

# LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

## WORK PROGRAMME PRIORITIES APRIL 2017

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As part of the recently adopted Corporate Plan, a Work Programme for each Committee will be developed.
- 1.2 An initial draft Work Programme for Finance & General Purposes Committee will be considered at its meeting on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
- 1.3 Following amendment and adoption a full annual programme with target dates will be developed and considered at each meeting.
- 1.4 This report provides an initial update on some aspects of that Work Programme.

### 2. STRATEGIC REVIEW

- 2.1 Leominster Town Council completed a Strategic Review in February 2016. The review was carried out by Chris Rolley Associates.
- 2.2 The table below provides an update on the 32 recommendations submitted to Council. Please note boxes shaded have now been completed.

RECOMMENDATION	UPDATE
Recommendation 1: That Council should note the position statement relating to asset transfers and ensure that adequate staff resources are in position before, or as soon as possible after the services are transferred in order to ensure seamless operation and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Westbury Street Public convenience nearing completion;</li> <li>• Cemetery transfer outstanding;</li> <li>• No other asset transfers identified.</li> <li>• Impact of cemetery transfer to be assessed (Staffing, Training etc)</li> </ul>
Recommendation 2: That a detailed time-line of work requirements for 11 Corn Square should be prepared so that Town Council and Tourist Information occupation of the premises can be progressed with the least delay following completion of the freehold purchase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates on progress of the refurbishment of 11 Corn Square submitted to Council and F&amp;GP Committee;</li> <li>• Completion of this project is targeted to be the end of July 2017.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 3: That Council should note the proposals for future service reviews, including in relation to Tourist and Visitor services, Allotments, Depot and the Cemetery for example, and ensure that these are conducted as soon as possible or, in respect of the Cemetery prior to any final commitment for devolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TIC transfer completed. TIC to move to Corn Square end of April 2017;</li> <li>• Target opening date is 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017;</li> <li>• Service reviews to be undertaken towards the end of the 2017/18 Financial Year;</li> <li>• No decision regarding the transfer</li> </ul>

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	of the Cemetery has been reached.
Recommendation 4: That Council should support the content of paragraph 2.18 and ensure that any future devolution should not be negotiated piece-meal but as a package of proposals designed to be mutually beneficial to both parties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation noted and majority of transfers completed;</li> <li>• Cemetery still outstanding;</li> <li>• No decision regarding the possible transfer of the cemetery reached as yet.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 5: That the Town Clerk's salary scale be confirmed at LC3 substantive (spinal column points 43-47) plus an additional increment for possession of CiLCA in accordance with the NALC/SLCC approved scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of salary scale undertaken;</li> <li>• Relevant increase implemented for 2017/18;</li> <li>• Further increases to be considered as appropriate annually.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 6: Deputy Clerk Post.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post deleted;</li> <li>• Actioned and completed.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 7: That the Tourist Information Centre Manager's salary grade be confirmed at spinal points 18-22 inclusive and that this post be re-designated Visitor Services and Events Manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 8: The appropriate evaluated grade for the Tourism Officer post should be spinal points 15-17, and the post should be re-designated Assistant Visitor Services and Events Manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 9: That the appropriate evaluated grade for the part-time Environmental Officers is evaluated as spinal point 12-14, as opposed to the current grade of spinal point 13.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 10: The current pay scale of the part-time Cleaner is confirmed as spinal point 9 and will remain so, subject to the Council continuing to meet the new national living wage should this ultimately be set at a higher level than currently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 11: That Council should approve an establishment for Finance, Democracy and Administration in line with the staffing proposed in paragraph 3.20. with two new posts of Office Manager and Administrative Assistant being created and the former post of Deputy Town Clerk being formally deleted from the establishment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 12: That the new (30 hours per week) part-time post of Office Manager be approved on spinal points 18-22 and that the job description and person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>

