



## ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 2AF  
Tel: 01953 456194 – Email: [enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk)

### You are summoned to the Meeting of Attleborough Town Council To be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7.00pm

This meeting will be held at the Town Hall and live streamed via YouTube  
(the YouTube link will be posted on [www.attleboroughtc.org.uk](http://www.attleboroughtc.org.uk))

Due to coronavirus, there will be a limited capacity for public attendance

Michelle Barron  
1<sup>st</sup> March 2022  
Town Clerk

## AGENDA

To transact the undermentioned business; to receive the following reports and to make such orders or give such directions as necessary: -

### 1 Mayors Welcome

### 2 Apologies for Absence

To receive and accept apologies for absence.

### 3 Declarations of Interest

a) To receive and consider declarations of interest in items below:

*(Members are no longer required to declare personal or prejudicial interests but are to declare any new Disclosable Pecuniary Interests that are not currently included in the Register of Interests.*

*Members are reminded that under the Code of Conduct they are not to participate and must leave the room for the whole of an agenda item to which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.*

*Members may disclose any other interests they may have in the interests of transparency)*

b) To receive and consider dispensations in respect of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

### 4 Councillor Co-Option Vacancies – for consideration and resolution

### 5 Public Participation (10 Minutes)

### 6 Minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022

#### a) Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022

For acceptance and approval.

## **7 Events Committee**

- a) Nominate and elect members – for consideration and approval
- b) Jubilee Budget – for consideration and approval
- c) Gazebo purchase – for consideration and approval
- d) Banner Quotes – for consideration and approval

## **8 Policies** – for acceptance and approval

- a) Document Retention & Disposal
- b) Code of Conduct
- c) Member Officer Protocol
- d) Communications & Media

## **9 Wheel Park Quotations** – for consideration and approval

### **10 Planning Matters**

- a) **Planning Applications** (Applications agreed and responses made) – for confirmation by members
- b) **Planning Applications** (Not due yet)
  - 3PL/2022/0147/HOU – ATTLEBOROUGH: 36 Wayland Close – Single storey rear extension (revised design following planning permission 3PL/2021/1458/HOU)
  - 3PL/2022/0059/HOU – Acre Lodge, London Road – Single storey rear/side extension & demolition of dilapidated timber garage
  - 3PL/2022/0200/HOU – ATTLEBOROUGH: 24 Croft Green – Removal of existing flat roof side extension replace with pitched roof extension & open porch.
  - 3PL/2022/0194/HOU – ATTLEBOROUGH: The Nurseries, London Road – Double garage & attic home office
  - 3PL/2022/0167/F – ATTLEBOROUGH: 2<sup>nd</sup> field north of Wroo Farm – Siting of a mobile home

### **11 Councillor Reports**

Town, District and County Councillors can give a brief report on relevant information.

### **12 Financial Matters**

- a) **To authorise payments** – for acceptance and approval
- b) **To agree direct debits** – for acceptance and approval
- c) **To receive income** – for acceptance and approval
- d) **Petty Cash payments** – for information
- e) **Income & Expenditure January 2022** – for information
- f) **Quotations for tree survey** – for acceptance and resolution
- g) **Notice Board price increase notification** - for consideration

### **13 Correspondence**

- a) **Development at Hargham Road, street lighting** – for consideration
- b) **Pedestrian Crossing request Rosecroft School** – for acceptance and resolution
- c) **Request for ATC to participate in World Parkinson's Day 11<sup>th</sup> April** – for consideration
- d) **Resident request for a sign to stop parking outside & blocking exit to their property in Thieves Lane** - for consideration.

### **14 Queens Square Car Park** - for discussion

### **15 Request to install Long Jump Pit at Gaymers Meadow** - for acceptance and resolution

- 16 **Picnic benches**. For consideration
- 17 **New Website** – for acceptance and resolution
- 18 **Public Participation (10 Minutes)**
- 19 **Any items which the Chairman decides are urgent**  
For discussion only.
- 20 **Exclusion of Press & Public**  
To pass a resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting given the sensitive nature of the Business to be discussed.
- 21 **Ongoing Legal Advice/Actions - Settlement Agreement**– for consideration.

Expected Meeting Length is 2 Hours

Michelle Barron

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4)

**From:** Rhys Redfern <rhysredfern@email.com>  
**Sent:** 06 December 2021 21:27  
**To:** Michelle Barron  
**Subject:** Re: FW: Councillor Vacancy

Hi Michelle

Thank you for your reply.

This is my application for the current vacancy on the town council.

I would like to introduce myself.

My name is Rhys Redfern and I am 22 years old. I live in Attleborough and have done for five and a half years. I attended Sixth form at Attleborough Academy, leaving with 4 A levels and then moved on to Brunel University, where I studied for two years for a degree in International Business and Accountancy. Currently, I am enrolled on an Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) course, once completed I will be a qualified accountant. I am also on a full-time apprenticeship level 3 in customer service.

I lived my younger years in Spain, and I am trilingual, knowing English, Spanish and Valencian, which is a regional language within Spain. While in Spain, I participated in Tobadas, which are team building exercises that bring together different groups from all over Spain. They come together to share their differences in language and culture that exist in the various regions in Spain. Due to my time in Spain as well as the activities I participated in, I became very open minded and accepting of new ideas.

In my spare time I enjoy walking and have summited Snowden in 2018. I like animals and have a dog and cat both from rescue homes. I love walking with my dog whilst enjoying nature and the outdoors. I also like reading as well as history, which in fact is one of my A levels.

I have always been interested in being involved in the town council and this interest was heightened seeing the positive development of the station car park. However, I believed that I was too young to be considered. After attending the Christmas Carnival and seeing the future plans for Attleborough, this inspired me once again to want to help contribute to the future positive changes of the town. While at recent dinner party, I spoke to my parent's friend Keith Martin who has been involved in the council for many years and he assured me that my age was not a hindrance and thus I have applied.

Regardless, of your decision, I would like to thank the council for their services to our town.

I look forward from hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

Rhys Redfern

4)  
Dear Town Clerk.

Application for Co-opting onto  
Town Council.

I understand that there is an opportunity to join the Town Council. I wish to express my wish to become a Town Councillor.

I have recently retired, having been the Director of Estates and Facilities at the University of East Anglia, and believe I can commit to giving my time to the Post.

I was previously a Town Councillor and Deputy Mayor having contributed to the creation and adoption of the Town's Neighbourhood Plan and would like to contribute to the further development of the Plan as it progresses.

I have lived in Attleborough for 20 years and believe it is a fine Market Town with the opportunity to become a thriving community led sustainable settlement benefiting from the planned housing development; if the ethos of the Neighbourhood Plan is prosecuted.

With my experience of Planning, development and the Town's Neighbourhood Plan I would like to offer my service to the town; hence this application to rejoin the Town Council.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely.

R. A. Bowel.

6)



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**Minutes of the meeting of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting  
Held on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 6.00 pm  
Held at the Town Hall, Queens Square.**

**Present:**

Cllr P Leslie - presiding  
Cllr J Ellis      Cllr E Tyrer      Cllr A Westby      Cllr V Dale      Cllr D Lane  
                    Cllr A Smith      Cllr S Mackinnon      Cllr P Wenham

In attendance – Michelle Barron – Town Clerk

**a.21) Mayors Welcome –**

Cllr Leslie opened the meeting.

**b.21) Apologies for absence –**

Cllr A Roberts  
Cllr T Taylor

**c.21) Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr Leslie stated that Cllr Dale renting a property on the Recreation Site in this situation did not constitute an interest and Cllr Dale could participate.

**d.21) Tender for the Recreation Centre Wheelpark project**

Cllr Leslie explained that the Extraordinary meeting had been called in order to move the project forward quickly.

