

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

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## AGENDA

### ORDINARY MEETING OF HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Date / Time: Tuesday, 10 December 2024 at 7.30 pm

Venue: Horley Town Council offices, Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, Horley RH6 7HZ

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#### SENT BY EMAIL TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

You are hereby respectfully summoned to attend an **ORDINARY MEETING of HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL** to be held on Tuesday, 10 December 2024, 7:30 pm, at the Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, Horley RH6 7HZ. The Agenda for the meeting is attached to this Summons.

Yours sincerely

Joan Walsh  
Town Clerk

#### Members' Apologies:

If required, a Member must submit their apologies for this meeting by sending an email to: [town.clerk@horleytown.com](mailto:town.clerk@horleytown.com) or by telephoning the office on 01293 784765, by no later than noon on the day of the meeting.

#### Public Forum:

***Members of the Public and Press are welcome to attend this meeting in person or may join it remotely by requesting a Zoom link by email to: [town.clerk@horleytown.com](mailto:town.clerk@horleytown.com) or by telephoning the office on 01293 784765, by no later than noon on the day before the meeting is due to be held.***

Public and Press attendees are invited to put questions or draw relevant matters to the Council's attention and are permitted to speak once only and for five minutes maximum in respect of a business item on the agenda, at the discretion of the Chairman. If it appears that the number of speakers is likely to unreasonably delay the disposal of business items on the agenda, the Chairman may direct that a question or comment is submitted in writing which shall be answered in due course.

# **HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

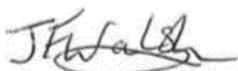
**An Ordinary Meeting of Horley Town Council will be held at the Albert Rooms,  
Albert Road, Horley on Tuesday, 10 December 2024, at 7.30 pm**

**All correspondence and papers referred to in the public part of the agenda are available to view in the Town Council Offices during normal office hours or on the website.**

## **AGENDA**

- 1 Apologies for Absence**  
To receive apologies for absence with officer recommendation for acceptance.
- 2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Pecuniary Interests**  
To receive any declarations of interest in relation to any items included on this agenda.
- 3 Public Forum**
- 4 Minutes**  
To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on [29 October 2024](#)
- 5 Full Council Updates**
- 6 Committee Reports**
  - i) To receive the draft Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees:  
Leisure Committee held on [17 October 2024](#)
  - ii) To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees:  
Planning and Development Committee held on [22 October 2024](#)
- 7 Council Chairman's Report**  
To receive a report of events attended by the Chairman or representative since the Full Council meeting held on 29 October 2024 (**attached**).
- 8 Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC) and National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**
  - i) To receive an update from Cllr Mike George as the HTC representative on the SALC Board, including the recent SALC AGM and Conference.
  - ii) To receive any other updates from the National and County Associations.
- 9 Borough, County Council and Other Updates**
  - i) To note that the SCC/RBBC/HTC Joint Council meeting, has been postponed until 20 January 2025.
  - ii) To receive an update on the RBBC/HTC Liaison Meeting held on 26 November 2024.
  - iii) To receive an update on any other matters.
- 10 Internal Audit Matters**  
To receive the report of the first internal audit for 2024/25 from Mulberry & Co and note this Council's response.
- 11 Horley Town Council Precept**
  - i) To approve the Town Council Precept set for the Financial Year 2025/2026.
  - ii) To approve the draft Budget Statement from the Finance Lead Member, for approval and publication.
- 12 Annual Subscriptions**  
Gatwick Greenspace Partnership (GGP) – To ratify the subscription for 2025/26 in the total sum of £2,350.
- 13 Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS) - Horley Edmonds Community Fund (HECF)**
  - i) To note the revised scale of charges for administering Endowment Funds from the Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS).
  - ii) **HECF Grant Award – St Bartholomew's Church (Lychgate Repair)** - To note information received.

- 14 RBBC Strategic Infrastructure Programme (SIP) 2023-2027:**  
**Reference Numbers: CIL SIP (2) 17, 18, 19, 20**
- i) To receive an update on the programme of live projects and anticipated timescales.
  - ii) **Residents Survey for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Projects in Horley** - To agree the contents of the survey, seeking views on smaller community projects to help improve the local area.
  - iii) To receive an update on any other matters.
- 15 Outside Bodies**  
To receive any updates from the Town Council representatives on the following outside bodies:
- i) Horley Community Partnership
  - ii) Royal British Legion
- 16 Environment Working Group**  
To receive an update from the Chair on the virtual meeting held on 03 December 2024.
- 17 Reigate and Banstead Borough Council Consultations**
- i) [RBBC Consultation on the Borough Council's Budget Proposals 2025/26 \(Closing Date: 13 January 2025\)](#) - To consider the Town Council's response.
  - ii) **RBBC Polling District & Place Review** - To approve the Town Council's response.
  - iii) **Reigate & Banstead Draft Corporate Plan Review 2025-2030 (Closing Date: 20 November 2024)** - To ratify the Town Council's submission to the Borough Council.
- 18 [Public Consultation Remote Meetings and Proxy Voting \(Closing Date: 19 December 2024\)](#)** - To approve the Town Council's response.
- 19 Communications Received**
- 20 Diary Dates**
- 21 Items for Future Consideration**  
To note urgent business for inclusion on future agenda.
- 22 Press Release**  
To agree items for inclusion.
- 23 Exclusion of Public and Press**  
**"In view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw."**
- 24 Confidential Minutes** **CONFIDENTIAL**  
To approve the confidential minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 29 October 2024.
- 25 'Café In The Park' Occupancy, Horley Recreation Ground** **CONFIDENTIAL**  
To receive an update from the Town Clerk on progress to date.
- 26 CIL SIP (2) 18: HTC Offices Expansion & Sustainability Project** **CONFIDENTIAL**  
To approve the expenditure for the technical design and tender phase of the project for an amount not exceeding £25,000 plus VAT.



## List of Mayoral Events 30 October 2024 – 08 December 2024

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
02 Nov	Horley Lions Firework Night	Horley Recreation Ground
06 Nov	Rededication of the Garden of Remembrance	Horley War Memorial
10 Nov	Remembrance day Parade & Service	Horley War Memorial
11 Nov	National Two Minutes Silence	Horley Town Precinct
07 Dec	Councillors Christmas Hospitality	Horley Community Centre
08 Dec	Christmas Tree Festival Carol Service	Horley Methodist Church



Mrs J Walsh  
Horley Town Council  
The Council Offices  
92 Albert Road  
Horley, Surrey  
RH6 7HZ

25<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Dear Joan,

**Re: Horley Town Council**  
**Internal Audit Year Ended 31 March 2025 – Interim Audit report**

**Executive summary**

Following completion of our interim internal audit on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 we enclose our report for your kind attention and presentation to the council. The audit was conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines and testing was risk based. Whilst we have not tested all transactions, our samples have where appropriate covered the entire year to date.

Our report is presented in the same order as the assertions on the internal auditor report within the published Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The start of each section details the nature of the assertion to be verified. Testing requirements follow those detailed in the audit plan previously sent to the council, a copy of which is available on request. The report concludes with an opinion as to whether each assertion has been met or not at this point in the year. Some assertions are tested only at the final internal audit, and this is reflected where appropriate in the report. **Recommendations for action are shown in bold text and are summarised in the table at the end of the report.**

Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk.