specification for this position be as set out in Appendices D1 and D2 respectively.	
Recommendation 13: That the new (20 hours per week) part-time post of Administrative Assistant be approved on spinal points 15-17 and that the job description and person specification for this position be as set out in Appendices E1 and E2 respectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 14: That Council should approve an establishment for Information Services, Events and Economic Activity in line with the staffing proposed in paragraph 3.21. with suggested re-titling of the posts of Tourist Information Centre Manager and Tourism Officer to Visitor Services Manager and Assistant Visitor Services Manager or some other equally appropriate titles that more properly reflect the responsibilities of the posts than do the current designations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed;</li> <li>Please note additional staff member employed on contract which runs until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018;</li> <li>Contract will be reviewed in December 2017</li> </ul>
Recommendation 15: That Council should approve an establishment for Outdoor Services and Environment in line with the staffing proposed in paragraph 3.21 with a new post of Environmental Services Supervisor being created.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 16: That the new (30 hours per week) part-time post of Environmental Services Supervisor be approved on spinal points 18-22 and that the job description and person specification for this position be as set out in Appendices F1 and F2 respectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed;</li> <li>Please note role was increased to Full Time role</li> </ul>
Recommendation 17: That four additional hours per week be allocated for the two Environmental Operatives from 2016/2017 financial year subject to a review of starting times being undertaken so that this only commences at 6.00 a.m. daily when watering takes place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendation reviewed and not implemented.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 18: That three new posts of Trainee be created at a salary to be determined by Leominster Town Council being mindful of national minimum pay rates, that job descriptions be prepared by the Town Clerk in conjunction with the appropriate heads of service, and that the person specification for these posts be in accordance with Appendices G1, G2 and G3 respectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendation postponed until 2018/19.</li> </ul>

Recommendation 19: That Council approves the Staff Establishment Tree, attached as Appendix H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 20: Deputy Clerk Post.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 21: That prior to 2016/2017 financial year the Town Clerk should prepare a detailed report with policy options and full financial costings regarding future pension provision for Council employees having regard to the requirements of the Pensions Act 2008 and the content of paragraph 3.25.3 of this report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 22: That Council should introduce a new Committee structure to take effect from 2016/2017 civic year, comprising three main programme committees with names to be agreed by Council and each with a distinctive focus, one for governance, finance and staffing, one for service delivery and the third for planning and representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed;</li> <li>Please note additional Committee being created in 2017/18 to oversee Tourism and Events.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 23: That Council should approve a Scheme of Delegation, and is recommended to use the draft model attached to this report as Appendix I as a basis for this, including revised Terms of Reference for Council and Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed;</li> <li>To be reviewed at the Annual Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017</li> </ul>
Recommendation 24: That Council should review its timetabling of meetings from 2016/2017 civic year to provide for a two-monthly cycle in accordance with the programme attached as Appendix J or some other equally viable schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 25: That Council should ensure its non-computerised personnel records are comprehensive, secure and maintained up-to-date at all times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 26: That Council should approve a staff appraisal system at the earliest opportunity having regard to best practice advice within paragraph 5.4 of this report and the recommended new procedures submitted as Appendix L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Appraisal scheme in place;</li> <li>Implementation to commence in 2017.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 27: That Council should, once resources permit, introduce a structured performance management system across the Council's sphere of activities with regular reporting on key performance indicators, and these should	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KPIs have now been developed;</li> <li>Corporate Strategy has now been developed;</li> <li>Work programme has now been developed</li> </ul>

be agreed in advance with elected members for each committee	
Recommendation 28: That Council should affirm its commitment to continued professional training and development and ensure that there is regular feedback on training undertaken and how that is benefitting the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be actioned</li> <li>• Forum to be drawn up to enable Councillors to feed back from training sessions attended.</li> </ul>
Recommendation 29: That Council should approve a Training and Development Policy, either the draft attached as Appendix M or some other equally robust statement of commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be actioned</li> </ul>
Recommendation 30: That Council should enter into a contractual arrangement with a specialist HR company in order to ensure the Council properly addresses the risks associated with employment based issues, not having the requisite experience within its own establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 31: That meetings of the Officer’s Management team should be held at least once every two months for a sharing of policy information and performance management, and a resolution of corporate issues, and for individual team meetings with annual meetings of all staff to be programmed additionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>
Recommendation 32: That Council confirms its commitment to positive external community engagement and approves the draft Policy, attached as Appendix N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actioned and Completed</li> </ul>