Discussion around access for wheelchair users and clarification that the wheel park should be available for wheelchair use. Cllr Leslie thanked the Clerk for the work on this project.

On the motion of Cllr Westby, seconded to Cllr Tyrer it was **RESOLVED** to move forward to Tender,

Meeting closed 6.11pm

6 a)



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**Minutes of the meeting of the Attleborough Town Council  
Held on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.00 pm  
Held at the Town Hall, Queens Square.**

**Present:**

Cllr P Leslie - presiding

Cllr J Ellis	Cllr A Westby	Cllr V Dale	Cllr D Lane
Cllr T Taylor	Cllr K Montague	Cllr A Busk	Cllr A Smith
Cllr P Wenham	Cllr E Tyrer	Cllr S Mackinnon	Cllr A Roberts

In attendance – Michelle Barron – Town Clerk  
In attendance – Anne Willett – Clerks Assistant (minute taker)  
Joel Fayers, MPC Dist. Cllr K Martin  
Public x 8

136.21) Mayors Welcome – Cllr Leslie welcomed everyone and stated it was his daughters sixteenth birthday and admitted to having cake before coming to the meeting.

137.21) Apologies for absence – None received

138.21) Declarations of Interest

a) To receive and consider declarations of interest in items below –

Cllr T Taylor – Items 9a, 12, 19

b) To receive and consider dispensations in respect of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests –

Cllr V Dale – Item 18

Cllr J Ellis - Items 9a, 12

138.21) MPC to give an update on SUE

Joel Fayers gave a brief update stating their two recent events had been well attended, with feedback being processed and fed into the upcoming design infrastructure plans submission. Most recently initial works had started on site such as trial trenching, boreholes, etc. but neighbouring residents had been made aware. Social media channels had been launched and more engagement with stakeholders and Town Council would take place during March regarding S106.

139.21) Public Participation - Resident's Questions –

RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned to allow the Public to speak –

140.21) Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Amendment to minutes to "Add Cllr E Tyrer as present"

On the motion of Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Dale, it was

RESOLVED - to accept the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 with the above amendment

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

**141.21) Planning Matters**

**a) Planning Applications –**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Taylor, it was  
**RESOLVED** to approve and accept the following recommendations already agreed and submitted prior to meeting.

**b) Planning Applications (Not due yet)**

**3PL/2022/0048/HOU – ATTLEBOROUGH: 111 Besthorpe Road – Rear flat roof extension with skylight**

On the motion of Cllr Westby, seconded by Cllr Leslie, it was

**RESOLVED** to accept with no objections

**3PL/2022/0070/F – ATTLEBOROUGH: Crosslands, Deopham Road – Change of use of land from equestrian to agricultural & erection of new agricultural building**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Ellis, it was

**RESOLVED** to accept with no objections

**c) Removal of storage container from car park at rear of Town Hall**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was

**RESOLVED** to move the container to the Recreation Ground for Grounds staff use.

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**142.21) Councillor Reports**

- Cllr Lane – newsletter would be produced quarterly, forward planning would include youth disco, celebration of Pancake Day due to take place 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 & plant swap on Queens Square 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Attended a meeting of Attleborough Contextual Safeguarding Group and would suggest taking up the initiative for this group as now moving onto another area.
- Cllr Dale attended training on how housing associations allocate houses, how to deal with homelessness and also licensing training.
- Cllr Westby and Town Clerk attended AGM for East Harling Drainage Board who are keen to become involved with the SUE
- Cllr Taylor attended usual meetings along with SNAP and Contextual Safeguarding meetings.
- Dist. Cllr Martin stated work had started on site at Wayland Close and the planning meeting next week has one application from Attleborough.

Cllr Ellis left the meeting

**143.21) Financial Matters**

**a) To authorise payments –**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Westby, it was

**RESOLVED** to accept and approve the following payment list dated 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Total £17,320.69

Cllr Ellis returned to the meeting

**b) To agree direct debits –**

On the motion of Cllr Ellis, seconded by Cllr Taylor, it was

**RESOLVED** to approve and accept the direct debit list dated February 2022

Total £30,008.95

**c) To receive income –**

On the motion of Cllr Dale, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was

**RESOLVED** to approve and accept the income list for January 2022

Total £14,852.28

**d) Petty Cash payments – Noted for information**

**e) Income & Expenditure December 2021 – Noted for information**

**f) Appointment of Internal Auditor**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Tyrer, it was

**RESOLVED** to appoint Kerry Butcher Accountancy as internal auditor

**g) Quotations for tree work Cemetery**

On the motion of Cllr Montague, seconded by Cllr Leslie, it was

**RESOLVED** to accept quoted price £1,895 + Vat @ 20%



**h) Quotations for Notice Boards**

On the motion of Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Roberts, it was **RESOLVED** to accept Supplier A

On the motion of Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Lane, it was **RESOLVED** to have half & half notice boards at Recreation Ground & Gaymers Meadow. All Boards to be engraved with Attleborough

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**144.21) Correspondence**

**a) Resident request for tree work to rear of their property –**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Westby, it was **RESOLVED** to obtain 3 quotes for a Tree Survey, bring the report to Council and act on the findings.

**b) Tracy Turner request to use Town Hall free of charge**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Lane, it was **RESOLVED** – to accept & approve

**c) Resident concern speed limit on Buckenham Road –**

As part of the SUE will check to see if speed limits are reviewed and email resident.

**d) Connaught Bowls Club concerns for state of repair of driveway to Recreation Ground**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Tyrer, it was **RESOLVED** – to obtain 3 quotes to resurface driveway to Recreation Ground and mark out for car parking for next Environment meeting

**e) Resident concern for safe footpath over A11 at Besthorpe and new bus stop at junction of Norwich Road, Morley Road –**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Tyrer, it was **RESOLVED** to contact Highways as a Town Council we would like to see this happen and flag this linked to Decoy Common.

**f) High Sheriff Visit 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

Cllr Tyrer to arrange High Sheriff visit to School and Cllrs to contact local groups, charities and let Cllr Leslie or Town Clerk know the details

**ACTION: CLLRS/PL/TOWN CLERK**

**145.21) Committee Membership**

On the motion of Cllr Mackinnon, seconded by Cllr Smith, received 9 votes

On the motion of Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Ellis, received 4 votes

it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Mackinnon to Standing Order Review Committee

On the motion of Cllr Wenham, seconded by Cllr Lane,

it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Wenham to Environment Committee

On the motion of Cllr Roberts, seconded by Cllr Smith,

On the motion of Cllr Wenham, seconded by Cllr Ellis,

it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Wenham & Cllr Roberts to Events & Communications Committee

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

Cllr Ellis leaves the meeting

**146.21) Christmas Lights**

During a discussion

On the motion of Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Mackinnon, it was

**RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders for member of public to take part

Member of public asked if Annual raffle would be included in review?

Cllr Leslie confirmed Council needs to validate monies given from public funds.

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Tyrer, it was

**RESOLVED** to set up a Review Committee to assist the Clerk to review Christmas Lights and bring to Council any recommendations

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Wenham, it was

RESOLVED to appoint Chair, Deputy Chair, Cllr Dale, Cllr Mackinnon to the Review Committee  
ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Cllr Ellis returns to meeting

**147.21) New Website**

A few adjustments needed Cllrs should have preview before next meeting  
ACTION: PL

**148.21) Public Participation (10 Minutes) –**

RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned to allow the Public to speak –

**149.21) Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent - None**

**150.21) Exclusion of Press & Public**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Taylor, it was  
RESOLVED – to exclude the press and public from the meeting given the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed.

Town Clerk left meeting

**151.21) Newly appointed staff Completion of probation periods –**

On the motion of Cllr Dale, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was  
RESOLVED – that newly appointed Michelle Barron had completed her probationary period without any problems.

