and doubtful debts	-	-
	34,575	41,674
HM Revenue & Customs (VAT recoverable)	89,080	100,708
	123,655	142,382

9 Creditors and Accrued Expenses

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade Creditors	(182,888)	(268,037)
Superannuation Payable		
Payroll Taxes and Social Security		
Accruals	(184,997)	(59,493)
Income in Advance	(45,775)	(17,000)
	(413,660)	(344,530)

		2025	2024
10	**Grants Received**		
	Capital Grants		
	Capital Grants	-	-
		-	-

		2025	2024
11	**Commuted Sums**	£	£
	Balance at 1 April	-	-
	Sums received during the year	-	-
		-	-
		-	-

12 **Earmarked Reserves**

	Balances at 1 April 2024	Contribution to Reserves	Contibution from Reserves	Balances at 31 March 2025
Other Earmarked Reserves	3,161,338	567,209	113,583	3,614,963
	3,161,338	567,209	113,583	3,614,963

See Appendix A: for a full anaysis of earmarked reserves

Banbury Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2025

Appendix A:

Schedule of Earmarked Reserves

	Corporate Objectives	Balances at 1 April 2024	Contribution to Reserve	Contribution from Reserve	Movement of reserve funds	Balances at 31 March 2025
Estate Wall Repairs & Ditch works	H1	86,240				86,240
Hardwick Hill Cemetery Extension	B1	563,470				563,470
Park Improvements	H1	757,575				757,575
Sports Capacity Investment	H1	328,160				328,160
Vehicle Replacement Fund (incl GM Plant)	H2	315,840				315,840
Allotment Site Improvement	A1	29,120				29,120
Town Centre Initiative	J1	146,720				146,720
Peoples Park Improvements	J2	151,699				151,699
Computer Software	D1	38,080				38,080
Hard Landscaping - Sports & Play	H1		200,000			200,000
Provision for bad and doubtful debts	D1		20,000			20,000
Playzone Refurb Chandos & PDP	H1	100,000				100,000
Section 106 Agreements	D1	644,434	347,209	113,583		878,060
		3,161,338	567,209	113,583	-	3,614,963

Banbury Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2025

Appendix C:

Annual Return Reconciliation

		2024 £	2025 £
1	Balances Brought Forward	4,584,781	4,659,691
2	Annual Precept	2,113,471	2,230,520
3	Total Other Receipts	346,685	796,413
4	Staff Costs	920,417	959,994
5	Loan Interest/Capital Repayments	-	-
6	Total Other Payments	1,464,829	1,580,615
7	Balances Forward	4,659,691	5,146,015
8	Total Cash and Investments	4,861,839	5,436,016
9	Total Fixed Assets	6,755,617	6,796,330
10	Total Borrowings	0	0

Banbury Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2025

Appendix B:

Reserves Reconciliation to Cash at Bank

		Prior Year	Prior Year	2025	2025
		£	£	£	£
Reserves	General	1,498,352		1,531,051	
	Earmarked	2,516,904		2,736,901	
	- Land transfer maintenan	644,434		878,060	
			4,659,690		5,146,011
Less Debtors		(142,381)		(123,654)	
Add Liabilities	Creditors and accrued expenses	344,530		413,660	
	Commuted Sums received in advance	0		0	
			202,149		290,006
Total			4,861,839		5,436,017
Cash at Bank			4,861,839		5,436,017
Difference			**0**		**0**

		2025	2025
		£	£
Bank Statement Balances			
	NAT WEST DISBURSEMENTS	221,946	
	NATWEST SALARIES	73,281	
	NATWEST SPECIAL INTEREST A/C	3,534,684	
	BARCLAYS	116	
	PETTY CASH	250	
	30 Day Notice	1,605,230	
	12 Month Bond	0	
			5,435,507
Unpresented Payments			(613)
Unbanked Receipts			1,123
Closing Balance			**5,436,017**
All Cash & Bank Accounts			
	NatWest Disbursements		222,456
	NatWest Salaries		73,280
	NatWest Special Int.		3,534,684
	Barclays		116
	Petty Cash		250
	Barclays		
	30 Day Notice Acc		1,605,230
	12 Month Bond		0
Total Bank & Cash Balances			**5,436,016**

Smaller authority name: **Banbury Town Council**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

NOTICE

1. Date of announcement Wednesday 18 June 2025 (a)

2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.
Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2025, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:

(b) Mark Hassall
Town Clerk
mark.hassall@banbury.gov.uk

commencing on (c) **Wednesday 18 June 2025**

and ending on (d) Tuesday **29 July 2025**

3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:

- The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and
- The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority.

The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.

4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:

MOORE

Moore (Ref AP/HD)
Rutland House
Minerva Business Park
Lynch Wood
Peterborough
PE2 6PZ

5. This announcement is made by (e) Mark Hassall – Town Clerk& RFO

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.

The basic position

By law, any interested person has the right to inspect the accounting records of smaller authorities. If you are a local government elector or registered to vote in the local councils' elections, then you are able to ask questions about the accounts and object to them.