**3. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed as part of the Corporate Strategy for the next 4 years.

3.2 The table below identifies those KPIs and indicates which Committee will be responsible for which KPIs.

3.3 Full KPI reports will be submitted on a regular basis to all Committees.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>
F&GP	Democracy	D1 – Annual number of members of the public attending Full Council and Committee meetings.
F&GP		D2 – Number of volunteer hours secured

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		delivering local democracy.
F&GP	Finance/Administration	FA1 – Total Council income, excluding precept income, as overall percentage of revenue expenditure
F&GP		FA2 – Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days
F&GP		FA3 – Percentage of increased income from income generating services
F&GP		FA4 – Total anticipated end of year general reserves
F&GP	Employment	HR1 – Average number of sick days per employee
F&GP	Customer Services	CS1 – Number of complaints recorded directly related to the activities of the Town Council per annum
Committee	Service Area	Key Performance Indicator
F&GP		CS2 – Average response time to acknowledge complaints recorded.
F&GP		CS3 – Total number of Mayoral engagements per annum
F&GP		CS4 – Number of Freedom of Information requests received per annum
E&S	Open Spaces	R1 – Average time taken to repair faulty play equipment from day of issue being reported.
E&S		R2 – Total number of complaints recorded regarding maintenance of open spaces managed by the Town Council per annum
E&S		R3 – Number of volunteer hours secured per annum on Open Spaces
C&E	Economic Regeneration	ER1 – Number of events held annually
C&E		ER2 – Number of regular market traders per week
C&E		ER3 – Average number of casual market traders per week
C&E	Communication	C1 – Annual visits to the website
C&E		C2 – Facebook Posts
C&E		C3 – Twitter Posts
C&E		C4 – Leominster News articles
C&E	TIC	TC1 – Number of volunteer hours per annum helping to deliver the TIC service.
C&E		TC2 – Number of visits per annum to the TIC
C&E		TC3 – Number of holiday flat bookings per annum
Committee	Service Area	Key Performance Indicator
C&E		TC4 – Percentage of income against total income of holiday flat
C&E		TC5 – Percentage income against total income of the new TIC centre

C&E		TC6 – Number of lettings per annum of the Exhibition Area
C&E		TC7 – Percentage of income against total income of Exhibition Area
E&S	Toilets	T1 – Number of complaints received per annum relating specifically to toilets.
E&S	Allotments	A1 – Percentage of vacant allotments per annum
E&S		A2 – Number of allotment inspections undertaken per annum
E&S		A3 – Number of monthly allotment inspections undertaken within five working days of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> of each month
		A4 – Number of letter sent to allotment holders requesting improvements to the maintenance of plots per month.
F&GP	Youth Provision	Y1 – Number of sessions per annum in central Leominster
F&GP		Y2 – Number of attendees at central Leominster
F&GP		Y3 – Number of sessions per annum at Barons Cross
F&GP		Y4 – Number of attendees at Barons Cross

#### **4. DRAFT TRAINING POLICY**

4.1 The following draft Training Policy was recommended by Chris Rolley Associates. Does Committee wish to consider adoption?

#### **A DRAFT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR**

#### **LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL**

##### *INTENTION*

- 1 The Council's policy is to provide appropriate training and development opportunities for all our staff in order that they can perform their individual jobs effectively and efficiently and, in doing so, ensures that the Council achieves its corporate objectives.
- 2 This intention reflects the Council's acceptance that effective utilisation of people and the maximisation of their skills and personal development should be awarded priority.
- 3 Competence Inventories - Standard knowledge/skill will be established for all jobs. These will provide the foundation against which training needs will be measured. Completion/ accreditation of the skills/knowledge will be a requirement upon employees and training programmes.

*RESPONSIBILITIES*

- 4 The Town Clerk is responsible to the Council for ensuring that training and development activity is directed towards achievement of the Council's corporate objectives. Day to day management of all training and development activities is the responsibility of the appropriate Service Heads. Each Service Head has the lead responsibility for the development of his or her staff and for assessing their training and development needs. This involves:
  - Coaching in immediate work processes and tasks;
  - Inducting new staff into the Council, assisted by professional colleagues where necessary;
  - Continuously monitoring the performance of staff and carrying out formal appraisals;
  - Supporting personal development plans.
- 5 Training will be provided where necessary to support Service Heads in completing these tasks. External appropriate assistance will be provided where necessary for Service Heads to enable them to fulfil their employee development responsibilities.
- 6 The Council encourages individual employee ownership of career and personal development. The Council will play its part by providing support, guidance and facilities.