It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose.

It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Horley Town Council are well established and followed.

**Regulation**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts. In addition to this, a smaller authority is required by Regulation 5(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to “undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.”

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance activity designed to improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the authority on whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

Internal audit’s function is to test and report to the authority on whether its specific system of internal control is adequate and working satisfactorily. The internal audit reports should therefore be made available to all Members to support and inform them when they considering the authority’s approval of the annual governance statement.

**Independence and competence**

Your audit was conducted by Mark Mulberry of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd, who has over 30 years' experience in the financial sector with the last 14 years specialising in local government.

Your auditor is independent from the management of the financial controls and procedures of the council and has no conflicts of interest with the audit client, nor do they provide any management or financial assistance to the client.

**Engagement Letter**

An engagement letter was previously issued to the council covering the 2024/25 internal audit assignment. Copies of this document are available on request.

**Planning and inherent risk assessment**

The scope and plan of works including fee structure was issued to the council under separate cover. Copies of this document are available on request. In summary, our work will address each of the internal control objectives as stated on the Annual Internal Audit Report of the AGAR.

It is our opinion that the inherent risk of error or misstatement is low, and the controls of the council can be relied upon and as such substantive testing of individual transactions is not required. Testing to be carried out will be "walk through testing" on sample data to encompass the period of the council year under review.

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## A. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.*

### **Audit findings**

The interim audit was conducted on site with the Clerk and the RFO, together. Other information was reviewed through discussion with the Clerk & RFO and a review of the council website <https://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/>

The Council uses the Rialtus accounting package for recording the council's finances. This is an industry specific accounting package, and I make no recommendation to change. The system encompasses a simple cashbook, and it provides for reconciliation of key control accounts and regular reporting against budget.

A review of the nominal ledger shows there to be no netting off of income and expenditure and items are posted to the heading to which they relate. There is no evidence of excess journal corrections to the accounts.

The system is used to produce management information reports for review at council meetings and is updated daily with financial information. A review of the cashbook shows that the system is being populated with relevant data, such that a casual reader can understand the nature and scope of the transactions. Supplier invoices are filed in lever arch files by date. A simple walk through of a receipt and payment chosen at random, proved the underlying documentation could be located.

There are five users, with their own individual log on's.

The bank is reconciled monthly by the RFO and signed by off. The bank reconciliations, income and expenditure reports, payment summaries and other financial reports are produced for council to review.

I tested opening balances as at 1/4/24 showing £75,098.21 and confirmed they could be agreed back to the audited accounts for 2023/24.

The council is VAT registered; the last VAT return was for the three-month period ended 30<sup>th</sup> of September. The reclaim was for £29,874.72, and was received on the 4<sup>th</sup> November. This shows the council is update with its financial postings and there is no significant delay between the end of the period, submission of the return, and receipt of the refund.

Overall, I have the impression that the accounting systems are well ordered and routinely maintained and as such I make no recommendation to change. I am of the opinion that the council keeps appropriate records and uses the systems for the purpose for which they are intended.

## B. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS

### **Internal audit requirement**

*This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

#### *Check the publication and minuting of the prior year audited AGAR and notice of conclusion of audit*

The External Auditor's Report was not qualified it is published on the council website together with the notice of conclusion. The 2023/24 AGAR was posted to the council website ahead of the deadline. This was reported to Full Council on the 10th September 2024 minute ref C5897.

#### *Confirm by sample testing that councillors sign statutory office forms*

I have confirmed in previous audits that councillors sign "Acceptance of Office" forms. The council website provides a link to details of the individual councillor's Register of Members' Interests forms. There have been no new councillors this year.

Councillors also sign a formal acceptance to receive information by electronic means.

#### *Confirm that the council is compliant with GDPR*

The council is fully aware of GDPR. It was noted the council has established common .gov email addresses for all councillors. The .gov address is recommended because it gives a natural segregation between work and personal lives, making it clear beyond doubt in what capacity a councillor is acting. In addition to this, it gives control to the council, adds a degree of professionalism and in the event of a FOI request limits access to personal computers.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide (March 2023) contains updated guidance on the matter as below:

#### *The importance of secure email systems and GOV.UK*

- 5.210. All Parish, Town and Community Councils are eligible to use, and are advised to use, a .gov.uk domain for their websites and email communications. Your community, suppliers and partners will now reasonably expect a local council to have a .gov.uk domain name. Note that Parish meetings are exempt from the requirement to have a website.
- 5.211. To assist with compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), it is advised that clerks provide official .gov.uk email accounts to their councillors, which must only be used for official council business.
- 5.212. When choosing a domain name all councils must follow the rules set out by the Cabinet Office to choose a .gov.uk domain name, for example, 'ourparishcouncil.gov.uk' with email addresses linked to that domain.
- 5.213. Using a .gov.uk domain for your council website and email accounts gives Town Councils the following advantages:
- 5.214. Increased professionalism and trust from members of your community, partners and suppliers because your email address and website domains are a trusted government brand.
- 5.215. Separation of your personal life from your professional life, ensuring members of your community, partners and suppliers understand what capacity you are emailing them in - whether a Councillor or Clerk.
- 5.216. Increased control for the Responsible Officer over email accounts and documentation when managing new joiners, leavers, sudden absences or Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests.
- 5.217. Peace of mind that your .gov.uk Town Council domain will never be sold to someone else if it is not renewed on time, which can happen with .co.uk, .org.uk and other commercial domains.
- 5.218. Additional security measures, as all .gov.uk domains are checked for any cyber vulnerabilities by the Cabinet Office and reported to the Responsible Owner, or your technical point of contact, so they can be fixed.
- 5.219. You can read more about the benefits of getting a .gov.uk domain on the GOV.UK website.

The council has a Privacy Notice and Accessibility Statement on its website, and it is clear the council has made every effort to comply with the website requirements.

#### *Confirm that the council meets regularly throughout the year*

In addition to full council, the council has a Planning and a Leisure Committee. Terms of reference are published on the website and dated 222. I discussed this with the Clerk and I was informed the terms of reference are generally reviewed and readopted on a bi-annual basis at the May meeting. We noted the May 2023 meeting resolved to accept the terms.

*Check that agendas for meetings are published giving 3 clear days' notice*

I was able to confirm that at least 3 clear days' notice is given on agendas. Whilst we have not tested every single committee and council meeting there was no evidence of non-compliance.

The ICO has issued guidance stating that "any background documents which are referred to in the agenda or minutes, or were circulated in preparation for the meeting. These are considered part of the agenda." *The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)*.

There is clear evidence the council is posting supporting documents along with the agendas, as outlined by the Information Commissioner's Office (page 3 of this link) [ico.org.uk/minutesandagendas.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/minutesandagendas.pdf)

*Check the draft minutes of the last meeting(s) are on the council's website*

Minutes are uploaded to the council website.