On the motion of Cllr Montague, seconded by Cllr Westby, it was  
RESOLVED – to give all three newly appointed staff members' permanent contracts.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Town Clerk returned to meeting

Cllr Dale left the meeting for Item 18

Cllrs Taylor, Tyrer, Montague & Busk left the meeting for Item 19

**152.21) Tenancy Review Initial Report/Actions**

Cllr Leslie gave an update to members

**153.21) Ongoing Legal Advice/Actions**

Cllr Leslie gave an update to members

Meeting closed 11pm

### Public Participation 1<sup>st</sup> Section

- Larry Gray outlined his concerns regarding the siting of the new Wheel Park and how it would affect the fun fair which had been part of Attleborough for over 50 years and requested a meeting with the Town Council to discuss.
- Cllr Leslie thanked Larry for his past service and confirmed a meeting would be arranged within the next month.
- Discussions took place regarding Queens Square car parking restrictions trial. There was great concern regarding where employees would park their cars if they could no longer use Queens Square and this may cause on road parking in residential areas.
- Cllr Leslie stated as a Council we would make representation for some sort of provision but it would be limited what we could do but we will raise our concerns with Breckland. There are good solutions but it will need a policy change at Breckland.

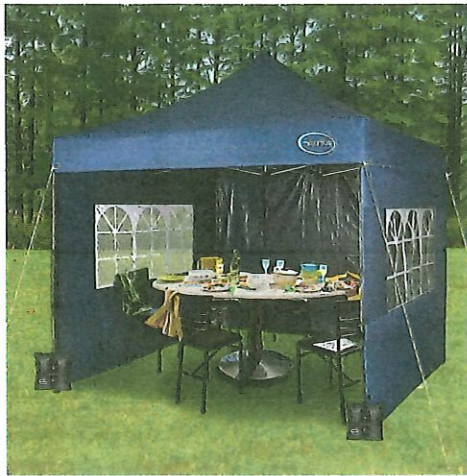
### Public Participation 2<sup>nd</sup> Section

- A question was asked about Lloyds Bank carpark
- No information but can enquire at Breckland but Lloyds are providing a mobile banking service and we have asked to be added to their list. Town Clerk informed Post Office will process cash & cheques
- Resident stated lowering the speed limit along Buckenham Road won't solve the problem as the road and pavements are too narrow.
- There is no easy solution but with the SUE this should improve in the future. Community Speed Watch could assist but there are restrictions where they are allowed to operate we could discuss at next SNAP meeting and contacting PC Andy London.
- It was queried why lockable posts have been put in the Cemetery
- The Clerk explained these had been put in to stop cars damaging graves and headstones which caused distress to relatives.
- Cllr Taylor stated that since the road improvements because the sign for London Tavern had been damaged numerous times it had been removed. Unloading bay not adequate. Along London Road the traffic calming measures impede the emergency services vehicles so unable to use the road and the reflectors don't show clearly in the dark.
- These issues will be discussed with Highways.

7c)

QUOTES FOR A COUNCIL GAZEBO

Quotes for heavy duty commercial gazebos with weights. Various colours are available from each supplier.



**SUPPLIER 1**

**MAXIMUS HEAVY DUTY POP UP GAZEBO 3m x 3m COMMERCIAL MARKET STALL WITH 4 WEIGHT BAGS (4 Walls, Blue)**

Brand: MAXIMUS

4.5 out of 5 stars 844 ratings

£179.99



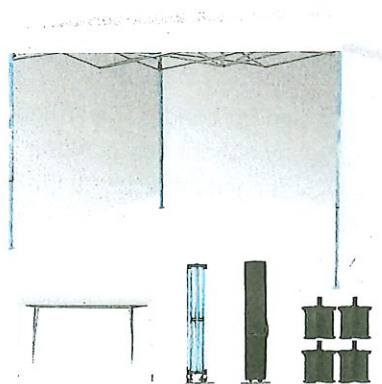
**SUPPLIER 2**

**Gorilla Gazebo® Pop Up 3x3m Heavy Duty Waterproof Commercial Grade Market Stall 4 Side Panels and Wheeled Carrybag (Graphite)**

Visit the Gorilla Gazebo Store

4.7 out of 5 stars 523 ratings

£209.99



**SUPPLIER 3 – BUDGET OPTION.**

**Pop up Gazebos 3x3m with 4 Sides, Waterproof Garden Pavilion Party Marquee, UV Protection Roof, 4 Seasons Canopy Tent for Festivals Outdoor Wedding Camping, Wheeled Carry Bag, 4 Leg Weight Bags**

Brand: Qdreclod

3.2 out of 5 stars 45 ratings

£99.99

7d)

I was asked to obtain prices for banners. There are many companies that provide this service. Most offer fairly rapid turnaround times although there may be a charge for expedited delivery. All of these sites allow the user to create and upload their artwork directly.

## 1. BANNERWORLD

Select measurement units: 3ft x 8ft quantity 2

Each £26.75 | Total £53.50 | VAT £10.70

£64.21 (total inc VAT)

Our Event banner is probably the lowest cost full colour printed banner of this quality in the UK. A fantastic mid-level product and ideal for cheap PVC advertising banners. Our event banner material is superb for smaller sized banners. A laminated banner material, 510 gsm weight instead of the more commonly used 450gsm sign shop grade. Printed in the same way as our Premium Trade 500gsm banner, the only difference is the quality of the banner material itself and the rock bottom prices!

## 2. PRINTED TODAY

Material: Vinyl PVC (510GSM) Unit: Foot Finishing: Eyelets Every 50cm Select Sides: Single Width: 8

Height 3

Total Amount for 2. £50.98

We use 510 gsm vinyl material with UV protected ink. We print large format Banners from £7.48, up to any size you may need. Orders received before 1 pm can be dispatched on the same day. Also, select the delivery timescale below for Banner.

## 3. VINYL BANNERS PRINTING

High Quality Vinyl Banner Printing services at Trade prices! Huge discounts for bulk orders! Buy 2 Banners Get 1 Free offer on ALL banners and Banner Stand products.

Vinyl banners are perfect for indoor and outdoor use, so let us know how to intend to use them and our customer service team will recommend the perfect type of banners.

3FT X 8FT £33.52 EACH

# Document Retention and Disposal Policy

8a)

Approved:  
Date of Review:

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council accumulates a vast amount of information and data during the course of its everyday activities. This includes data generated internally in addition to information obtained from individuals and external organisations. This information is recorded in various different types of document.
- 1.2 Records created and maintained by the Council are an important asset and as such measures need to be undertaken to safeguard this information. Properly managed records provide authentic and reliable evidence of the Council's transactions and are necessary to ensure it can demonstrate accountability.
- 1.3 Documents may be retained in either 'hard' paper form or in electronic forms. For the purpose of this policy, 'document' and 'record' refers to both hard copy and electronic records.
- 1.4 It is imperative that documents are retained for an adequate period of time. If documents are destroyed prematurely the Council and individual officers concerned could face prosecution for not complying with legislation and it could cause operational difficulties, reputational damage and difficulty in defending any claim brought against the Council.
- 1.5 In contrast to the above the Council should not retain documents longer than is necessary. Timely disposal should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations so that personal information is not retained longer than necessary. This will also ensure the most efficient use of limited storage space.