The right to inspect the accounting records

When your council has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year, they must advertise that they are available for people to inspect. You must then provide the council with reasonable notice of your intentions. Following this, by arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records and supporting documents. You may be required to pay a copying charge.

The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

If you have any questions regarding the accounting records, you should first ask your smaller authority. This must be done during the 30-day period for the exercise of public rights. You may also ask the appointed auditor questions about an item in the accounting records. However, the auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions so is limited with their response. To avoid any confusion, it is advised that you put your questions in writing.

The right to make objections

Should you view something as unlawful or believe there are matters of wider concern in the accounts, you may wish to object. If you are a local government elector, you have the right to ask the external auditor to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item is contrary to the law and should be reported as a matter of public interest. This must be done by telling the appointed auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you believe it to be unlawful or think a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide clear evidence to support your objection, and this should be done in writing and the copied to the council.

You should not use the 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. Complaints of this nature should be taken to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor.

A final word

Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, the auditor must consider the cost that will be involved. They will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision, you may have to pay for the action yourself.

Appendix 5

Banbury Town Council

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

INDEX to Financial Regulations

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1 GENERAL

1.1 These financial regulations shall govern the conduct of the financial transactions of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council.

1.2 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), under the policy direction of the Resources Committee, shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's affairs.

1.3 The RFO shall be responsible for the production of financial management information.

2. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

2.1 Each committee shall formulate and submit proposals to the Resources Committee in respect of revenue services and capital projects for inclusion in the rolling capital programme not later than the end of January each year.

2.2 Detailed estimates of income and expenditure on revenue services, and receipts and payments on capital account, shall be prepared each year by the RFO.

2.3 The Resources Committee shall review the estimates and submit them to the Council not later than the end of January in each year and shall recommend the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall supply each member with a copy of the approved estimates.

2.4 The annual capital and revenue budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

2.5 The Council shall prepare and have regard to a four year forecast of Revenue and Capital Receipts and Payments which shall be prepared at the same time as the annual Budget or Estimates.

3 BUDGETARY CONTROL

3.1 Expenditure on the revenue account may be incurred up to the amounts included in each approved committee budget.

3.2 No expenditure may be incurred which cannot be met from the amount provided in the appropriate committee revenue budget unless a virement has been approved by the Resources Committee or the Council.

3.3 Transfers within committee revenue budgets can be made provided that this does not distort Council policy. The Town Clerk and the RFO may authorize such transfers.

3.4 The RFO shall periodically provide the Resources Committee with a statement of income and expenditure to date under each head of the approved budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget.

3.5 The Town Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the council which is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000 per annum. The Town Clerk shall report the action to the appropriate committee as soon as practicable thereafter.

3.6 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with regulation 3.4 above and the sum required can not be met from savings made elsewhere within that committee's approved budget, it shall be subject to the provision of a supplementary estimate approved by the Resources Committee or the Council.

3.7 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an Earmarked Reserve by resolution of the Resources Committee.

3.8 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving expenditure on capital account unless the committee concerned are satisfied that it is contained in the rolling capital programme and that the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

3.9 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015.

4.2 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the annual financial statements of the Council as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them and report thereon to the Resources Committee.

4.3 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the Accounts of the Council and for submitting the Accounts for approval and authorisation by the

Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015,

4.4 The following principles shall be observed in connection with accounting duties.

a) The duty of providing information, calculating, checking and recording sums due to, or from, the council, should be separated as completely as possible from the duty of collecting or dispersing them.

b) Officers charged with the duty of examining and checking the accounts of cash transactions should not be engaged in any of those transactions.

4.5 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the RFO or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.

4.6 The Internal Auditor shall carry out the work required by the RFO, or by the Council. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to Council in writing on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual report in respect of each financial year.

4.7 The RFO shall make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015

4.8 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

5 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND CHEQUES

5.1 The council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Resources Committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.

5.2 A schedule of the payment of money shall be prepared by the RFO and together with the relevant invoices etc be presented to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Resources Committee, the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor. If the schedule is in order it shall be authorised by any two of the four signatories.

5.3 Cheques and autopay sheets drawn on the two bank accounts in accordance with the schedule referred to in the previous paragraph shall be signed by any two of the following:

Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Resources Committee, the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor.

5.4 To indicate agreement of the detail shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

6.1 Apart from petty cash payments, all payment shall be effected by cheque or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.

6.2 Before certifying an account, the certifying officer shall be satisfied that:

(a) The goods to which the account relates have been received, examined and approved as to quality and quantity, or services rendered or work carried out satisfactorily.

(b) The prices, extensions, calculations, trade discounts, other allowances, credits and tax are correct.

(c) The relevant expenditure has been properly incurred, is within the relevant estimate provision, and the account has not been previously passed for payment.

(d) The expenditure has been correctly coded to the appropriate cost centre and appropriate entries made in inventories, store records or stock books, as required.

6.3 Duly certified invoices shall be passed to the Accountant who shall examine them in relation to arithmetical accuracy and authorisation. When the Accountant is satisfied that invoices are in order shall give them final certification in the box provided on the payment slip. When the invoice relates to an order raised by the Accountant he shall pass it to the Deputy Town Clerk for final certification.