*PLANS & PROGRAMMES*

- 7 An annual training plan will be agreed ordinarily in October of each year. Responsibility for this rests with the Town Clerk in conjunction with Service Heads. The timetable will ensure that proper regard to training and development needs can be incorporated within the budget submission.

*RESOURCES*

- 8 Overall control of the Development and Training budget is the responsibility of the Town Clerk in his capacity as Responsible Finance Officer. The total cost of training and development will be contained within the relevant budget as agreed on an annual basis.

*ACCESS TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES*

- 9 There are no exclusions to the types of training and development the Council is prepared to offer to assist in the achievement of corporate and operational plans.
- 10 No individual will be excluded from receiving training on the grounds of race, sex, and age or grade or any other criteria, which could be deemed as discriminatory or derisive.

- 11 Each member of staff has access to the Councils training provision by direct communication with their Service Head and through the formal training request system.

*TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES*

- 12 Effective Management is clearly vital for the continuing success of the Council and the Council prides itself on its reputation locally and within the profession. It is therefore a Council priority to provide every employee with the opportunity to develop his/her ability and potential.
- 13 The Council recognises the requirement to make continuous improvements in the way we work. This is a particular requirement of achieving Best Value. To this end, all members of staff must be enabled to maintain and develop the necessary expertise throughout their careers to successfully and effectively perform their duties. The Council recognises the importance of continuous professional development. Under this process the goal is to improve personal and organisational performance and to enhance career progression within the Council.
- 14 All training and development requests reflect needs and will be treated sympathetically. However resources are dependent on several factors, for example budgetary constraints and training and development priorities necessary to fulfil the Councils objectives. Consequently there may be occasions when a training request may be postponed or refused due to other priorities. Decisions on this will be made by the appropriate Service Head but in the event of an appeal the Town Clerk will be the final arbiter.

*EVALUATION OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT*

- 15 All training and development activities will be evaluated and amendments made on the basis of an evaluative return.
- 16 Evaluation is the responsibility of the individual member of staff in conjunction with their Service Head and/or the Town Clerk.
- 17 The outcome of training and development will be evaluated at the following levels:
- Immediate reactions to the training provided will be recorded in the form of an evaluation questionnaire to be completed by the individual concerned.
  - the achievement of individual performance objectives is the responsibility of Service Heads both to support members of staff implementing new learning acquired through training and to monitor the effect of the training on staff performance; and
  - The achievement of team and organisational objectives will be measured by reference to indicators such as customer satisfaction targets, staff retention levels and the achievement of targets.

*END OF YEAR REPORTING*

- 18 The Town Clerk will prepare an annual end-of-year report at the close of each financial year, summarising training undertaken during the year, expenditure incurred, and an initial evaluation of likely future training needs.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS POLICY DRAFT**

- 5.1 The following draft Communications Policy was recommended by Chris Rolley Associates. Does Committee wish to consider adoption?

**Leominster Town Council**

**Proposed Communications Strategy**

**A. Town Council Correspondence**

- (g) The point of contact for the council is the Town Clerk, and it is to the Town Clerk that all correspondence for the town council should be addressed.
- (ii) The Town Clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting.
- (iii) No individual Councillor or Officer should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the town council, a committee, sub-committee or working party. In particular, Councillors and Officers do not have a right to obtain confidential information/documentation unless they can demonstrate a 'need to know'.
- (iv) Where correspondence from the Town 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 (e.g. copy to xx).

**B. Agenda Items for Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties**

- (i) The agenda should be clear and concise. It should contain sufficient information to enable Councillors to make an informed decision, and for the public to understand what matters are being considered and what decisions are to be taken at a meeting.
- (ii) Items for information should be kept to a minimum on an agenda.
- (iii) Where the Town Clerk or a Councillor wishes fellow Councillors to receive matters for "information only", this information will be circulated via the Town Clerk or delegated staff members in his/her absence.

**C. Communications with the Press and Public**

- (i) The Town Clerk will clear all press reports, or comments to the media, with the Town Mayor or the Chair of the relevant committee as appropriate.
- (i) Press reports from the council, its committees or working parties should be from the Town Clerk or an officer or via the reporter's own attendance at a meeting.
- (ii) 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.