*Confirm that the Town Council's Standing Orders have been reviewed within the last 12 months*

The Standing Orders are based on the NALC model and were most recently reviewed and adopted by council on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 minute ref C5802

*Confirm that the Town Council has adopted and recently reviewed Financial Regulations*

Financial Regulations are based on the new NALC model and were last reviewed and adopted by council on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024, minute ref C5802. The regulations contain provisions for the approval of spending, setting of budgets, reconciliation of the bank and reporting to council.

*Check that the council's Financial Regulations are being routinely followed*

The current thresholds in place at which authorisations to spend must be obtained as below:

*FR 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by the clerk up to £2,000 and then full council.*

*Such authorisation must be supported by a minute in the case of council or committee decisions or other auditable evidence trail.*

Based on the level of financial activity of the council, and through discussion with the Clerk and Finance Officer the authorisation thresholds appear appropriate for a council of this size.

I reviewed the Cashbook to select invoices over £2,000 to test the approval process (noted below). It was evident through discussion with the Clerk and RFO that council is fully informed and is provided with regular opportunity to question expenses.

- 26/9/24 The Havering Fencing Company Ltd - £34,163.00: Tender Item. Council on 18<sup>th</sup> June agreed, email to client on 20<sup>th</sup> June noted, council approval of invoice noted – invoiced noted, payment approval noted, physical payment noted.
- 10/09/24 Sussex Wildlife Trust - £2,235.00: Full council minute ref C5712 on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 gives approval to purchase. PO noted, invoice noted, payment approval and payment noted.
- 31/07/2024 Hags SMP Ltd £68,656.57: Tender Item. Council on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 agreed, email to client on 20<sup>th</sup> June noted, council approval of invoice noted – invoiced noted, payment approval noted, physical payment noted.
- 26/06/24 Horley Anglican Team Ministry £6,750.00. Full council minute ref C5758 gives approval to make grant.

The bank is set up as a tri- authorisation system where by the originator of a transaction cannot authorise the same transaction. The Clerk or RFO originate the transaction and councillors authorise. This is a good robust control.

*Confirm all section 137 expenditure meets the guidelines and does not exceed the annual per elector limit of £10.81 per elector*

The council has the General Power of Competence (GPC). Section 137 expenditure does not apply.

*Confirm that checks of the accounts are made by a councillor*

The system noted above details internal review takes place, I am under no doubt that council properly approves expenditure.

## C. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

### **Internal audit requirement**

*This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.*

### **Audit findings**

The council has a risk assessment policy in place. This contains risks broken down by category, the specific risk is identified, an assessment of the likelihood, and severity of the risk occurring and the control measures in place.

This type of approach is suitable for a council of this size and demonstrates that the council takes its risk management responsibilities seriously. This was taken to council on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Daily inspection by outside contractor playground inspections and also annually by an appointed contractor. Council is made aware of any work required.

I confirmed that the council has a valid insurance policy in place with Aviva which expires in May 2025. The policy includes Public Liability of £10 million and Employers Liability cover of £10 million and a Fidelity Guarantee of £250,000 which is sufficient for a council of this size.

## D. BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES

### **Internal audit requirement**

*The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.*

### **Audit findings**

The council approved the 2024/25 budget and precept on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023, minute ref C5708 & C5709. The precept requirement was set at £604,096. This has been agreed to the Cashbook.

The Clerk confirmed that the 2025/26 budget setting process is underway with all deadlines achievable. The draft budget shows a % increase year on year with a predicted surplus of £50k. The process the council has in place is robust and allows for council discussion at all stages. The calculations and assumptions are fact based and clearly presented.

The council regularly reports income and expenditure against budget. The month 7 income and expenditure report shows the council position as: budgeted income £716,134 and budgeted expenditure £646,133 being a surplus of £70,001. Actual year to date income is £1,020,023 this is £303,889 above budget expectation and is due to £307k of s.106 receipts. Actual year to date expenditure is £419,485, this is £226,648 below budget and is at a level to be expected at month 7 and there are no overdrawn budget headings. Excess spending against cost centres are shown as covered by earmarked reserves. However, of note cost centre 220 codes 1400 has negative income due to a credit note and 4405 shows the reversal of an accrual..

The latest outturn predicts a surplus of £50k for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This would give the council circa £725k in total reserves. At the date of the interim internal audit, the council held £579,544 in eight earmarked reserves, four of which pertain to Cil monies. It is therefore anticipated the general reserve will be circa £150k at the year end. The council has very robust reserves reporting. The general reserve balance is within range

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's guide states '*the generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure*' (para 5.33).

## E. INCOME

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

Apart from the precept, the council receives income from interest, grants, VAT, allotments, hall lettings and pitch hire. There is evidence of fees are charges being discussed in the October 2024 meeting.

From a review of the accounting records, income appears to be recorded with sufficient narrative detail to identify the source and allocated to the most appropriate nominal code.

## **F. PETTY CASH**

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for.*

### **Audit findings**

The council has no petty cash.

## **G. PAYROLL**

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.*

### **Audit findings**

The payroll is processed in house using Sage. There are six employees with signed contracts of employment, based on the NALC template. The salaries are aligned to the NJC scale point range and the scale point was tested correctly to the month 9 payroll. There were no errors.

The tax deductions at Month 9 were tested and found to be correct.

I reviewed the government gateway account and the council has correctly disclaimed the employment allowance and is up to date date with its liabilities.

There are councillor allowances via the payroll.

The council has a LGPS pension scheme in place and has fulfilled its obligation for pensions.

## **H. ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS**

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.*

### **Audit findings**

The council has a comprehensive fixed asset register in place using Excel with assets shown at historic or proxy cost. This type of approach is suitable for a council of this size. The register contains sufficient information to identify the asset, its location, historic or proxy cost. The assets are regularly inspected and recorded.

The council has PWLB borrowing agreed to statements.

## **I. BANK AND CASH**

### **Internal audit requirement**

*Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.*

### **Audit findings**

Bank reconciliations are completed on a monthly basis and are filed in hard copy, together with the bank statements. The reconciliations are independently checked, and signed off by a councillor.

I was able to confirm the balances on the bank reconciliation to the bank statements, and noted the reconciliations are signed off. There are no exceptions to report. I am under no doubt that bank reconciliation is being properly carried out.

As the council's budget does exceed €500,000, it does not benefit from protection from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

## J. YEAR END ACCOUNTS

### Internal audit requirement

*Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.*

### Audit findings

The council, at its meeting to sign off the year-end accounts, must discuss Section 1 of the AGAR (Annual Governance Statement) and record this activity in the minutes of the meeting. **COUNCIL IS REMINDED THAT THIS MUST BE A SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF SECTION 2 OF THE AGAR (ANNUAL ACCOUNTS).**

### Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement

Based on the internal audit finding I recommend using the table below as the basis for that discussion.