6.4 The Accountant shall take all possible steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, within 30 days of their receipt.
If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge of interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, the RFO may take all steps necessary to settle such invoices provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the appropriate signatories at the next available opportunity.

6.5 All duly certified invoices will then be entered on the schedule referred to in 5.2 above.

6.6 The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement:

a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float to a limit of £250 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of the payment of money presented to the Resources Committee Chairman or Vice-Chairman, the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor (under 5.2 above).

6.7 If thought appropriate by the RFO, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by the Resources Committee Chairman or Vice-Chairman, the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor as made.

7 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

7.1 The payment of all salaries and wages shall be made by the RFO from the Salaries account in accordance with the payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by the Resources Committee.

7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates.

7.3 All time sheets shall be certified as to accuracy by or on behalf of the Town Clerk.

7.4 The payroll account shall not be overdrawn at the bank. Transfers to fund it shall be made from the Council's general account and shall be shown separately on the schedule of the payment of money presented to the Resources Committee Chairman or Vice-Chairman, the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor (under 5.2 above).

8 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated by the RFO in the name of the Council, and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Policy, which shall be reviewed annually by the Resources Committee and recommended for approval by the Council.

8.2 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8.3 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose.

8.4 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

9 INCOME

9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Town Clerk.

9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts over £250 shall be reported to the Resources Committee and shall be written off in the year.

9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall either be paid to the RFO for banking or be banked by the officer collecting the money as directed by the RFO. In all cases all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

9.6 A reference to the related debt, or otherwise, indicating the origin of each cheque, shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.7 Every transfer of official money from one member of staff to another shall be signed for by the receiving officer.

9.8 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

9.9 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

9.10 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

10.1 Official orders shall be in a form approved by the RFO and are to be signed only by officers authorised by the Town Clerk who shall be responsible for official orders issued. In all cases no orders will be authorised by the officer raising the order.

10.2 An official order or letter of intent shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate e.g. petty cash purchases or for supplies of public utility services, periodical payments such as rent or rates or other such exceptions as the RFO may from time to time approve. Orders shall contain a quotation or estimate of costs and works to be undertaken. Copies of orders shall be maintained.

10.3 Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.

10.4 All Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order is to ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction and are subjected to terms of the Council’s financial regulations on Contracts at paragraph 11 of these regulations.

10.5 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11 CONTRACTS

11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

(a) Every contract whether made by the council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated shall comply with these standing orders, and no exception from any of the following provisions of these standing orders shall be made otherwise than by direction of the council or in an emergency by such a committee as aforesaid provided that these standing orders shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (v) below:

(i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;

(ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;

(iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

(iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;

(v) for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an

estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act following consultation with the Chairman of Resources Committee;

(vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/ or which are sold only at a fixed price.

(b) Where it is intended to enter into a contract:

(i) for expenditure of £50,000 or less in value the Town Clerk or one of the duly authorised deputies (in the first instance the Deputy Town Clerk or Director of Environment) shall have executive power.

(ii) exceeding £3,000 but not exceeding £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works, quotations in writing from at least three firms shall be obtained by Officers under the direction of the Town Clerk, unless the service/goods is available from one specialist supplier only or for the reasons set out in paragraph (a) above. Such firms shall be selected in accordance with standing orders.

(iii) for expenditure exceeding £50,000, a minimum of three tenders shall be invited from the appropriate approved list of contractors, or upon the recommendation of any professional advisors engaged to assist the Council in undertaking the tender process, under the direction of the Town Clerk. If three offers are not received the Officers may repeat the request to other suitable approved firms.

(iv) a check is to be made whether the European Union Public Sector Procurement Rules apply and appropriate advice sought. Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (SI No.5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.

(c) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Resources Committee.

(d) Every exception made by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated shall be reported to the Resources

Committee and the report shall specify the emergency by which the exception shall have been justified.

(e) Notice of a contract exceeding £50,000 shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the last date by which those tenders should reach the Town Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Tenders received after that date shall not be accepted or considered and the tender will be returned directly to the tenderer.

(f) Tenders shall only be accepted if returned in the Council's own stamped addressed envelope with no additional information added by the tenderer.

(g) Tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk in the presence of at least one Member of the Council and shall be reported to the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee.

(h) All tenders received, including any returned, shall be recorded. A register of all contracts awarded shall be kept and maintained. This register shall be open to inspection by any member of the Council.

(i) Neither the Council nor any Committee, or Sub-Committee is bound to accept the lowest tender or any tender, quote or estimate; however satisfactory justification shall be required and recorded in the minutes.

(j) If no tenders are received or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works as it thinks fit.

(k) A notice issued under the regulations shall contain a statement of the effect of the following.

   (i) If a supplier/tenderer of any goods/services is to his/her knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, he/she and the person to whom he/she is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Town Clerk. A person who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such contract and, if engaged, the contract may be withdrawn without further notice. The Town Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate Committee any such disclosure.
   (ii) Canvassing of members or of any Committee, directly or indirectly, for any work/service under the Council shall disqualify the supplier/tenderer. The Town Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph to every supplier/tenderer.
   (iii) A member of the Council shall not solicit for any person any work under the Council or recommend any person for such work; but, nevertheless, a member may give a written testimonial of a supplier's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council.