- (iii) 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.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) Media Training will be made available to all Councillors.

**D. Councillor Correspondence to external parties**

- (i) Individual councillors are responsible for their own ward member correspondence. The Town Council does not provide a secretariat for such purpose. Councillors must ensure they make clear where they are informing on official policy and where they are stating their personal views.
- (ii) 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.

**E. Communications with Town Council Staff**

- (i) 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).
- (ii) No individual Councillor, regardless of whether or not they are the Town Mayor or 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.
- (iii) Telephone calls should be appropriate to the work of the town council.
- (iv) Instant replies should not be expected to e-mails from the Clerk; reasons for urgency should be stated;
- (v) Councillors should acknowledge their e-mails when requested to do so.
- (vi) For meetings with the Clerk or other officers an appointment should be made wherever possible, meetings should be relevant to the work of that particular officer and councillors should be clear that the matter is legitimate council business and not matters driven by personal or political agendas.

**6. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

6.1 It was previously agreed to develop a Social Media Policy. This is currently being drafted and will be presented in due course to Committee for consideration.

6.2 The following extract is from the Staff Handbook and covers internet, email and social media use by staff:

## **Computer use**

It is very important that the Council is able to keep its data secure. To assist with this, all employees are required to comply with instructions that may be issued from time to time regarding the use of Council-owned computers or systems.

Council portable IT devices must be kept secure and password protected at all times.

Your computer password is an important piece of confidential information and you should treat it that way. Do not share it with others, and make sure that it is not written down anywhere where an unauthorised person can find it.

Unauthorised access to any of the Council's systems will amount to gross misconduct.

## **Email**

All email correspondence should be dealt with in the same professional and diligent manner as any other form of correspondence.

If you have a Council email account you should be mindful of the fact that any email that you send will be identifiable as coming from the Council. You should therefore take care not to send anything via email that may reflect badly on the Council. In particular, you must not send content of a sexual or racist nature, junk mail, chain letters, cartoons or jokes from your Council email address.

Using a Council email address to send inappropriate material, including content of a sexual or racist nature, is strictly prohibited and may amount to gross misconduct. Should you receive any offensive or inappropriate content via email you should inform the Town Clerk of this as soon as possible so that they can ensure that it is removed from the system.

You should also take care that emails will be seen only by the person intended. Particular care should be taken when sending confidential information that the email has been correctly addressed, marked 'private' and not copied in to those not authorised to see the information. Sending confidential information via email without proper authorisation or without taking sufficient care to ensure that it is properly protected will be treated as misconduct.

While a reasonable amount of personal use of email is perfectly acceptable, your email remains the property of the Council and you should not use your Council email to send or receive any information that you regard as private. The Council may, in the course of its operation, read emails that you have sent or received - although in the absence of evidence of wrongdoing the Council will try to avoid reading personal emails if possible.

## **Internet use**

Employees with access to the internet on Council-owned devices should use that access responsibly. Excessive personal use during working hours will be treated as misconduct. From time to time the Council may block access to sites which it

considers inappropriate but whether or not a specific site has been blocked, employees must not use the internet to view or download offensive or sexually explicit material. Any attempt to do so may, depending on the circumstances, amount to gross misconduct leading to dismissal.

Employees must not download any software, plug-ins or extensions on to Council-owned devices unless this is first cleared by the Town Clerk. Nor must employees use Council-owned devices to download music, video or any other entertainment content.

Firewalls and anti-virus software may be used to protect the Council's systems. These must not be disabled or switched off without the express authorisation of the Town Clerk.

### **Social media**

An employee's behaviour on any social networking or other internet site must be consistent with the behaviour required of employees generally. Where it is possible for users of a social media site to ascertain who you work for, then you should take particular care not to behave in a way which reflects badly on the Council. Inappropriate or disparaging comments about the Council, colleagues or the town will be treated as misconduct. Because social media interactions can be copied and widely disseminated in a way that you may not be able to control, the Council will take a particularly serious view of any misconduct that occurs through the use of social media.

You must not operate a social media account or profile that purports to be operated on or on behalf of the Council without express permission to do so from your manager.