	Annual Governance Statement	'Yes', means that this authority	Suggested response based on evidence
1	We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>	<b>YES</b> – accounts follow latest Accounts and Audit Regulations and practitioners guide recommendations.
2	We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>	<b>YES</b> – there is regular reporting of financial transactions and accounting summaries, offering the opportunity for scrutiny.
3	We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>	<b>YES</b> – the Clerk advises the council in respect of its legal powers.
4	We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>	<b>YES</b> – the requirements and timescales for 2023/24 year-end were met
5	We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>	<b>YES</b> – the council has a risk management scheme and appropriate external insurance.
6	We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>	<b>YES</b> – the council has appointed an independent and competent internal auditor.
7	We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>	<b>YES</b> – matters raised in internal and external audit reports have been addressed.
8	We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this	<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>	<b>YES</b> – no matters were raised during the internal audit visits.

	authority and. Where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.		
9	Trust funds including charitable – In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/asset(s), including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	<i>has met all its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>	N/A – the council has no obligations

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements

AGAR box number		2022/23	2023/24	Internal Auditor notes
1	Balances brought forward	326,943	415,520	Agrees to 2022/23 carry forward (box 7)
2	Precept or rates and levies	464,794	525,016	Figure confirmed to central precept record
3	Total other receipts	115,417	407,424	Agrees to underlying accounting records
4	Staff costs	189,040	232,078	Agrees to underlying accounting records. Includes only expenditure allowed as staff costs (see section G)
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	47,141	47,141	Confirmed to PWLB documents
6	All other payments	255,453	392,313	Agrees to underlying accounting records
7	Balances carried forward	415,520	676,428	Casts correctly and agrees to balance sheet

8	Total value of cash and short-term investments	425,037	736,620	Agrees to bank reconciliation for all accounts
9	Total fixed assets plus long-term investments and assets	2,480,033	2,424,580	Matches asset register total and changes from previous year have been traced
10	Total borrowings	608,634	578,039	Confirmed to PWLB documents

For Local Councils Only		Yes	No	N/A	
11a	Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable)		✓		<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b	Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable)			✓	<i>The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

### Audit findings

The year-end accounts have been correctly prepared on an income and expenditure basis with the box 7 and 8 reconciliation explained due to year-end debtors, creditors, accruals, VAT.

The AGAR correctly casts and cross casts and last year's comparatives match the figures submitted for 2022/23 and published on the council website.

The variance analysis has been completed to explain the variances exceeding 15% where required, and in my opinion, contains sufficient narrative and quantitative information for the External Auditor.

## **K. LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW**

### **Internal audit requirement**

*IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")*

### **Audit findings**

The council did not certify itself exempt in 2023/24 due to exceeding the income and expenditure limits, this test does not apply.

## **L: PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION**

### **Internal audit requirement**

*The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation*

### **Audit findings**

The council is required to follow the requirements of the Freedom of Information ACT and the ICO Model Publication Scheme. In addition to this, (as best practice) it can follow the requirements of the Transparency Code – but this does not have the weight of law.

All councils are required to follow The Accounts and Audit Regulations which include the following requirements:

**13(1)** An authority must publish (which must include publication on that authority's website)

- (a) the Statement of Accounts together with any certificate or opinion entered by the local auditor in accordance with section 20(2) of the Act; and
- (b) the Annual Governance Statement approved in accordance with regulation 6(3)

**13(2)** Where documents are published under paragraph (1), the authority must

- (a) keep copies of those documents for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum; and
- (b) ensure that those documents remain available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which those documents were first published in accordance with that paragraph.

We have considered the requirements of Statutory Instruments 2015/480 The Local Government (Transparency Requirements) Regulations 2015 [<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/480/made/data.pdf>] and, 2015/494 The Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements). [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/494/pdfs/ukxiem\\_20150494\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/494/pdfs/ukxiem_20150494_en.pdf)

In addition to this, we have considered the additional publication requirements as set out in the ICO Model Publication Scheme for Town Councils. <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1153/model-publication-scheme.pdf> & [https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1266/parish\\_council\\_information\\_guide.doc](https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1266/parish_council_information_guide.doc)

The council has a Model Publication Policy which is posted to the council website. This was adopted on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024. In addition to this the council does also follow the transparency code.

I was able to confirm that pages 4 (Annual Governance Statement), 5 (Accounting Statements) and 6 (External Auditor's Report and Certificate) of the AGAR are available for review on the council website for financial years 2019/20 to 2023/24 inclusive.

**M: EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS - INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2024 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*

**Audit findings**

Inspection – key dates	2023/24 Actual
Date AGAR signed by council	18 <sup>th</sup> June
Date inspection notice issued	21 <sup>st</sup> June
Inspection period begins	24 <sup>th</sup> June
Inspection period ends	2 <sup>nd</sup> August
Correct length (30 working days)	Yes
Common period included (first 10 working days of July)	Yes

I am satisfied the requirements of this control objective were met for 2023/24, and assertion 4 on the Annual Governance Statement can therefore be signed off by the council for 2024/25.

**N: PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS****Internal audit requirement**

*The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24. Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website / webpage.*

*Before 1 July 2024 authorities must publish:*

- *Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited*
- *Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24, approved and signed, page 4*
- *Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24, approved and signed, page 5*

*Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities must publish:*

- *Notice of conclusion of audit*
- *Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate*
- *Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.*

*It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.*

**Audit findings**

I was able to confirm that the Notice of Public Rights is published on the council website along with the Notice of Conclusion of audit and External Auditor Report and I was able to confirm that the publication requirements for 2023/24 have been met.

**O. TRUSTEESHIP****Internal audit requirement**

*Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.*

**Audit findings**

The council has no trusts.

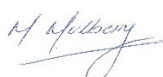
**Achievement of control assertions at interim audit date**

Based on the tests conducted during the interim audit, our conclusions on the achievement of the internal control objectives are summarised in the table below. A further review and update of this opinion will be conducted at the final audit.

	INTERNAL CONTROL OBJECTIVE	YES	NO	NOT COVERED
A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year	✓		
B	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for	✓		
C	This authority assesses the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these	✓		
D	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for	✓		
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for			✓ None
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K	If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			✓ N/a
L	The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation	✓		
M	The authority, during the previous year (2023-24) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	✓		
N	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR.	✓		
O	Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓ N/a

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Mark Mulberry**  
Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd

**Interim Audit 2024/25 - Points Carried Forward**

None



<b>Precept 2025/26</b>						
			<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Projection</b>
			2024/25	2023/24	2025/26	2026/27
						2027/28
<b>Expenditure/Income</b>			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
F&GP Expenditure			428,741	381,217	436,015	447,364
F&GP Income			-19,800	-21,000	-15,015	-17,000
Leisure & Amenities Expenditure			180,047	180,047	188,493	192,955
Leisure & Amenities Income			-46,756	-31,008	-50,210	-51,270
Full Council, Grants, Loans etc			37,346	37,346	39,346	37,549
<b>Net Expenditure</b>			<b>579,578</b>	<b>546,602</b>	<b>598,630</b>	<b>609,597</b>
Net Expenditure			579,578		598,630	609,597
Earmarked Funds requirement (below)			102,500		116,500	30,000
Total Expenditure			682,078	0	715,130	639,597
Council Tax Support Grant			0		0	0
Double Taxation Grant			-45,482		-45,482	-47,301
CIL						
General Reserve funds(- used /+increased)			-32,500		-30,000	10,000
			604,096	0	639,648	602,296
<b>Precept requirement</b>			<b>604,096</b>		<b>639,648</b>	<b>602,296</b>
<b>Summary 2025/26</b>			<b>(Band D Parish Element of Council Tax)</b>			
						Tax
No of Households 2025	11,286.60		25/26			56.67
No of Households 2024	11,186.20		24/25			54.00
Increase in no of households	100		Annual Increase per household			2.67
						% increase
						4.95
<b>Predicted Movements on Reserves</b>	<b>1.4.24</b>	24/25	24/25			<b>1.4.25</b>
		movements	spend	earmark		
General fund	233,631				241,131	
predicted underspend 24/25	40,000				50,000	
	241,131				261,131	
<b>Earmarked Funds</b>		movement 24/25		earmark 25/26	bal	
CIL	42,776	-6,667			36,109	
Election Contingency	2,500	0		0	2,500	Included in the budget
Edmonds Hall	0	0		20,000	20,000	For Edmonds Hall Repa
Parks and Playgrounds	40,000	-20,000		20,000	40,000	Replenish amount spent
HTC Projects Match Funding EMF	0	0		10,000	10,000	Match funding
Office Expansion and Sustainability	100,000	0		66,500	166,500	Total EMR for office is n
CIL SIP (2) - 17 Allotment Resurface	35,806	-31,033			4,773	
CIL SIP (2) - 18 Office Expansion	106,000	277,796			383,796	Total with tranche is £48
CIL SIP (2) - 19 MC Playground	70,000	-70,000			0	
CIL SIP (2) - 20 Horley Rec Perimeter	28,170	-28,170			0	
sub total	425,252	121,926	0	116,500	663,678	
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>666,383</b>	<b>121,926</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>116,500</b>	<b>924,809</b>	

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Export House  
5 Henry Plaza  
Victoria Way  
Woking  
GU21 6QX

01483 478092

Rebecca.Bowden@cfsurrey.org.uk

1 Nov 2024

Dear Fund owner,

I am writing to update you of our scale of contribution charges. These were last reviewed and increased in 2022, although charges for Endowment Funds have not been increased for the last ten years.

The charges that you pay on the funds that we administer on your behalf cover approx. 80% of what it costs to run the CFSurrey charity. The remainder of those core costs are sourced through seeking donations from individuals and charitable foundations, in the same way as any other charity. We do this so that we can offer an affordable, subsidised, and cost-effective alternative to setting up your own charitable foundation, whilst ensuring that we are focussing on being experts at understanding the local need in Surrey.

The charges cover:

- Actively seeking funding applications from organisations and causes that match your funding criteria.
- Carrying out all due diligence checking and assessment of applications.
- Supporting funds on communications – via website, social media and printed materials.
- Carrying out all statutory reporting to HMRC, Charity Commission and Companies House, and undertaking annual independent audit and biennial quality assurance testing.
- Monitoring and reporting on all grants awarded, arranging events & visits for donors.
- Analysing and communicating data on emerging needs and issues in our communities.
- Convening meetings and workshops to encourage charities and community groups to work collaboratively, and encourage co-funding of key issues by other funders such as statutory bodies.
- Fees paid to our wealth managers and bankers for administration of investment and cash funds.

In light of increases to our costs experienced over the last couple of years we have made a small increase in charges for both our flow-through funds, and our endowment funds. This is explained in the attached schedule. We hope you understand that we have done this after much thought and consideration. We review all our costs regularly and strive hard to keep all operating cost as low as we can, whilst paying an equitable wage for our wonderful employees. Of course if you would like to discuss these revised charges we would both be happy to meet with you.

We'd like to thank you for all your support – we are currently more than 8 times over-subscribed and we know that groups are relying heavily on our funding to keep responding to the needs in the local community.

We couldn't do anything without you – thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Rebecca Bowden, Chief Executive



Paul Downes, Honorary Treasurer

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Joan Walsh**

**Town Clerk**

Council Offices, 92 Albert Road

Horley, Surrey RH6 7HZ

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Polling District and Places Review

Electoral Services

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Town Hall, Castlefield Road

Reigate RH2 0SH

**Sent by Email:** [elreg@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:elreg@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

December 2024

Dear Sir / Madam

## **Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Places - Reigate & Banstead Borough Council**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above consultation, open for comment until 16 December 2024, to ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities to vote at the Local Elections in 2025.

The matter was considered by Horley Town Council at our Full Council meeting held on 10 December 2024. Our members discussed the locations along with accessibility and have the following comments to make where they relate to Polling Districts and Places in Horley. It should be noted that some of our comments were raised during the former Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Places.

### **HORLEY EAST:**

HRC1: Regent House Community Centre, Albert Road RH6 7JA

HRC2: Edmonds Hall, Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road RH6 7HZ

HRC3: St Francis Church Hall, Balcombe Road RH6 9AY

HRE3: Tanyard Barn Community Centre, The Acres, Brookfield Drive RH6 9TA

HRE5: Tanyard Barn Community Centre, the Acres Brookfield Drive RH6 9TA

**The County Boundary Review moved properties south of Ladbroke Road within the HRE4 polling district from the 'Horley West, Salfords and Sidlow' division into the 'Horley East' division. It is therefore necessary to create a new 'HRE5' polling district comprising of these properties and approximately 160 electors. The County Boundary Review moved HRC1 to this division from 'Horley West, Salfords & Sidlow', however this does not require any change to the polling district boundary for HRC1.**

- All Polling Stations are clustered in the north of the Polling District which seems unbalanced.
- Having two Polling Stations in Albert Road appears confusing for some voters.
- Polling Station **HRC2 at Horley Town Council**, Albert Road RH6 7HZ is to be refurbished in the next financial year with a small rear and side extension but our aim is to programme the works outside of the Local Election dates in May to avoid withdrawal of the venue and disruption to voters.
- Polling Stations **HRE3 and HRE5 at Tanyard Barn Community Centre** can be difficult to find and better street signage should be provided to guide voters to the location along with adequate parking facilities.
- We have identified a particular large area at the **Riverside Gardens Estate** which does not have a Polling Station at all and thereby requires electors to commute all the way to Polling Station **HRC2 at the Albert Rooms (Horley Town Council)**. It has therefore been suggested that Horley Library on Russell Square, Victoria Road should be considered as a more convenient alternative with less

travelling time and expense. Further consideration should also be given for potentially siting a 'Mobile Polling Station' in this area to provide better geographical coverage.

**HORLEY WEST, SALFORDS & SIDLOW:**

HRE4: Tanyard Barn Community Centre, The Acres, Brookfield Drive RH6 9TA

HRW2: St Wilfrid's Church, Horley Row, RH6 8DF

HRW3: Pathfinder Scout Hall, Baden rive, RH6 8SD

HRW4: Westvale Park Primary Academy School, Cavell Way, Webber Street RH6 8SU

**The County Boundary Review moved HRC1 from this division to the 'Horley East' division, however this does not require any change to the polling district boundary for HRC1.**

**The County Boundary Review moved HRE1 from 'Earlswood & Reigate South' to this division, however this does not require any change to the polling district boundary for HRE1.**

**In addition, the County Boundary Review divided the HRE4 polling district (refer to proposal number 5, above) along Ladbroke Road, with the southern partition moving into the 'Horley East' division and is proposed to be renamed 'HRE5'.**

- Polling Station **HRE4 at Tanyard Barn Community Centre** can be difficult to find and better street signage should be provide to guide voters to the location along with adequate parking facilities.
- We feel that Polling Station HRW4 at Westvale Park Primary Academy School has improved provision in this District.