(l) Tenders for the purchase of land, surplus equipment, etc., from the

Council will be dealt with in accordance with the general interpretation of the regulations unless otherwise decided by the Council.

12 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by installments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case when it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding fluctuation clauses, will exceed the contract sum by 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the appropriate committee.

12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Town Clerk in writing, the appropriate committee being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13 STORES EQUIPMENT

13.1 The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.

13.2 Delivery Notes must be obtained in respect of all goods received into store and goods must be checked as regard quality at the time delivery is made.

13.3 Stocks shall generally be maintained at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

13.4 The RFO shall be responsible for an annual check of all stocks and stores.

14 PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

14.1 The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held .

14.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, save where the estimated market value of any one item does not exceed £1,000.

15 INSURANCE

15.1 Following an annual risk assessment, the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Town Clerk.

15.2 The Town Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances

15.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

15.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim.

15.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.

15.6 The RFO shall undertake an annual risk assessment.

16 CHARITIES

16.1 Where the Council is sole trustee of a Charitable body the Town Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Town Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17 RISK MANAGEMENT

17.1 The Town Clerk with the RFO shall prepare and promote risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council.

17.2 The Town Clerk and RFO shall ensure that all reports considered by the Council, Committees and Sub Committees address the legal and financial liabilities and Risk Management issues that arise from the proposed activity.

18 REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

18.1 It shall be the duty of the Resources Committee to review the financial regulations of the Council from time to time and to make such recommendations to the Council as the Committee considers are required.

Banbury Town Council

STANDING ORDERS

Index of standing orders

1 Meetings

a) **Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**

b) **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.**

c) **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**

d) Subject to standing order 1(c) above, Banbury residents are permitted, at the discretion of the Town Mayor, to ask questions in respect of any item of business included in the agenda for the meeting of the full Council or which relate either to matters over which the Council has power or Its administrative area.

e) The period of time which is designated for public participation at meetings of the full Council in accordance with standing order 1(d) above shall not exceed (20) minutes. There shall be no public participation session at the Annual Council Meeting.

f) Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda for the full Council meeting and shall not speak for more than (5) minutes.

g) In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting of the full Council shall not require a response or debate.

h) In accordance with standing order 1(g) above, the Town Mayor may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.

i) A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.

j) A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The Town Mayor may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.

k) Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Town Mayor.

l) Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Town Mayor shall direct the order of speaking. Where a number of people wish to make similar representations, they should be prepared to select one person from amongst their number to speak for them all. Where different people wish to speak on each side of a debate then each side must be willing to appoint one member to represent their views.

m) Audio and visual recordings of a meeting of the Council, Committees and other Council bodies by the general public, or the media, is permitted. It would be helpful if those wishing to record could contact the Council before the meeting so that we can ensure the necessary facilities are in place. The Town Mayor (or the Chairman of the meeting) will advise the public that the meeting is being recorded. A request to record a meeting shall only be refused if the Town Mayor believes recording would disrupt the meeting. The purpose of this standing order is to provide guidance for members of the press, or public, on the taking of photographs and/ or the audio / visual recording of any Council meeting which is held in public.

There are no restrictions on anyone at a Council meeting using Twitter, blogs, Facebook or similar social media provided that the Town Mayor does not consider their actions are disrupting the proceedings of the meeting.

n) In accordance with standing order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

o) **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Town Mayor (or Chairman of a Committee/Sub Committee) may in his absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Town Mayor (or Vice-Chairman).**

p) **The Town Mayor, if present, shall preside at a meeting of the Council. If the Town Mayor is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Town Mayor, if present, shall preside. If both are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**

q) **Subject to model standing order 1 (x) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**

r) **The Town Mayor may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.** (See also standing orders 2 (h) and (i) below.)

s) **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of two Councillors, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before the vote is taken.

t) **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present** and absent**.**

u) **The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors and co-opted members in respect of the entire meeting.**

v) **An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.** (See also standing order 7 below.)

w) **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than 3.**

x) **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.

2 Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**

b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**

c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**

d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**

e **The election of the Town Mayor and** Deputy Town Mayor **shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**

f **The Town Mayor, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

g **The Deputy Town Mayor, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

h **In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor has been elected. The current Town Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

i **In an election year, if the current Town Mayor** has **been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Town Mayor has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

j Following the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.

i. In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.
ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees.
iii. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
iv. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
v. To appoint representatives to Outside Bodies
vi. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the power of General Competence expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.