## 2. Scope and Objectives of the Policy

- 2.1 The aim of this document is to provide a working framework to determine which documents are:
  - Retained – and for how long; or
  - Disposed of – and if so by what method.
- 2.2 There are some records that do not need to be kept at all or that are routinely destroyed in the course of business. This usually applies to information that is duplicated, unimportant or only of a short-term value. Unimportant records of information include:
  - 'With compliments' slips.
  - Catalogues and trade journals.
  - Non-acceptance of invitations.
  - Trivial electronic mail messages that are not related to Council business.
  - Requests for information such as maps, plans or advertising material.
  - Out of date distribution lists.
- 2.3 Duplicated and superseded material such as stationery, manuals, drafts, forms, address books and reference copies of annual reports may be destroyed.
- 2.4 Records should not be destroyed if the information can be used as evidence to prove that something has happened. If destroyed the disposal needs to be disposed of under the General Data Protection Regulations.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities for Document Retention and Disposal**

3.1 Councils are responsible for determining whether to retain or dispose of documents and should undertake a review of documentation at least on an annual basis to ensure that any unnecessary documentation being held is disposed of under the General Data Protection Regulations.

3.2 Councils should ensure that all employees are aware of the retention/disposal schedule.

### **4. Document Retention Protocol**

4.1 Councils should have in place an adequate system for documenting the activities of their service. This system should take into account the legislative and regulatory environments to which they work.

4.2 Records of each activity should be complete and accurate enough to allow employees and their successors to undertake appropriate actions in the context of their responsibilities to:

- Facilitate an audit or examination of the business by anyone so authorised.
- Protect the legal and other rights of the Council, its clients and any other persons affected by its actions.
- Verify individual consent to record, manage and record disposal of their personal data.
- Provide authenticity of the records so that the evidence derived from them is shown to be credible and authoritative.

4.3 To facilitate this the following principles should be adopted:

- Records created and maintained should be arranged in a record-keeping system that will enable quick and easy retrieval of information under the General Data Protection Regulations
- Documents that are no longer required for operational purposes but need retaining should be placed at the records office.

4.4 The retention schedules in Appendix A: List of Documents for Retention or Disposal provide guidance on the recommended minimum retention periods for specific classes of documents and records. These schedules have been compiled from recommended best practice from the Public Records Office, the Records Management Society of Great Britain and in accordance with relevant legislation.

4.5 Whenever there is a possibility of litigation, the records and information that are likely to be affected should not be amended or disposed of until the threat of litigation has been removed.

### **5. Document Disposal Protocol**

5.1 Documents should only be disposed of if reviewed in accordance with the following:

- Is retention required to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements?
- Is retention required to meet the operational needs of the service?
- Is retention required to evidence events in the case of dispute?
- Is retention required because the document or record is of historic interest or intrinsic value?

5.2 When documents are scheduled for disposal the method of disposal should be appropriate to the nature and sensitivity of the documents concerned. A record of the disposal will be kept to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations.

5.3 Documents can be disposed of by any of the following methods:

- Non-confidential records: place in waste paper bin for disposal.
- Confidential records or records giving personal information: shred documents.
- Deletion of computer records.
- Transmission of records to an external body such as the County Records Office.

5.4 The following principles should be followed when disposing of records:

- All records containing personal or confidential information should be destroyed at the end of the retention period. Failure to do so could lead to the Council being prosecuted under the General Data Protection Regulations.
- the Freedom of Information Act or cause reputational damage.
- Where computer records are deleted steps should be taken to ensure that data is 'virtually impossible to retrieve' as advised by the Information Commissioner.
- Where documents are of historical interest it may be appropriate that they are transmitted to the County Records office.
- Back-up copies of documents should also be destroyed (including electronic or photographed documents unless specific provisions exist for their disposal).

5.5 Records should be maintained of appropriate disposals. These records should contain the following information:

- The name of the document destroyed.
- The date the document was destroyed.
- The method of disposal.

## **6. Data Protection Act 1998 – Obligation to Dispose of Certain Data**

6.1 The Data Protection Act 1998 ('Fifth Principle') requires that personal information must not be retained longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was originally obtained. Section 1 of the Data Protection Act defines personal information as:

Data that relates to a living individual who can be identified:

- a) from the data, or
- b) from those data and other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of the data controller.

It includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the Council or other person in respect of the individual.

6.2 The Data Protection Act provides an exemption for information about identifiable living individuals that is held for research, statistical or historical purposes to be held indefinitely provided that the specific requirements are met.

6.3 Councils are responsible for ensuring that they comply with the principles of the under the General Data Protection Regulations namely:

- Personal data is processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless specific conditions are met.
- Personal data shall only be obtained for specific purposes and processed in a compatible manner.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant, but not excessive.
- Personal data shall be accurate and up to date.
- Personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary.
- Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of the data subject.
- Personal data shall be kept secure.



6.4 External storage providers or archivists that are holding Council documents must also comply with the above principles of the General Data Protection Regulations.

## **7. Scanning of Documents**

7.1 In general once a document has been scanned on to a document image system the original becomes redundant. There is no specific legislation covering the format for which local government records are retained following electronic storage, except for those prescribed by HM Revenue and Customs.

7.2 As a general rule hard copies of scanned documents should be retained for three months after scanning.

7.3 Original documents required for VAT and tax purposes should be retained for six years unless a shorter period has been agreed with HM Revenue and Customs.

## **8. Review of Document Retention**

8.1 It is planned to review, update and where appropriate amend this document on a regular basis (at least every three years in accordance with the *Code of Practice on the Management of Records* issued by the Lord Chancellor).

8.2 This document has been compiled from various sources of recommended best practice and with reference to the following documents and publications:

- *Local Council Administration*, Charles Arnold-Baker, 910<sup>h</sup> edition, Chapter 11
- Local Government Act 1972, sections 225 – 229, section 234
- SLCC Advice Note 316 Retaining Important Documents
- SLCC Clerks' Manual: Storing Books and Documents
- *Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records* issued under Section 46 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*

## **9. List of Documents**

9.1 The full list of the Council's documents and the procedures for retention or disposal are listed overleaf. This is updated in accordance with any changes to legal requirements.

## List of Documents for Retention or Disposal

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained (Clerks office unless otherwise shown) (NRO = Norfolk Records Office)	Disposal
Minutes Including Committees and Annual Parish Meetings	Indefinite	Archive	NRO	Original signed paper copies of Council minutes of meetings must be kept indefinitely in safe storage. At regular intervals of not more than 5 years they must be archived and deposited with the Higher Authority
Agendas	1 year	Management		Bin
Acceptance of Office Forms	Term of office plus 4 years.	Management		Confidential waste
Register of members interests	Term of office plus 4 years.	Management		Confidential waste
Accident/incident reports	20 years	Potential claims		Confidential waste
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management		Bin
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT		Bin
Bank statements including deposit/savings accounts	6 years	Audit		Confidential waste
Bank paying-in books	6 years	Audit		Confidential waste
Cheque book stubs	6 years	Audit		Confidential waste
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)		Confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT		Confidential waste
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)		Confidential waste

VAT records	6 years generally but 20 years for any VAT on rents	VAT		Confidential waste
Audit Submissions and Reports	6 years	Audit		Confidential waste
Timesheets	Last completed audit year 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal injury (best practice)		Bin
Wages books/payroll	12 years	Superannuation		Confidential waste
Insurance policies	21 years	Must be retained in the event of any public liability claims being made.	NRO	N/A
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753) Management		Bin
Play Area equipment inspection reports	21 years	Potential claims		Bin
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management	NRO	N/A
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Ward Gethin Archer Solicitors	N/A
Surveys of Parish Facilities	Indefinite	Archive	NRO	N/A
Information from other bodies e.g. circulars from county associations, NALC, principal authorities	Retained for as long as it is useful and relevant			Bin

Local/historical information including photographs and programmes of events arranged by the Parish Council and Parish Council newsletters.	Indefinite – to be securely kept for benefit of the Parish	Councils may acquire records of local interest and accept gifts or records of general and local interest in order to promote the use for such records (defined as materials in written or other form setting out facts or events or otherwise recording information).	NRO	N/A
Magazines and journals	Retain for as long as they are useful and relevant.			Bin
<p>The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 (the 2003 Act) requires a local council which after 1<sup>st</sup> February 2004 has published works in print (this includes a pamphlet, magazine or newspaper, a map, plan, chart or table) to deliver, at its own expense, a copy of them to the British Library Board (which manages and controls the British Library). Printed works as defined by the 2003 Act published by a local council therefore constitute materials which the British Library holds. Bin if applicable.</p>				

#### Documents from legal matters, negligence and other torts

Most legal proceedings are governed by the Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). The 1980 Act provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. Where the limitation periods are longer than other periods specified the documentation should be kept for the longer period specified. Some types of legal proceedings may fall within two or more categories. If in doubt, keep for the longest of the three limitation periods.