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

- Any changes made to the Polling Stations in each District should be well publicised and communicated to voters ahead of the Local Elections.
- More directional signage should be placed on streets to guide people to their relevant Polling Stations with ease.

We look forward to hearing the outcomes of the consultation in due course.

Yours faithfully



**Joan Walsh  
Town Clerk  
Horley Town Council**



Reigate & Banstead Borough Council  
Corporate Policy Team  
Town Hall, Castlefield Road  
Reigate, RH2 0SH  
Sent by Email: [RBBC2030@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:RBBC2030@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

November 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Reigate and Banstead 2025-30: Draft Corporate Plan Response from Horley Town Council**

Horley Town Council welcomes the opportunity to make comment on the **Reigate and Banstead 2025-30 Draft Corporate Plan**.

We would like to thank the Council Leader, Cllr Richard Biggs and Corporate Policy officers for meeting with us at the Horley Town Council (HTC) offices, along with Salfords & Sidlow Parish council representatives on two occasions, to present the new five-year Plan proposals and the informative feedback shared through the engagement process. We found both sessions to be very informative with many valid comments and interesting points raised for consideration together with the responses given from the Borough's Council's perspective.

Having considered the detailed proposals within the draft document together with RBBC's priorities, objectives, we fully support the vision for a ***“healthy, sustainable borough; and a resilient Council that enables our communities to thrive and provide support for those in need”*** and we have the following comments to make under the key themes of the Draft Plan, as set out below:

### **Theme 1: Enabling our Communities to Thrive**

- **Great places to live and work**
- **Leisure, culture and community**
- **Waste, recycling and cleansing**

At the heart of every thriving community is a strong social network, where effective communication is built through meaningful conversations and interactions. This fosters a sense of unity, enabling communities to overcome social challenges and achieve positive outcomes through common objectives and a shared future vision. We believe that every person, regardless of personal circumstances, should have ample opportunities to improve their quality of life and future prospects. Access to essential public services, along with targeted support for those with more complex needs, ensures that everyone can lead happy, fulfilling lives and contribute positively to the local community. Where resources and services are proportionately distributed and designed to meet diverse needs, this sets the tone that every individual matters. This is fundamental to building an inclusive society where everyone's rights are respected. We fully endorse the Borough Council's ongoing commitment to support local communities and promote economic growth and prosperity in local areas. We recognise that as a principal local authority,

it has a vital role to play, not only in its civic duties and statutory functions but also discharging its legal responsibilities and provision of core public services.

As an independent local authority, Horley Town Council similarly has many important functions and responsibilities, some of which overlap with RBBC or have been delegated through devolved powers. For example, by delivering local services, maintaining parks and greenspaces, managing local amenities and facilities, supporting environmental and wellbeing schemes as well as commenting on local planning applications to the LPA as a legal consultee. This creates a solid foundation for new changes anticipated under the new local government framework, to be set out in the forthcoming Surrey Devolution Deal. Once finalised, it is expected to drive significant changes in local government and better align resources with the needs of local communities.

The town of Horley we serve is indeed unique, being one of two civil parishes in the southern part of the Reigate & Banstead borough. Its close proximity to Gatwick Airport positions it as a vital urban gateway, opening up opportunities for local development, economic growth, tourism, and employment. While its proximity to Gatwick offers significant advantages, it also presents challenges typical of communities near major transportation hubs, such as increased traffic, heightened pollution, noise, and high demands for housing and public services. Balancing the need for sustainable development with preserving residents' quality of life is essential to prevent negative impacts on both public health and the environment. While local community engagement can drive investment and infrastructure improvements, careful planning and consultation are essential to address current challenges and support Horley as a commuter town and key link to the broader region.

As stated in the Town Council's five-year Town Plan, it is our vision for Horley to ***"become a progressively prosperous town with sustainable economic growth, offering better employment opportunities, quality neighbourhoods with a range of housing schemes, improved complement of shops to rejuvenate the scope of High Street retail, excellent cultural and leisure amenities together with a supportive and diverse range of facilities to benefit the whole community."*** We are committed to working closely with the principal authorities to represent the interests of Horley residents through key stakeholder engagement. We believe that both our councils have benefited from being coterminous as our shared boundaries have enhanced coordination and streamlined administrative processes. Working collaboratively with key stakeholders creates a unified approach to Horley's growth and improvement, ensuring that local councils, businesses, community organisations and residents are all involved in shaping the town's future.

Fortunately, the benefit of strong collaboration among the three council tiers; County, Borough, and Town, has resulted in many positive outcomes for Horley, including new regeneration projects aimed at revitalising the town centre. This integrated approach illustrates how pre-engagement with key stakeholders can bring significant benefits and much needed investment to Horley when capital projects are delivered. By involving key stakeholders early on in the planning process, can align priorities, streamline efforts and build our shared vision for Horley's future. However, we believe that more local investment in our town is urgently needed, particularly in regeneration efforts, including the enhancement of local sports and recreational facilities, which have been shown to have lasting positive impacts on residents' health and well-being.

With these investments becoming a reality, we can foster a healthier, more active community and improve the overall quality of life for our residents. We have already begun actively engaging with Borough Council representatives through meaningful conversations, pre-engagement participation and other input to support the development of the emerging new Local Plan during the information-gathering stages. This demonstrates a shared commitment to prioritising common goals to promote physical activity, social engagement and lay the foundation for future improvements. We commend the Borough Council for agreeing to extend their Outdoor Play Space Provision surveys, specific to Horley sites and working with the Town Council to obtain views about our open spaces and what residents and community groups think we should do to improve outdoor recreational, sport and play facilities.

At the same time, we would want to see a renewed and proactive focus on further regeneration of Horley which is a point we raised during the last Corporate Plan review. While we have seen some measurable results since then, we believe that further investment in larger local parks and open spaces would bring even greater benefits. For example, by expanding popular green spaces, similar to the model used in other town parks across the borough, could revitalise our six-acre park at Horley Recreation Ground, enhancing community well-being, supporting biodiversity and providing additional recreational facilities for local residents.

Additionally, an urgent need for additional playing pitches and sports facilities in the southern part of the borough, identified in RBBC's recent study should, in our view, be supported through alternative financial resources beyond the precepts levied on residents in parished areas, as in Horley. This would ensure a more equitable distribution of the funding burden while addressing the growing demand for recreational spaces. By working together to secure funding allows us to invest in upgrades, maintenance and new amenities for Horley's parks, ensuring these areas are accessible, safe, and enjoyable for everyone. This approach not only ensures fair access to recreational spaces but also supports community health and wellbeing, thereby reinforcing commitment to sustainable development.

For positive change to occur in a general sense, it is essential that residents' views on any topic are always heard, not just during public consultations and engagement stages, leading to more effective governance and fostering stronger community ownership. This can be achieved with the involvement of diverse community forums which we feel would not only be well received but also strengthen trust between residents and local government representatives, thereby setting a standard that prioritises the community's best interests. It would also be a giant leap forward to help tackle local issues early on, set out possible measures for change and identify what people would like to see happen or done differently. As current economic and social challenges evolve, there is always room to do more and improve through a range of measures aimed at reaching a wider audience, connecting people, and encouraging greater community involvement.