3 Proper Officer

a The Council's Proper Officer shall be the Town Clerk or such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.

b The Council's Proper Officer shall do or make arrangements for the doing of the following.

i. **Sign and serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee** and sub-committee **at least 3 clear days before the meeting.**

ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee** or a sub- committee **(provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them)**.
iii. Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice before the agenda for the meeting has been sent out confirming his withdrawal of it.
iv. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Town Mayor, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with standing order 3(b)i above**.
v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
vii. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**
viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
x. Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 2022, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
xi. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
xii. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be sealed using the Council's common seal (*See also standing orders 14(a) and (b).*)
xiv. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
xv. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority on the Council's Planning Database;;
xvi. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Ward Councillors for comment
xvii. Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
xviii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

4 Motions requiring written notice

a In accordance with standing order 3(b)(iii) above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the next meeting.

b The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

c If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Town Mayor or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda. The proposer of the motion shall be advised accordingly.

d Having consulted the Town Mayor or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(c) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.

e Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.

f Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection in a book for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.

g Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

h If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-committee or employee provided that the Town Mayor may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

5 Motions not requiring written notice

a Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.

i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
ii. To record the absences of councillors.
iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
viii. To close or adjourn debate.
ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
x. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
xi. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
xii. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub- committee or an employee.
xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
xvi. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
xvii. To extend the time limit for speeches.
xviii. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
xix. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
xx. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
xxi. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.
xxii. To adjourn the meeting.
xxiii. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
xxiv. To answer questions from councillors.

6 Rules of debate

a Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Town Mayor's direction for reasons of expedience.

b Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.

c Subject to standing order 3(b)(iii) above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.

d A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Town Mayor, be reduced to writing and handed to the Town Mayor who shall determine the order in which they are considered.

e A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.

f Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
   i. to leave out words;
   ii. to add words;
   iii. to leave out words and add other words.

g A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.

h Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Town Mayor. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.

i Subject to Standing Order 6(h) above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Town Mayor considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.

j Pursuant to standing order 6(h) above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.

k If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Town Mayor.

l If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

m The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding (5) minutes.

n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.

o Subject to standing orders 6(m) and (n) above, a councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.

p During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.

q A point of order shall be decided by the Town Mayor and his decision shall be final.

r With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.

s Subject to standing order 6(o) above, when a councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:

i. to amend the motion;
ii. to proceed to the next business;
iii. to adjourn the debate;
iv. to put the motion to a vote;
v. to ask a person to be silent or for him to leave the meeting;
vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
vii. to exclude the public and press;
viii. to adjourn the meeting;
ix. to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.

t In respect of standing order 6(s)(iv) above, the Town Mayor shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is put to the vote. The Town Mayor shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

7 Code of conduct (England)

See also model standing orders 1(d)–(i) above

a All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

b All councillors shall be encouraged to undertake training in the code of conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.

c **Councillors with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting shall as soon as practicable after the start of the meeting make a disclosure as to the nature as well as the existence of that interest; and thereafter, leave the room or chamber.**

8 Questions

(See also Standing Order 1(d) to 1(k)

a A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed before the meeting begins.

b Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.

c Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

d A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

e At all meetings of the Council except at the Annual Council Meeting a period of up to 20 minutes in total shall be allocated in accordance with Standing Order 1(d) where the Town Mayor may at his/her discretion, allow any Banbury resident to address the meeting, subject to:

- no member of the public speaking for more than five minutes;
- where a number of people wish to make similar representations they are prepared to select one person from amongst their number to speak for them all; and
- where different people wish to speak on each side of a debate then each side being willing to appoint one member to represent their views.

f Such sessions form part of the Council meeting in law and shall be duly minuted.

9 Minutes

a	If a copy of the minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.

b	No discussion of the minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with standing order 5(a)(iv) above.

c	Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Town Mayor or Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

10 Disorderly conduct

a	No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.

b	If, in the opinion of the Town Mayor or Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Town Mayor or Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Town Mayor or Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.

c	If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 10(b) above, is disobeyed, the Town Mayor or Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

11 Rescission of previous resolutions

a	A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 6 councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.

b	When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

12 Voting on appointments

a Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Town Mayor/Chairman's casting vote.

13 Expenditure

a Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.

b The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.

c The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.

14 Execution and sealing of legal deeds /documents

a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.

b **In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 14(a) above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Town Clerk**

c A resolution of the Council or of a Committee (where that Committee has the power) or the exercise of any power under delegation arrangements authorising the acceptance of any tender or quotation, the purchase, sale, letting or taking of any property, the making of any payment, the issue of any stock, the transfer of shares and other investment transactions, the presentation of any petition, memorial or address, the making of any rate or contract or the doing of, or any other matter or thing, shall be sufficient authority for the sealing of any document necessary to give effect thereto.

d The Town Clerk may sign on behalf of the Council, any agreement or other document not requiring to be executed under seal and he or his authorised alternate, may sign on behalf of the Council any notice, order or other document not required to be executed under seal, the subject matter of which has been approved by or on behalf of the Council or any Committee or Sub-Committee thereof or Officer authorised so to act under delegation arrangements.

e An entry of the sealing of every deed and document to which the Common Seal shall have been affixed shall be made in a book to be provided for that purpose and shall be signed by the person present at the sealing.

f Where any document will be a necessary step in legal proceedings on behalf of the Council it shall, unless any enactment otherwise requires or authorises or the Council shall have given the necessary authority to some other person for the purpose of such proceedings, be signed by the Town Clerk, or other Officer authorised so to act under delegation arrangements.

15 Committees

See also standing order 1 above

a The Council may at its Annual Town Council Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf: -

- Shall not appoint any member of a Committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.

- May appoint persons other than members of the Council, in a non-voting capacity, to any Committee.