Negligence, Defamation & Contracts	6 years	Confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Leases	12 years	Confidential waste.
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years	Confidential waste.
Personal injury	3 years	Confidential waste.
To recover land	12 years	Confidential waste.
Rent	6 years	Confidential waste.
Breach of trust	None	Confidential waste.
Trust deeds	Indefinite	N/A

Record-keeping				
<p>To ensure records are easily accessible it is necessary to comply with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A list of files stored in cabinets will be kept</li> <li>✓ Electronic files will be saved using relevant file names</li> </ul>	<p>The electronic files will be backed up periodically on a portable hard drive and also in a cloud-based programme.</p>	<p>Management</p>		<p>Documentation no longer required will be disposed of, ensuring any confidential documents are destroyed as confidential waste. A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.</p>
<p>General correspondence</p>	<p>Unless it relates to specific categories outlined in the policy, correspondence, both paper and electronic, should be kept. Records should be kept for as long as they are needed for reference or accountability purposes, to comply with regulatory requirements or to protect legal and other rights and interests.</p>	<p>Management</p>		<p>Bin (shred confidential waste) A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.</p>

Correspondence relating to staff	If related to Audit, see relevant sections above. Should be kept securely and personal data in relation to staff should not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose it was held. Likely time limits for tribunal claims between 3–6 months Recommend this period be for 3 years	After an employment relationship has ended, a council may need to retain and access staff records for former staff for the purpose of giving references, payment of tax, national insurance contributions and pensions, and in respect of any related legal claims made against the council.		Confidential waste A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.
Documents relating to staff applications (unsuccessful applicants)	Until appointment confirmed.			Confidential waste

<b>Planning Papers</b>				
Applications, Appeals and Trees	Only whilst current. Available on Breckland website.			Bin
				Bin
				Bin
Local Development Plans	Retained whilst in force	Reference		Bin
Local Plans	Retained whilst in force	Reference		Bin
Neighbourhood Plans	Indefinite – final adopted plans	Historical purposes	NRO	N/A



## ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 2AF  
Tel: 01953 456194 - email: [enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk)  
[www.attleboroughtc.org.uk](http://www.attleboroughtc.org.uk)

# CODE OF CONDUCT

In accordance with section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Attleborough Town Council has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council, acknowledging that they each have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with the council's staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic, and environmental outcomes for Attleborough Town.

For the purposes of this Code, and unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a member of the Council includes a member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee.

## 1 Expected Behaviour

a) All members must be committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following general principles governing councillors conduct under the Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001, as set out below:

- Selflessness

Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

- Honesty and Integrity

Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

- Objectivity

Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

- Accountability

Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

- Openness

Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

- Personal Judgement

Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

- Respect for Others

Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

- Duty to Uphold the Law

Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

- Stewardship

Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

- Leadership

Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

b) When a member of the Council acts, claims to act or gives the impression of acting as a representative of the Council, he/she has the following obligations:

- They shall behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful.
- They shall not act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory.
- They shall not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- They shall use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirements.
- They shall not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

## 2 Dress Code

Our dress code outlines how we expect our members to dress at meetings, and at other public events whilst representing the Council in front of residents, visitors or other parties. Members should note that their appearance can create a positive or negative impression that reflects on our Council and our Culture.

- Members must be clean and well-presented. Grooming styles dictated by religion and ethnicity aren't restricted.
- All clothes must be appropriate to a role in public office. Active wear, trainers or sportswear are not permitted.
- Members must avoid clothes with stamps that are offensive or inappropriate.



### 3 Confidentiality Requirement

- a) Under the legal requirement of The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 to include a confidentiality clause in the Code of Conduct, the following must be observed by all Councillors.
- b) Members must not disclose to anyone else any information given to me in confidence; nor disclose any information coming into their possession (including at a meeting or committee meeting of the Council) which they believe or might reasonably be expected to believe to be of a confidential nature; except in one of the following circumstances:
  - they have received the consent of a person authorised to give it; or
  - they are required by law to do so; or
  - the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice, provided that the third party undertakes not to disclose the information to any other person; or
  - the disclosure is reasonable and in the public interest and made in good faith to comply with a reasonable requirement of the Council.

### 4 Registration of Interests

- a) Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or the member's election or the co-opted member's appointment (where that is later), he/she shall register with Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer of the interests which fall within the categories set out in clause 4.
- b) Upon the re-election of a member or the re-appointment of a co-opted member, he/she shall within 28 days re-register with Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer any interests set out in clause 4.
- c) A member shall register with Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer any change to interests or new interests in set out in clause 4 within 28 days of becoming aware of it.
- d) A member need only declare the existence but not the details of any interest which Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer agrees is a 'sensitive interest'. A sensitive interest is one which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead the member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation.

### 5 Description of Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made to the member during the 12 month period ending on the latest date referred to in clause 3(a) above for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her election expenses.  This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation)

	Act 1992.
Contracts	<p>Any contract made between the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of**) and the Council —</p> <p>a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
Licences	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer.</p>
Corporate Tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge)—</p> <p>a) the landlord is the Council; and</p> <p>b) the landlord is the Council; and</p> <p>c) the tenant is a body that the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities** of.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities** of a body where—</p> <p>a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and</p> <p>b) either—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the total nominal value of the securities** exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>• if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</li> </ul>
Other Interests	<p>Any other interest which relates to or is likely to affect:</p> <p>a) any body of which the member is in a position of general control or management and to which he/she is appointed or nominated by the Council;</p> <p>b) any body—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exercising functions of a public nature;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• directed to charitable purposes; or</li> <li>• one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which the member of the Council is a member or in a position of general control or management;</li> </ul> <p>c) any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office. Please refer to clause 6 for more information.</p>
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\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\*\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## 6 Declaration of Interests at Meetings & Dispensations

- a) Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest listed in clause 3 the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He/she only has to declare what his/her interest is if it is not already entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it. Please refer to the Council's Meetings Protocol for more information.
- b) On a written request made to the Proper Officer, the Council may grant a member a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if he/she has an interest in clause 3 if the Council believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part or it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation. Please refer to the Council's Meetings Protocol for more information.

## 7 Gifts & Hospitality

- a) Councillors are required to register any gifts or hospitality worth £50 or over that you receive in connection with your official duties, and the source of the gift or hospitality. You must notify the Council in writing within 28 days of receiving it.
- b) As with other registered interests, you have a personal interest in any matter under consideration at a meeting if it is likely to affect a person giving you a gift or hospitality. You must declare the existence and nature of the gift or hospitality as an interest at the meeting. You will also need to consider whether your interest is prejudicial.
- c) The receipt of gifts or hospitality can be misinterpreted. This is intended to help you to consider the implications of receiving gifts and hospitality and to make an appropriate judgement.
  - Treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally which may possibly be perceived to be in connection with your position within the Council.
  - Your personal reputation and that of the Council can be seriously jeopardised by the inappropriate acceptance by you of gifts or hospitality.