## **7. LONE WORKER POLICY**

- 7.1 It was previously agreed to develop a Lone Worker Policy. This is currently being updated by Ellis Whittam and will be presented in due course to Committee for consideration.
- 7.2 The current policy is provided below:

## **LONE WORKING POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 People who work by themselves, either on a regular, permanent or occasional basis can be at greater risk from assaults and accidents than other workers. This guidance is to assist managers and staff, to reduce the risk of harm occurring to lone workers.
- 1.2 With proper management and control of the risks those who work alone can be as safe as everyone else at work can.

**2. Who is a lone worker?**

- 2.1 Lone workers are simply those people who work by themselves, without close or direct supervision.
- 2.2 People will generally know when they are working alone, but there are situations where even when an office is normally crowded, people can be working in isolation e.g. in a meeting or interview room.

**3. Risk assessment**

- 3.1 The need to assess the risks associated with any work activity applies to staff who work alone. The risk assessment process is the responsibility of managers, and this will ensure that the hazards and level of risks are identified, and if necessary action taken to avoid and/or control the risks.
- 3.2 Control measures may include; issuing safe working instructions, training, supervision, issuing personal protective equipment. Managers should ensure that control measures are implemented. The risk assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is always kept up to date if situations change.
- 3.3 It is important that all staff are consulted on the risk assessment, as they can provide valuable information and advice. Where risk assessments identify that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back up should be put in place.
- 3.4 If a lone worker carries out their work at another employers site, information should be provided about any risks for the manager to carry out the risk assessment and ensure that the right action is taken to ensure the safety of the lone worker.

**4. Lone worker advice**

- 4.1 It is impossible to identify all of the hazards that a lone worker may face, many may be transient in nature. It is important to protect staff against all known risks and to equip them with adequate training and information to assist them in dealing with any risky situations that they may encounter ranging from dealing with aggressive clients to entering an unsafe building. Specific safe working arrangements should be implemented and developed.
- 4.2 The following may be drawn from for local guidance.

**5. Lone working in premises**

- 5.1 Ensure that you know relevant emergency procedures and can act appropriately when an alarm is raised
- 5.2 Be aware of any other procedures intended for your safety and use them.

- 5.3 If dealing with clients/the public find out if there have been problems that may affect your safety and use them – if in doubt, have a second person available.
- 5.4 Know where and how to obtain help if needed, e.g. first aid assistance.
- 5.5 Know the security measures for your workplace and use them correctly.

**6. Lone working in the community**

- 6.1 Ensure that your line manager knows your intended movements and inform them if they change.
- 6.2 Ensure that any communication device, such as a telephone, or alarm, works and that it is checked regularly.
- 6.3 Do not leave items within clear sight in a vehicle.

**7. Visiting other people and unknown premises**

- 7.1 Ensure that your line manager/colleague is aware of your intended visit and inform them if there is any problem or changes.
- 7.2 Follow the procedures for maintaining contact with your manager.
- 7.3 If you have doubts about potential risks, from the place or person you are planning to visit, check if it is safe to visit alone.
- 7.4 Try not to visit alone for the first time, and especially not after dark.
- 7.5 Be aware of dogs, other animals or other people at the site.
- 7.6 Suggest that dogs and other animals be kept in a separate room if possible.
- 7.7 If you are in any doubt about your safety, do not enter the premises.
- 7.8 Be aware of your surroundings and look out for unstable or slippery surfaces.
- 7.9 Do not under any circumstances enter confined spaces or dangerous structures.
- 7.10 Report incidents or hazardous conditions.

**8. Manual handling**

- 8.1 Avoid manual handling, if at all possible, by using mechanical aids
- 8.2 Always assess the situation, and if there is any doubt about the safety of carrying out a manual handling task, do not do it.
- 8.3 Follow good practice handling technique as you have been advised in your training and safe working instructions.

8.4 If the task requires more than one person, do not do it until assistance is provided.

**9. Working at home**

9.1 Develop a routine; this will help to avoid stress.

9.2 Communicate regularly with your line manager.

9.3 Be aware of any hazards around and inside the house.

9.4 Know what to do in an emergency situation.

9.5 Check that equipment is safe to use.

9.6 Follow the good practice as advised in your safe working instructions.

**10. Other risks**

10.1 It is not always possible to be prepared for every eventuality so be aware and judge the risks and take appropriate action. If you are unsure of what to do, talk to your manager. Above all do not put yourself at risk, if there is any danger stop work or leave the location.