- May subject to the provisions of Standing Order 11 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a committee.

- May at any time give instructions to or modify or revoke the powers or duties of any Committee.

- Shall, as far as is practicable appoint members to Standing Committees in proportion to the number of Councillors in each group to which they affiliate.

b Every committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and may elect a Vice-chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

c The quorum of Committees and of Sub-Committees shall be one third of the whole number of members of the Committee or Sub-Committee but shall not be less than three members of a Committee or two members of a Sub-Committee.

16 Sub-committees

See also standing order 1 above

a Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of the committee.

17 Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above

a The Town Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.

b **If the Town Mayor does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**

c The Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.

d If the Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee). The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by those two councillors.

18 Advisory committees

See also standing order 1 above

a The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.

b Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

19 Presence of Non-Members at Meetings

a A member who has proposed a resolution, which has been referred to any committee of which he is not a member, may explain his resolution to the committee but shall not vote.

b A Member of the Council may attend as an observer, without a right to speak or vote, a meeting of any Committee or Sub-Committee of which he is not a Member, even if members of the public have been excluded, except when a matter in respect of which he would be required to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is to be discussed.

c A Member of the Council may attend, without a right to vote, any meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of which they are not a Member, in order to make a statement on a particular item of business of which notice has been given in the formal agenda and which directly and specifically affects the Ward they represent. Such attendance shall not be allowed if the matter is one where the Member would be required to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

d A Member attending a meeting as a Ward Member to make a statement shall notify the Town Clerk prior to the start of the meeting so as to enable a proper record to be made in the Minutes.

e Where alternate membership of a Committee or Sub-Committee is permitted, each Political Group may have an unlimited number of alternate members for that Committee or Sub-Committee provided that each alternate member has been duly appointed as such by the Council or by the parent Committee.

f If a Member of a Committee or Sub-Committee (with the exception of such bodies where the Council has decided alternate members shall not be appointed) is unable to attend a meeting thereof, a duly appointed named alternate member shall be entitled to attend, speak and vote at the meeting provided that:-

(i) no member shall be entitled to act as an alternate for more than one member at any one meeting;

(ii) the name of the alternate member is notified to the Town Clerk before the time appointed for the start of the meeting, and shall be reported formally by him to the meeting and the substitution recorded in the Minutes;

(iii) the attendance of the alternate member shall apply for the whole of the meetings in question;

g The provisions of paragraphs (e) and (f) above shall apply also to a vacant seat on a Committee or Sub-Committee created when a Member vacates his or her seat on the Council for whatever reason prior to the expiry of their elected term of office, until such time as the seat on the Committee or Sub-Committee has been filled.

h The Town Mayor shall be entitled to attend and speak, but may not vote at meetings of any Committee/Sub-Committee of which they are not appointed Members.

i A Member who is appointed as the Leader of a Political Group represented on the Council shall be entitled to attend and speak at all meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees of the Council. A Member who is attending a meeting as Leader of a Political Group shall advise the Town Clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting of that fact, and such attendance shall be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

20 Accounts and Financial Statement

a All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.

b The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March a Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis for a year to 31 March. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30 June.

21 Estimates/precepts

a **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year** at its meeting before the end of January.

b Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than December.

22 Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors

a Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.

b A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

c This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

23 Inspection of document

a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

24 Unauthorised activities

a Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
  i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

25 Confidential business

a Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.

b A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 25(a) above may be removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

26 Power of General Competence

a **Before exercising the power of general competence, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.**

b **The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under standing order 26 (a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.**

27 Matters affecting council employees

a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered at a meeting until the meeting has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.

b Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.

c The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.

d Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.

e Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records if so justified.

f Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment shall be provided only to the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

28 Relations with the press/media

a All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

29 Liaison with District and County Councillors

a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillors of the District and County Councils representing Banbury electoral divisions/wards.

30 Financial matters

a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
   i. the accounting records and systems of internal control;
   ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
   iii. the work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
   iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments;
   v. procurement policies (subject to standing order 30(b) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £50,000.

b **Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (and as amended in 2022).**

c Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
   i. a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper or in any other manner that is appropriate;
   ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
   iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Town Clerk by a stated date and time;
   iv. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk and at least one member of the Council;
   v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.

d Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

e **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (and as amended in 2022) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.**

31 Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

a Any complaints regarding breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct shall be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Cherwell District Council.

32 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

a Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law and shown in bold type, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

b A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council’s standing orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

33 Standing orders to be given to councillors

a The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of the Council’s standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.

b The Town Mayor/Chairman’s decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.

7

Banbury Town Council

Co-option of a Town Councillor.

Before you can be considered for co-option as a Member of the Town Council, this form must be completed and returned to the Council Offices.

NAME (in full) ....Fiaz Ahmed
....

ADDRESS: .... [redacted]
....

....[redacted].......... Post Code:

Telephone: (Day) ....[redacted]...... (Evening) ....

You must be able to answer "YES" to at least one of the following four questions.