Moving on to more localised issues, for an urban town the size of Horley with a rapidly growing and ageing population, we feel under constant threat from increased demand placed on local public services which are already over-utilised. This is primarily due to the town's geographical location and the impact of new development, which often lies outside the parish boundary but still contributes to higher demand on neighbouring infrastructure in Horley, risking resources becoming overstretched. This combination of factors not only places a strain on infrastructure, like roads and healthcare facilities, but also essential services in social care, housing, and

community support. We suggest that the Borough Council collaborates with the County Council and healthcare providers to foster greater partnership working across the public sector, securing investment to deliver public services across East Surrey and to develop more health and wellbeing initiatives.

Additionally, we remain fully committed to ensuring that Horley's growing population has access to high quality Post-16 educational options. For many years, we have actively advocated for improvements in Horley with education and government authorities, but the need has now become more urgent. In the meantime, we have shifted our focus towards improving transport links for students who must commute to out-of-town colleges, such as Reigate College. While our efforts have led to positive progress in discussions with rail and bus operators, there remains much more work to be done. Currently, certain rail services that pass through Horley Station do not stop there en

route to destinations like Reigate and we believe these services should be adjusted to meet local needs. Additionally, major housing developments, like Westvale Park, still lack completed road infrastructure which delays the start of a full bus service and affects reliable access to education. We will continue to push for these essential improvements for both educational access and transportational infrastructure, aiming to provide Horley's young people with the resources they need to progress.

Under this theme, we further note another important objective relates to **'Building safe communities and tackling antisocial behaviour...'**. As the landowner of one of the major town parks and other green spaces across the borough, the Town Council fully understands that proper management of these areas is essential for maintaining community safety and fostering a positive environment for residents. We recognise that greenspaces are valuable assets for recreation and social interaction. However, when misused or neglected, they can become hotspots for antisocial behaviour, often deterring people from using them and negatively impacting on community wellbeing. We were fortunate to embark on a recent major capital project at Horley Recreation Ground through the RBBC CIL SIP 2 Scheme, following a successful bid. The project focused on community safety and involved extensive park infrastructure enhancements. This is another example of both councils working effectively together to address important community issues and achieve valuable common goals.

Additionally, we fully support the objective to **'Work through the Reigate & Banstead Community Safety Partnership (including Surrey Police) to support resident safety and play a key role in delivering the partnership's action plan...'**. However, putting this into practice will be challenging, especially where public parks are reliant on local councils like ours to promote and enhance safety measures, such as, regular security patrols. Consequently, we must remain reliant on the Community Safety Partnership to address the root causes of antisocial behaviour and implement preventative measures. The reduction in police resources for patrols has hindered the ability to respond quickly to incidents of antisocial behaviour and has created a lack of visible presence in our parks and public spaces where residents may feel vulnerable or unsafe. We hope that this can be addressed as an urgent priority by the partnership.

Our final comment under this theme is that we appreciate the Borough Council's focus on neighbourhood services, particularly waste management, recycling, and cleansing. This includes the planned roll-out of new solar-powered, compact 'Big Belly' waste and recycling bins, which serve as a viable environmental measure and sets a leading example for future waste

management solutions. This will undoubtedly have a positive impact by minimising waste collections locally and creating a proactive approach to future sustainability. We suggest another positive way forward would be to help reduce environmental impact through other council activities, including creating awareness on best practice for waste reduction and recycling as well as encouraging residents/businesses to do the same. This might be achieved with support from the RBBC Community Development team and the introduction of a Social Value Assessment toolkit to help evaluate council activities undertaken towards environmental and sustainability goals and, in turn, maximise benefits to the local community.

We also call for greater support and recognition for all the wonderfully dedicated individuals, community groups, and organisations who willingly volunteer so much of their time and energy to improve our community. This includes litter pickers, conservation volunteers and many others who work tirelessly to enhance our local environment and quality of life. Recognising their invaluable contributions is essential and we believe that offering additional incentives to encourage even more community involvement will help strengthen our collective impact. Whether through public acknowledgments, awards, or practical support for their initiatives, we want to foster a culture that values and celebrates community service at every level.

## **Theme 2: Support for those in need**

- **Targeted support and developing communities**
- **Affordable Housing and tackling homelessness**

Horley Town Council strongly believes that every Horley resident deserves safe and secure access to accommodation, regardless of their personal circumstances and this sets the foundation to the overall health, wellbeing and prosperity of local communities. We fully endorse the Borough Council's ongoing commitment to exceed statutory requirements in addressing homelessness. This includes proactive and practical support through early intervention, providing advice and financial assistance, outlining measures and options to secure more affordable housing and supporting new development to meet both current and future housing needs.

As Horley continues to grow, it is imperative that the Borough Council and other housing providers continue to ensure that effective solutions are reached, including targeted support for vulnerable residents and local income families to prevent the risk of homelessness. We recognise that the Town Council likewise has a role to play by directly engaging with electors to fully understand local housing challenges, gather valuable insights and represent community needs, while advocating for effective, long-term solutions. This approach would allow the council to gain first-hand insight into specific issues and gather feedback to share with the housing authority. It can be achieved through our ongoing community engagement strategies, including councillor outreach surgeries, online surveys and resident forums. This resident-focused approach not only builds trust and transparency but also promotes a sense of shared ownership and accountability in addressing housing challenges and creating a foundation for solutions that are responsive, practical and sustainable.

Additionally, we recognise the urgent need for more affordable housing in Horley to meet rising demand and to alleviate the burden on emergency temporary accommodation costs. Our own observations have highlighted a critical gap in the availability and accessibility of affordable

homes locally. Given the challenges many people face in securing suitable homes, we suggest that reintroducing the concept of 'social housing' could be a sensible and much-needed solution. By distinguishing social housing from privately-owned or market-rate properties, we can create a clearer pathway for residents who may otherwise struggle to find affordable accommodation. Social housing is designed to be more affordable for those on lower incomes or facing specific housing challenges and provides an important safety net. It not only addresses immediate housing needs but also contributes to long-term stability for families and individuals who may otherwise lack the financial means for homeownership or the rental market. This approach would also give clarity to developers, housing providers, and policymakers, ensuring that both affordable and market-rate housing are appropriately represented and integrated into future planning. We suggest that reintroducing social housing as a distinct category within housing provision would ultimately help create a more balanced and inclusive housing market in Horley by addressing the diverse needs of the whole community.

Within the context of housing and supporting vulnerable groups, such as older people, those with disabilities or individuals with long-term health conditions, we believe that providing practical advice and support to help them live as independently as possible are essential. Providing targeted assistance and guidance can significantly reduce demand on Adult Social Care services, allowing resources to be redirected towards people who require specialised care, while empowering capable individuals to manage their own needs.