**11. What to do if an incident occurs**

11.1 Try to remain calm.

11.2 In a potentially violent situation, talk quietly, as your training advises.

11.3 Whenever possible, remove yourself from the scene as soon as possible.

11.4 Do not attack an potential assailant, run away if possible towards a friendly group or busy and well populated area.

11.5 If you witness an incident, try to remember as much as you can to help in any investigation.

11.6 Report the incident immediately to your manager.

11.7 Complete an incident report form and follow your reporting procedures.

11.8 Report the incident to the police, if necessary.

**12. Further assistance and advice**

12.1 The Health and Safety Executive Leaflet - Working Alone In Safety INDG 73, available from [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) / Tel: 08701 545500

**8. OTHER ITEMS**

- 8.1 The training requirements requested by F&GP at its last meeting are currently being sourced. Advice is being sought from Ellis Whittam on the best way to move forward.
- 8.2 The Council's complaints procedure is outlined below. This will be considered for adoption at the Full Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

- 1 This complaints procedure is intended to ensure that complaints by members of the public about the Council's actions, or lack of action, or standard of service are dealt with promptly and effectively. The object of the procedure is to put things right when they have gone wrong and ensure that mistakes do not recur in the future.
- 2 This procedure does not apply to:
- Complaints about the substance of policy decisions made by the Council (although members of the public may make comments or ask questions during the public participation session during every Council and committee meeting);
  - Complaints about the conduct of an individual councillor, which should be made to the Monitoring Officer at Herefordshire Council
  - Complaints by an employee of the Council about the Council's actions as an employer, which should be dealt with under the Council's grievance procedure.
- 3 Complaints about the Council's administration and procedures should be made initially to the Town Clerk, and will be dealt with initially by the Clerk. If the complainant is unwilling to approach the Clerk a complaint may be made to the Town Mayor, who will refer the complaint either to the Clerk or to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Complaints may be made in writing, by email, by telephone or in person. A written record of the complaint must be submitted.
- 4 Complaints which cannot be dealt with immediately to the satisfaction of the complainant will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days by either letter or email.
- 5 Complaints should be dealt with promptly. In general complaints will be dealt with within 20 working days of receipt, although this time limit may be extended with the agreement of the complainant, or where the Clerk feels it necessary to take legal or other advice.
- 6 Where it appears that the complaint includes an allegation that a criminal offence has been committed the Clerk may deal with the complaint by referring it to the police.

## AGENDA ITEM: 7

- 7 If a complainant is dissatisfied with the Clerk's decision on a complaint, or if the complaint is not dealt with to the satisfaction of the complainant within the time limit set out in the previous paragraph, the complainant may ask for the matter to be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 8 Where a complaint is referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee the complainant will be informed of the date, time and place of the meeting. At least ten working days' notice will be given. The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and also to submit any documents which s/he wishes to refer to. Any such documents must be received by the Clerk seven working days before the meeting to enable them to be circulated to members. The Clerk will provide the complainant with any documents that s/he wishes to refer to within the same timescale. The Clerk will also inform the complainant whether it is likely that the meeting will be open to the press and public or whether the press and public are likely to be excluded (for example because the personal affairs of an individual may be discussed).
- 9 At the Committee meeting the Chairman should introduce everyone and explain the procedure. The complainant may outline the grounds of complaint and may then be questioned, first by the Clerk and then by Committee members. The Clerk may outline the Council's position and may be questioned, first by the complainant and then by Committee members. The Clerk and then the complainant may give a final summary of their position.
- 10 The complainant and the Clerk will then leave the room to allow the Committee to reach a decision on the complaint. They will be called back when the Committee has reached a decision.
- 11 If the Committee considers that a complaint alleges misconduct by an employee the decision on the complaint may be deferred until the allegation has been dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 12 Committee decisions on a complaint should normally be announced in public. The complainant should be notified of the decision in writing within seven working days, and notified also of what action will be taken.
- 13 Where a complaint is upheld the Clerk should report to a subsequent meeting of the Committee and of full Council what action has been taken to ensure that any mistake does not recur