## 8 Code of Conduct Complaints

- a) Upon notification by Breckland Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Clerk shall report this to the council.
- b) Where the notification in 7(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Clerk, the Clerk shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been concluded.
- c) The council may:
  - provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d) Upon notification by Breckland Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

8c)

## MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL

### Introduction

1. The purpose of this Protocol is to guide Members and Officers of the Council in their relations with one another in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council. Given the variety of such relations, this Protocol does not seek to be either prescriptive or comprehensive. It seeks simply to offer guidance on some of the issues which most commonly arise.
2. The protocol seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective Codes of Conduct, which apply to Members and Officers and should read in association with those Codes. The shared objective of the Codes is to enhance and maintain the integrity of local government.
3. Councillors and Officers are servants of the public. The effectiveness of the outcomes they are able to deliver for residents is dependent on a strong and constructive relationship which adheres to a set of clear principles. These principles are:
  - Mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities.
  - Dealings between Members and Officers should be courteous and conducted in a constructive and positive way.
  - Neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or seek to exert undue influence.
  - Respecting the confidentiality of information given and received as part of Council business.
  - Concerns as to the conduct of Officers should be made to the Chairman of the Council, and of Members, to the Monitoring Officer at Breckland District Council.
4. This Protocol is mainly a written statement of current practice and convention but aims to promote greater clarity and certainty. If the Protocol is followed it should ensure that Members receive objective and impartial advice and that Officers are protected from accusations of bias and any undue influence from Members. It also reflects the principle underlying the Members Code of Conduct which is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government.
5. A Member should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public. This is a long-standing convention in public service. An Officer has no means of responding to such criticisms in public. If a Member feels they have not been treated with proper respect, courtesy or have any concern about the conduct or capability of an Officer, and fails to resolve it through direct discussion with the Officer, they should raise the matter with the chairman of the Personnel Committee who will then look into the facts and report back to the Member. Any action taken against an Officer in respect of a complaint will be in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Complaints Policy & Procedure and/or Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
6. Should a member of the public raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public it is the responsibility of the chairman to immediately insist they follow the Council's Complaints Policy & Procedure, and politely ask them to stop their remarks and allow due process to be undertaken. If this is ignored, or they behave offensively or improperly, the chairman shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct. Failing this, the chairman shall seek to adjourn or stop the meeting via the appropriate process.
7. Members and Officers should not disclose sensitive or confidential information that would undermine confidence in any Member or Officer other than in the discharge of their duties in accordance to agreed policies such as the Council's Complaints Policy & Procedure and/or Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, or as required by law.

**Commented [PL1]:** Amended by the Personnel Committee -Previously read 'Town Clerk', which created issues if the matter involves the Town Clerk.

**Commented [PL2]:** Added to policy by the Personnel Committee to improve safeguards for Officers from public accusations and abuse. There is an approved process for complaints that should be followed.

**Commented [PL3]:** Added to policy by the Personnel Committee to prevent Council processes and investigations, which should be kept confidential, from been disclosed in a manner that could undermine confidence and trust in Members or Officers.

## Officer Advice to Members

8. It must be recognised by all Officers and Members that, in discharging their duties and responsibilities, Officers serve the Council as a whole and not exclusively any political group (if applicable), combination of groups or any individual Member of the Council.
9. There is now a recognition of political groups and in some Councils, it is common practice for such groups to give preliminary consideration to matters of Council business in advance of such matters being considered by the relevant Council decision making body. This is not presently the case at Attleborough. However, should this situation arise, Officers may properly be called upon to support and contribute to such deliberations by political groups, but they must at all times maintain political neutrality. All Officers must, when dealing with political groups and individual Members, treat them in a fair and even-handed manner.
10. Support provided by Officers can take different forms, ranging from the normal briefing with a Chairman prior to a meeting to responding to telephone queries. Such support is available to all Members regardless of political affiliation and will be available to all political groups should they become formalised in the future. When support such as this is given both Members and Officers should understand that it must not extend beyond providing information and advice in relation to matters of Council business; Officers should not be involved in advising on matters of party business.
11. Whilst any Member may ask a relevant Officer for written factual information about a service, such requests must be reasonable. Requests will be met, subject to any overriding legal considerations (such as the Data Protection Act) unless the recipient of any request considers the cost of providing the information requested or the nature of the request to be unreasonable. If that is the case, she/he will raise the matter with the Town Clerk who will discuss the issue with the Member.

## Support Services to Members

12. The only basis on which the Council can lawfully provide support services (e.g. stationery, typing, printing, photocopying, transport, etc.) to Members is to assist them in discharging their role as Members of the Council. Such support services must therefore only be used on Council business. They should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity, or for private purposes.

## Members' Access to Information and to Council Documents

13. Members are free to approach Officers to ask for information in accordance with paragraph 9. This right extends to such information, explanation, and advice as they may reasonably need in order to assist them in discharging their role as a Member of the Council. This can range from a request for general information about some aspect of the Council's activities to a request for specific information on behalf of a constituent.
14. As regards the legal rights of Members to inspect Council documents, these are covered partly by statute and partly by common law.
15. Members have a statutory right to inspect any Council document which contains material relating to any business which is to be transacted at a Council or other meeting. This right applies irrespective of whether the Member is a member of the body which is meeting and extends not only to reports which are to be submitted to the meeting, but also to any relevant background documents. This right does not, however, automatically apply to background documents relating to certain items which may appear as an exempt item on the agenda for a meeting, e.g. information relating to employees or criminal investigations.

16. The common law right of Members is based on the principle that any Member has a prima facie right to inspect Council documents so far as his/her access to the document is reasonably necessary to enable the Member properly to perform his/her duties as a Member of the Council. This principle is commonly referred to as the "need to know" principle.
17. The exercise of this common law right depends, therefore, upon an individual Member being able to demonstrate that she/he has the necessary "need to know". In this respect a Member has no right to a "roving commission" to go and examine documents of the Council. Mere curiosity is not sufficient. The crucial question is the determination of the "need to know".
18. Any Council information provided to a Member must only be used by the Member for the purpose for which it was provided, i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the Member's duties as a Member of the Council. This point is emphasised in the Code of Conduct for Members.

## Officer/Member Relationships

**Commented [PL4]:** Amended by the Personnel Committee -Previously read 'Chairman', but this section is for all Members.

19. It is important that there should be a close working relationship between the Chairman of a meeting and the Officers who report to or interact with that meeting. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close, as to bring into question the Officer's ability to deal impartially with other Members and other political groups.
20. For transparency and to help fulfil Member's duty of care to Officers, meetings between the Members and Officers shall be scheduled in the Council's internal diary, which Members and Officers have access to. Officers are entitled to have another Officer and/or appropriate Member (the chairman/deputy of the Council or the chairman/deputy of the Personnel Committee) attend these meetings at their discretion.
21. In relation to action between meetings, it is important to remember that the Council's political decision making structure only allows for decisions relating to the discharge of any of the Council's functions to be taken by a meeting or an Officer unless the procedures set out in the Standing Orders are invoked. There is no allowance for such decisions to be taken by a Chairman or indeed by any other single Member.
22. At some meetings, a resolution may be passed which authorises named Officers to take action between meetings in consultation with the Chairman and/or specified Member(s). It must be recognised that it is the Officer, rather than the Chairman and/or Member(s), who takes the action and it is the Officer who is accountable for it.
23. Finally, it must be remembered that Officers are accountable to the Town Clerk and that, whilst Officers should always seek to assist a Chairman (or indeed any Member), they must not, in so doing, go beyond the bounds of whatever authority they have been given by him/her.

**Commented [PL5]:** Added to policy by the Personnel Committee for transparency and safeguarding purposes.

## Correspondence

24. Official letters on behalf of the Council should normally be sent in the name of the appropriate Officer, rather than in the name of a Member. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter to appear in the name of a Member, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. Letters which, for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the Council should never be sent out in the name of a Member.