(a) Are you registered as a Local Government Elector at the above address? YES

(b) Do you reside in the Civil Parish of Banbury, or within 3 miles? YES

(c) Do you occupy land or premises within the Civil Parish of Banbury? YES

(d) Is your main place of work within the Civil Parish of Banbury? YES

If you answer "YES" to any of the following six questions, please supply full details on a separate sheet. You may not qualify to serve as a Town Councillor. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

(a) Do you now, or have you in the last 12 months, held any paid office or any other position of profit with this Council? NO

(b) Have you ever been surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more? NO

(c) Have you ever been disqualified by a Court from holding Public Office? NO

(d) Have you ever been declared bankrupt? NO

(e) Have you ever been convicted of any offence where the sentence was more than 3 months (even if sentence suspended) NO

(f) Have you ever been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws? NO

Signed Fiaz Ahmed .... Date
21 -05 2025.................

Please return the completed form to the Council Offices as quickly as possible.

Banbury Town Council

Co-option of a Town Councillor.

Before you can be considered for co-option as a Member of the Town Council, this form must be completed and returned to the Council Offices.

NAME (in full) Lee Christian John Davis
ADDRESS: [redacted]

Telephone: (Day) (Evening) ....

You must be able to answer "YES" to at least one of the following four questions.

(a) Are you registered as a Local Government Elector at the above address? YES /

(b) Do you reside in the Civil Parish of Banbury, or within 3 miles? YES /

(c) Do you occupy land or premises within the Civil Parish of Banbury? NO

(d) Is your main place of work within the Civil Parish of Banbury? YES

If you answer "YES" to any of the following six questions, please supply full details on a separate sheet. You may not qualify to serve as a Town Councillor. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

(a) Do you now, or have you in the last 12 months, held any paid office or any other position of profit with this Council? NO

(b) Have you ever been surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more? NO

(c) Have you ever been disqualified by a Court from holding Public Office? NO

(d) Have you ever been declared bankrupt? YES / NO

(e) Have you ever been convicted of any offence where the sentence was more than 3 months (even if sentence suspended) NO

(f) Have you ever been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws? NO

[redacted]

Signed   Date 22/5/25

Please return the completed form to the Council Offices as quickly as possible.

Banbury Town Council

Co-option of a Town Councillor.

Before you can be considered for co-option as a Member of the Town Council, this form must be completed and returned to the Council Offices.

NAME (in full). **Simon Zachary Garrett**

....

ADDRESS: [redacted]

....

.... Post Code: [redacted]

Telephone: (Day) [redacted] .... (Evening) [redacted] ....

You must be able to answer "YES" to at least one of the following four questions.

(a) Are you registered as a Local Government Elector at the above address? YES

(b) Do you reside in the Civil Parish of Banbury, or within 3 miles? YES

(c) Do you occupy land or premises within the Civil Parish of Banbury? YES

(d) Is your main place of work within the Civil Parish of Banbury? NO

If you answer "YES" to any of the following six questions, please supply full details on a separate sheet. You may not qualify to serve as a Town Councillor. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

(a) Do you now, or have you in the last 12 months, held any paid office or any other position of profit with this Council? NO

(b) Have you ever been surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more? NO

(c) Have you ever been disqualified by a Court from holding Public Office? NO

(d) Have you ever been declared bankrupt? NO

(e) Have you ever been convicted of any offence where the sentence was more than 3 months (even if sentence suspended) NO

(f) Have you ever been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws? NO

Signed **S Garrett** .... Date 19/5/2025

Please return the completed form to the Council Offices as quickly as possible.

Banbury Town Council

Co-option of a Town Councillor.

Before you can be considered for co-option as a Member of the Town Council, this form must be completed and returned to the Council Offices.

NAME (in full) Turlea Octavian

ADDRESS: [redacted]

Post Code: [redacted]

Telephone: (Day) [redacted] (Evening) [redacted]

You must be able to answer "YES" to at least one of the following four questions.

(a) Are you registered as a Local Government Elector at the above address? **YES** / NO

(b) Do you reside in the Civil Parish of Banbury, or within 3 miles? **YES** / NO

(c) Do you occupy land or premises within the Civil Parish of Banbury? YES / **NO**

(d) Is your main place of work within the Civil Parish of Banbury? **YES** / NO

If you answer "YES" to any of the following six questions, please supply full details on a separate sheet. You may not qualify to serve as a Town Councillor. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

(a) Do you now, or have you in the last 12 months, held any paid office or any other position of profit with this Council? YES / **NO**

(b) Have you ever been surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more? YES / **NO**

(c) Have you ever been disqualified by a Court from holding Public Office? YES / **NO**

(d) Have you ever been declared bankrupt? YES / **NO**

(e) Have you ever been convicted of any offence where the sentence was more than 3 months (even if sentence suspended) YES / **NO**

(f) Have you ever been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws? YES / **NO**

Signed Turlea Octavian Date 26 May 2025

Please return the completed form to the Council Offices as quickly as possible.

Banbury Town Council

Co-option of a Town Councillor.

Before you can be considered for co-option as a Member of the Town Council, this form must be completed and returned to the Council Offices.

NAME (in full) Mr John Stansfield

ADDRESS: [redacted] ....