## Conclusion

25. Mutual understanding and openness on these sorts of sensitive issues and basic respect are the greatest safeguard of the integrity of the Council, its Members and Officers.

## MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL

### Introduction

1. The purpose of this Protocol is to guide Members and Officers of the Council in their relations with one another in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council. Given the variety of such relations, this Protocol does not seek to be either prescriptive or comprehensive. It seeks simply to offer guidance on some of the issues which most commonly arise.
2. The protocol seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective Codes of Conduct, which apply to Members and Officers and should read in association with those Codes. The shared objective of the Codes is to enhance and maintain the integrity of local government.
3. Councillors and Officers are servants of the public. The effectiveness of the outcomes they are able to deliver for residents is dependent on a strong and constructive relationship which adheres to a set of clear principles. These principles are:
  - Mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities.
  - Dealings between Members and Officers should be courteous and conducted in a constructive and positive way.
  - Neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or seek to exert undue influence.
  - Respecting the confidentiality of information given and received as part of Council business.
  - Concerns as to the conduct of Officers should be made to the Chairman of the Council, and of Members, to the Monitoring Officer at Breckland District Council.
4. This Protocol is mainly a written statement of current practice and convention but aims to promote greater clarity and certainty. If the Protocol is followed it should ensure that Members receive objective and impartial advice and that Officers are protected from accusations of bias and any undue influence from Members. It also reflects the principle underlying the Members Code of Conduct which is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government.
5. A Member should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public. This is a long-standing convention in public service. An Officer has no means of responding to such criticisms in public. If a Member feels they have not been treated with proper respect, courtesy or have any concern about the conduct or capability of an Officer, and fails to resolve it through direct discussion with the Officer, they should raise the matter with the chairman of the Personnel Committee who will then look into the facts and report back to the Member. Any action taken against an Officer in respect of a complaint will be in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Complaints Policy & Procedure and/or Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
6. Should a member of the public raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public it is the responsibility of the chairman to immediately insist they follow the Council's Complaints Policy & Procedure, and politely ask them to stop their remarks and allow due process to be undertaken. If this is ignored, or they behave offensively or improperly, the chairman shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct. Failing this, the chairman shall seek to adjourn or stop the meeting via the appropriate process.
7. Members and Officers should not disclose sensitive or confidential information that would undermine confidence in any Member or Officer other than in the discharge of their duties in accordance to agreed policies such as the Council's Complaints Policy & Procedure and/or Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, or as required by law.

**Commented [PL1]:** Amended by the Personnel Committee -Previously read 'Town Clerk', which created issues if the matter involves the Town Clerk.

**Commented [PL2]:** Added to policy by the Personnel Committee to improve safeguards for Officers from public accusations and abuse. There is an approved process for complaints that should be followed.

**Commented [PL3]:** Added to policy by the Personnel Committee to prevent Council processes and investigations, which should be kept confidential, from being disclosed in a manner that could undermine confidence and trust in Members or Officers.



## Officer Advice to Members

8. It must be recognised by all Officers and Members that, in discharging their duties and responsibilities, Officers serve the Council as a whole and not exclusively any political group (if applicable), combination of groups or any individual Member of the Council.
9. There is now a recognition of political groups and in some Councils, it is common practice for such groups to give preliminary consideration to matters of Council business in advance of such matters being considered by the relevant Council decision making body. This is not presently the case at Attleborough. However, should this situation arise, Officers may properly be called upon to support and contribute to such deliberations by political groups, but they must at all times maintain political neutrality. All Officers must, when dealing with political groups and individual Members, treat them in a fair and even-handed manner.
10. Support provided by Officers can take different forms, ranging from the normal briefing with a Chairman prior to a meeting to responding to telephone queries. Such support is available to all Members regardless of political affiliation and will be available to all political groups should they become formalised in the future. When support such as this is given both Members and Officers should understand that it must not extend beyond providing information and advice in relation to matters of Council business; Officers should not be involved in advising on matters of party business.
11. Whilst any Member may ask a relevant Officer for written factual information about a service, such requests must be reasonable. Requests will be met, subject to any overriding legal considerations (such as the Data Protection Act) unless the recipient of any request considers the cost of providing the information requested or the nature of the request to be unreasonable. If that is the case, she/he will raise the matter with the Town Clerk who will discuss the issue with the Member.

## Support Services to Members

12. The only basis on which the Council can lawfully provide support services (e.g. stationery, typing, printing, photocopying, transport, etc.) to Members is to assist them in discharging their role as Members of the Council. Such support services must therefore only be used on Council business. They should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity, or for private purposes.

## Members' Access to Information and to Council Documents

13. Members are free to approach Officers to ask for information in accordance with paragraph 9. This right extends to such information, explanation, and advice as they may reasonably need in order to assist them in discharging their role as a Member of the Council. This can range from a request for general information about some aspect of the Council's activities to a request for specific information on behalf of a constituent.
14. As regards the legal rights of Members to inspect Council documents, these are covered partly by statute and partly by common law.
15. Members have a statutory right to inspect any Council document which contains material relating to any business which is to be transacted at a Council or other meeting. This right applies irrespective of whether the Member is a member of the body which is meeting and extends not only to reports which are to be submitted to the meeting, but also to any relevant background documents. This right does not, however, automatically apply to background documents relating to certain items which may appear as an exempt item on the agenda for a meeting, e.g. information relating to employees or criminal investigations.

16. The common law right of Members is based on the principle that any Member has a prima facie right to inspect Council documents so far as his/her access to the document is reasonably necessary to enable the Member properly to perform his/her duties as a Member of the Council. This principle is commonly referred to as the "need to know" principle.
17. The exercise of this common law right depends, therefore, upon an individual Member being able to demonstrate that she/he has the necessary "need to know". In this respect a Member has no right to a "roving commission" to go and examine documents of the Council. Mere curiosity is not sufficient. The crucial question is the determination of the "need to know".
18. Any Council information provided to a Member must only be used by the Member for the purpose for which it was provided, i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the Member's duties as a Member of the Council. This point is emphasised in the Code of Conduct for Members.

## Officer/Member Relationships

19. It is important that there should be a close working relationship between the Chairman of a meeting and the Officers who report to or interact with that meeting. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close, as to bring into question the Officer's ability to deal impartially with other Members and other political groups.
20. For transparency and to help fulfil Member's duty of care to Officers, meetings between the Members and Officers shall be scheduled in the Council's internal diary, which Members and Officers have access to. Officers are entitled to have another Officer and/or appropriate Member (the chairman/deputy of the Council or the chairman/deputy of the Personnel Committee) attend these meetings at their discretion.
21. In relation to action between meetings, it is important to remember that the Council's political decision making structure only allows for decisions relating to the discharge of any of the Council's functions to be taken by a meeting or an Officer unless the procedures set out in the Standing Orders are invoked. There is no allowance for such decisions to be taken by a Chairman or indeed by any other single Member.
22. At some meetings, a resolution may be passed which authorises named Officers to take action between meetings in consultation with the Chairman and/or specified Member(s). It must be recognised that it is the Officer, rather than the Chairman and/or Member(s), who takes the action and it is the Officer who is accountable for it.
23. Finally, it must be remembered that Officers are accountable to the Town Clerk and that, whilst Officers should always seek to assist a Chairman (or indeed any Member), they must not, in so doing, go beyond the bounds of whatever authority they have been given by him/her.

**Commented [PL4]:** Amended by the Personnel Committee - Previously read 'Chairman', but this section is for all Members.

**Commented [PL5]:** Added to policy by the Personnel Committee for transparency and safeguarding purposes.

## Correspondence

24. Official letters on behalf of the Council should normally be sent in the name of the appropriate Officer, rather than in the name of a Member. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter to appear in the name of a Member, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. Letters which, for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the Council should never be sent out in the name of a Member.

## Conclusion

25. Mutual understanding and openness on these sorts of sensitive issues and basic respect are the greatest safeguard of the integrity of the Council, its Members and Officers.

# ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

## Communications and Media Policy

All Councillors and staff are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the reputation, privacy, confidentiality and interests of the council, its services, employees, partners and community.

### Town Council Correspondence

- The point of contact for Attleborough Town Council is the Clerk, and it is to the Clerk that all official correspondence for the council should be addressed.
- The Clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting unless agreed otherwise.
- No individual Councillor or Officer should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the council, a committee, sub-committee or working party.
- Councillors and Officers do not have a right to obtain confidential information/documentation unless they can demonstrate a 'need to know'.
- All official correspondence should be sent by the Clerk in the name of the council using council letter headed paper.
- Where correspondence from the Clerk to a Councillor is copied to another person, the addressee should be made aware that a copy is being forwarded to that other person.

### Communications with the Press and Public

- The Clerk will clear all press reports, or comments to the media, with the Chair/Vice Chair of the council or the Chair of the relevant committee.
- Unless a Councillor has been authorised by the council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view.
- Unless a Councillor is absolutely certain that he/she is reporting the view of the council, they must make it clear to members of the public that they are expressing a personal view.
- If Councillors receive a complaint from a member of the public, this should be dealt with under the council's adopted complaints procedure, or via a council agenda item.

### Councillor Correspondence to External Parties

- Any correspondence from a Councillor to other bodies sent on behalf of or representing the view of the council needs to make clear that it is written in their official capacity and has been authorised by the council.
- A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the council or a Councillor's role within it, should be sent to the Clerk, and it be noted on the correspondence, e.g. "copy to the Clerk" so that the recipient is aware that the Clerk has been advised.

### Communications with Council Staff

- Councillors must not give instructions to any member of staff, unless authorised to do so (for example, three or more Councillors sitting as a committee or sub-committee with appropriate delegated powers from the council).

- No individual Councillor, regardless of whether or not they are the Chair of the council, the Chair of a committee or other meeting, may give instructions to the Clerk or to another employee which are inconsistent or conflict with council decisions or arrangements for delegated power.
- Telephone calls should be appropriate to the work of the council.
- E-mails:
  - Instant replies should not be expected. Where a response is required as a matter of urgency reasons should be stated. Behaviour required by the code of conduct applies.
  - Information to Councillors should normally be directed via the Clerk;
  - E-mails from Councillors to external parties should be copied to the Clerk;
  - Councillors should acknowledge their e-mails when requested to do so.

### Electronic Communications

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables the Town Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Town Council and between the Town Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

The Town Council has a Website, Facebook page, Twitter account and uses email to communicate. The Town Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. Over time the Town Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur, this Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

### Town Council Email

The Clerk to the council has her own council email address: [townclerk@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:townclerk@attleboroughtc.org.uk) which is monitored mainly during office hours, Monday to Friday, alongside the [enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk) email account. We aim to reply to all correspondence sent as soon as we can and an 'out of office' message will be used when appropriate.

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with emails received and passing on any relevant mail to members or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Clerk, and otherwise will always be copied to the Town Clerk.

### Councillor Email Accounts

- All Councillors are given a council email address to use for council business which can be found on the council's website.
- The use of this email for personal purposes is not permitted.
- Individual councillors are free to communicate directly with their constituents and the wider community in relation to their own personal views.
- All correspondence from Councillors must comply with the councils policies, protocols and procedures.
- Behaviour required by the code of conduct shall apply.

- The council may monitor email activity, so that compliance with this policy and other relevant policies and regulations can be effectively managed.
- Access to Councillor email accounts is restricted to individual users and must not be shared accounts.
- If you suspect there has been a data breach, or your email/IT has been hacked, you must inform the Clerk immediately so the relevant action can be taken (in accordance with the councils data protection policy).
- Unless authorised by the individual, do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email and telephone numbers.

Time should be set aside on a regular basis for "housekeeping", in order to delete old or unwanted items from mailboxes. The councils document retention and disposal policy must be complied with.

Any emails copied to the Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act. On the receipt of a Freedom of Information or Subject Access Request it may be necessary for a member of staff to be given access to the Councillor email account. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

Any communication by a Councillor that is not associated directly with Attleborough Town Council business (i.e. it is carried out by a Councillor acting on their own or on behalf of another) is not considered as acting as a Councillor by the ICO "the business of the Council". Therefore, you are not covered by the Council's data protection fee requirement to the ICO and as such you will be responsible (as an individual) for complying with all of the GDPR regarding data security.

### SMS (texting)

Members and Officers may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

### Video Conferencing

If this medium is used to communicate please note that this policy also applies to the use of videoconferencing.

### Social Media

The councils Facebook page and Twitter account intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within the town and promote our community positively. The Clerk will be responsible for publishing content on the council's social media. All Councillors are encouraged to put forward suggestions at the end of meetings or email them to the Clerk.

Communications from the council will meet the following criteria:

- Be civil, tasteful and relevant;
- Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;

- Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;
- Not contain any personal information, other than necessary basic contact details;
- If official council business it will be moderated by the Town Clerk;
- Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.

In order to ensure that all discussions on the councils social media pages are productive, respectful and consistent with the council's aims and objectives, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abuse of language will not be tolerated.
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the councillors or staff, will not be permitted.
- Share freely and be generous, but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- Stay on topic.
- Refrain from using the council's Facebook page or Twitter site for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products.

Our social media pages are not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, we will endeavour to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities. Please do not include personal/private information in your social media posts to us.

Sending a message/post via Facebook or Twitter will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the council's Town Clerk and/or members of the council by emailing [enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk)

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libellous statements.
- Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Alleges a breach of a council's policy or the law

The council's response to any communications received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the council's discretion based on the message received, given our limited resources available. Any information posted on our social media pages not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. The council may post a statement that 'a post breaching the council's communications and media policy has been removed'. If the post alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

Town Council Website

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information, or we may forward their question to one of our Town Councillors for consideration and response.

The Town Council may, at its discretion, allow and enable approved local groups to have and maintain a presence on its website for the purpose of presenting information about the group's activities. The local group would be responsible for maintaining the content and ensuring that it meets the council's rules and expectations for the website. The council reserves the right to remove any or all of a local group's information from the website if it feels that the content does not meet our rules and expectations. Where content on the website is maintained by a local group it should be clearly marked that such content is not the direct responsibility of the council.

Images

To use images of minors under the age of 18 and/or vulnerable adults, written consent must be obtained. Please complete relevant forms on page -

Internal communication and access to information within the Town Council

The Town Council is continually looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement.

# ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL Communication and Media Policy ACCEPTANCE SLIP

I have received, read and understood the council's communication and media policy. I understand that:

- My use of Attleborough Town Council's email may be monitored for management and security purposes.
- If I use my own computer/laptop/tablet for council business I confirm I am responsible for ensuring I comply with IT security and data protection as required under the General Data Protection Regulations.
- Breaches of the policy may result in action being taken against me by the Information Commissioner's Office.
- I confirm that when my role ends as a Councillor for Attleborough Town Council, I will delete all Council business from my device immediately.

Signed .....

Name .....

Date .....

Please return completed forms to Town Clerk.

**Planning Applications received to-date**

**3PL/2022/0059/HOU - ATTLEBOROUGH: Acre Lodge, London Road** – Two storey extension on back elevation & demolition of dilapidated timber garage – No objections

**3PL/2022/0117/F - ATTLEBOROUGH: Zandielle, Queens Square Car Park Attleborough** – Side extension to south west elevation – No objections