Post Code: [redacted]

Telephone: (Day) .... [redacted] .... (Evening) .... [redacted]

You must be able to answer "YES" to at least one of the following four questions.

a) Are you registered as a Local Government Elector at the above address? YES

b) Do you reside in the Civil Parish of Banbury, or within 3 miles? YES

c) Do you occupy land or premises within the Civil Parish of Banbury? YES

d) Is your main place of work within the Civil Parish of Banbury? NO

If you answer "YES" to any of the following six questions, please supply full details on a separate sheet. You may not qualify to serve as a Town Councillor. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

a) Do you now, or have you in the last 12 months, held any paid office or any other position of profit with this Council? NO

b) Have you ever been surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more? NO

c) Have you ever been disqualified by a Court from holding Public Office? NO

d) Have you ever been declared bankrupt? NO

e) Have you ever been convicted of any offence where the sentence was more than 3 months (even if sentence suspended) NO

f) Have you ever been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws? NO

Signed [redacted]. Date 23/05/2025

Please return the completed form to the Council Offices as quickly as possible.

8

COUNCIL MEETING

17 JUNE 2025

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK & RFO

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN FOR 2024/25

1 Introduction and Purpose of Report

1.1 As part of the Audit and Accounts Regulations, the Council is required to complete an Annual Return.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to authorise the Leader of the Council, Town Clerk and the RFO to sign off the Annual Return and Accounts, as appropriate, on behalf of the Town Council.

2 Wards Affected

2.1 All Wards.

3 Effect on Policy

3.1 Nil.

4 Contact Officer

4.1 Mark Hassall (01295 817313).

5 External Audit

5.1 Following changes to the audit regime, the Council's External Audit is now completed remotely. The deregulation removed the need for the External Auditor to visit the premises at all, with a consequent significant savings in Audit costs. The larger town councils now come within the same Audit regime as all other parish and town councils, rather than that applied to principal authorities such as CDC and OCC which was the case prior to the introduction of the lighter touch audit regime.

5.2 Under the limited assurance regime bodies with annual income or expenditure over £200K but below £6.5m are regarded as "smaller" bodies and are subject to an intermediate audit. This requires the completion of an Annual Return which is then sent to the External Auditor for completion at section 3 along with the appropriate supporting evidence and an audit questionnaire. Whilst the Auditor no longer visits the site he is still required to probe further into the annual governance statement in a "show me" approach in testing the assertions made by the Council.

6 The Annual Return

Annual Governance Statement

6.1 The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) has 9 parts; the Council meets the requirements of each as follows;

1. The accounts were prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations as they apply to Banbury Town Council.
2. There are procedures and internal controls in place and there are regular checks of bank accounts and income and expenditure. The effectiveness of the internal controls has been reviewed.
3. To the best of my knowledge, the Council has only taken actions and decisions on matters that it has the legal power to do so. Also, no matters of this nature have been reported by the internal auditor.
4. The notice as to electors' rights will be displayed in accordance with the Audit and Accounts Regulations.
5. An annual risk assessment is completed and reported to Council. Internal controls and insurances are reviewed on a regular basis.
6. An independent internal auditor examines the accounting records and control systems and provides written reports and recommendations which go to Resources Committee. The effectiveness of the system of internal audit has been reviewed.
7. All audit reports and recommendations from both the internal and external auditors, along with proposed actions to address any concerns, go before the Resources Committee for consideration.
8. To the best of my knowledge, the Council has disclosed everything it should have about its business during the year including any events taking place after the year-end.
9. The Council has discharged its responsibilities in relation to accountability for funds/assets held in trust.

6.2 In accordance with paragraph 6(4)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 the Annual Governance Statement must be approved in advance of approving the Statement of Accounts. A copy is attached at **Appendix 1.**

Accounting Statements

6.3 This part of the Return (Section 2) will be completed by the RFO from extracts taken from the Council's computerised accounting system (RBS Omega) and verified by the Council's independent Accounts Advisor. Copy attached as **Appendix 2**.

7 Statement of Accounts

7.1 There is no longer a prescribed format for the Accounts. This has allowed for a more user-friendly format to be applied, which hopefully Elected Members and members of the public will find easier to follow. In any event the new format has considerably reduced the length of the Accounts.

7.2 The Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (unaudited) are attached as **Appendix 3**.

8 Financial Effects and Risk Assessment

8.1 Undertaking an Annual Governance Review helps to ensure that the Council has an effective corporate governance framework and provides a mechanism through which weaknesses can be identified and addressed.

9 Recommendations

That the Council be RECOMMENDED to resolve:

9.1 That the Annual Internal Audit Report (page 3 of the Annual Return) be received and noted;

9.2 That the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 on the Annual Return – attached as **Appendix 1**), where questions 1 to 9 are answered yes, and signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader of the Council and the Town Clerk;

9.3 That the Accounting Statements (Section 2 on the Annual Return – attached as **Appendix 2**) for the year ended 31 March 2025 be approved and be signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader of the Council and the RFO;

9.4 That the Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2025 (unaudited) (attached as **Appendix 3**) be approved and signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader of the Council and the RFO.

9.5 That the Notice of Electors Rights (attached at **Appendix 4**) be approved.

Background papers – none