### **Theme 3: A Resilient Council**

- **Robust governance**
- **The tools to do the job**
- **People and skills**
- **Connecting with People**

We recognise that, to be resilient, the Borough Council has to maintain robust governance to manage resources effectively, adapt to emerging challenges and ensure financial security. This foundation is essential for meeting community needs while fostering long-term growth and stability. It must also be able to respond proactively to unexpected changes, whether economic, environmental, or social while discharging its statutory duties and responsibilities efficiently. Robust governance underpins the framework for transparency, accountability and strategic decision-making, helping to build trust with residents and promote the efficient use of public funds. It should therefore always be a key consideration.

The Borough Council needs to have the right tools to adapt to new challenges in the fast-changing landscape of local government. This includes up-to-date technology, data analytics and robust communication platforms to effectively engage with residents. It also requires adequate funding, skilled staff and training programs to ensure council members can make informed, strategic decisions. With these resources, the council is better equipped to provide essential services, respond to crises and plan for long-term community well-being, laying the foundation to be more sustainable.

To be resilient, the Borough Council has to be reliant on dedicated individuals with a diverse skill set to navigate complex challenges and serve the community effectively. Building resilience starts with attracting and retaining skilled staff who bring expertise across areas such as

governance, finance, planning, crisis management and community engagement. Continuous professional development and training ensures that team members are prepared for changing demands and can adapt to unforeseen circumstances. Additionally, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation and flexibility, empowers council staff to work together effectively, creating a strong foundation for responsive and proactive governance. By investing in its people and skills, the council builds resilience from within, positioning itself to better serve and support the community.

To be resilient, the Borough Council has to be transparent in decision-making. Timely responses to feedback fosters trust and creates multiple channels for dialogue, allowing both our councils to work collaboratively. Furthermore, effective communication is crucial, encompassing both digital and non-digital channels. This includes not only fostering partnerships but also ensuring that information to be shared publicly is always timely, as we highlighted on previous occasions. We feel this is essential to avoid inefficiencies and reduce the risk of negative speculation at local level if not correctly followed.

### **CONCLUSION:**

We are grateful to have received early engagement on proposals for the new Draft Corporate Plan. We hope that you will find our detailed responses set out under the key themes in the Plan, to be constructive, informative and thought-provoking as you finalise the Borough Council's key objectives for the next five years. We recognise the challenges faced by the council in maintaining financial stability while serving a growing population, addressing contemporary issues and managing the accelerated impacts of climate change. Balancing these demands requires careful planning, resourcefulness and a strong commitment to sustainability.

Horley Town Council is an ambitious organisation with strong aspirations for the future and a deep commitment to build on past successes and recent accomplishments. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to work in partnership with the Borough Council. This collaboration allows us to achieve our shared goals and make a positive impact on local communities. We look forward to continuing our efforts through a united front to support Horley residents, grounded in the core democratic principles of liberty, equality, and justice. By upholding these shared values, we aim to build a brighter, better future for all. We fully endorse the Borough Council's clear objectives outlined in the draft Plan and believe its comprehensive and proactive strategies will not only benefit local communities today but also have a positive impact on future generations.

We hope that our comments and observations will be taken on board. We look forward to hearing the outcomes and reading the published plan after approval by the RBBC Executive in the spring.

Yours faithfully



Joan Walsh  
Town Clerk

cc: Council Leader, Cllr Richard Biggs, Corporate Policy Team - RBBC  
County Cllr Jordan Beech, County Cllr Andy Lynch - SCC  
Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

Open consultation

# Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

Published 24 October 2024

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**Applies to England**

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# Scope of this consultation

## Topic of this consultation

This short consultation seeks views on the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England.

## Scope of this consultation

Government is consulting on introducing powers for local authority members to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and vote by proxy in certain circumstances.

If any changes to legislation are made as a result of this consultation, they would only apply to local authorities in England, meaning:

- a county council
- a unitary authority
- a London borough council
- a district council
- the Common Council of the City of London
- the Greater London Authority
- the Council of the Isles of Scilly
- a parish council
- a joint board continued in being by virtue of section 263(1) of the 1972 Act
- a parish meeting constituted under section 13 of the Local Government Act 1972
- Transport for London, Para.5 of Schedule 10 of the GLA 1999 allows the GLA to regulate its own procedures and committees
- an authority established under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1985
- a joint authority established under Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1985
- a joint committee constituted to be a local planning authority under section 29 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- a combined authority established under section 103 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

- a combined county authority established under section 9 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023
- a fire and rescue authority constituted by a scheme under section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 or a scheme to which section 4 of that Act applies, or created by an order under section 4A of that Act
- a National Park authority as referenced at section 184 of the LGA 1972 and/or established under section 63 of the Environment Act 1995
- the Broads Authority established by section 1 of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988
- a conservation board established under section 86 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- a police and crime panel established under section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

## **Geographical scope**

The questions in this consultation apply to all relevant local authorities in England as defined above.

They do **not** apply to authorities in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

## **Impact assessment**

If any policy changes are made following this consultation they will be subject to appropriate assessment. No impact assessment has been conducted at this time.

## **Basic information**

This is an open consultation. We particularly seek the views of individual members of the public; prospective and current local authority members/representatives; all relevant local authorities defined above; and those bodies that represent the interests of local members/representatives at all levels.

## Body/bodies responsible for the consultation

The Local Government Capability and Improvement Division in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is responsible for conducting this consultation.

## Duration

This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 24 October 2024.

## Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation please contact:  
[remoteattendanceconsultation@communities.gov.uk](mailto:remoteattendanceconsultation@communities.gov.uk)

## How to respond

You can only respond to this consultation through our online consultation platform, Citizen Space. [Respond via Citizen Space](https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting) (<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting>).

## Ministerial foreword

The government has set out its intention to reset the relationship between central and local government as partners in delivering better outcomes for the communities we collectively represent. Key to this is supporting the sector to modernise democratic engagement, raise standards and widen the range of candidates standing for council by removing unnecessary barriers.

The attendance of elected members at local authority meetings is a core part of the democratic process at the local level and is integral to members carrying out their functions effectively. In addition to the value of members coming

together to debate and discuss the issues which impact the lives of the people they represent; it is also important that local residents have the opportunity to engage directly with the people they have elected to take key decisions on their behalf.

At the same time, the government recognises that there are circumstances in which it may not always be possible for members to attend council meetings in person. It is with this in mind that the government intends to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings.

The intent is that this increased flexibility will strike the balance between the principle that significant in-person engagement remains vitally important, and a recognition that there will sometimes be a need to accommodate members' requirements to attend council meetings remotely. We hope it will encourage a wider diversity of people willing and able to stand and actively participate in local democracy by creating improved conditions where meetings are accessible and inclusive.

In addition, we are seeking views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an elected member, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely, for example during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

In line with the government's commitment to working with local government to establish partnerships built on mutual respect, genuine collaboration, and meaningful engagement, this short consultation seeks your views on the detail and practical implications of this proposition to inform our ongoing policy development.

## **Who we would like to hear from**

Responses are invited from local authority elected members, all types and tiers of authorities, and local authority sector representative organisations. We are also particularly keen to hear from those members of the public who have point of view based on their interest in accessing local democracy in their area or standing as a candidate for local government at any tier to represent their local community at some future point.

### **Question 1**

Please tick all that apply - are you responding to this consultation as:

a) an elected member – if so please indicate which local authority type(s) you serve on

- Town or Parish Council
- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

b) a council body – if so please indicate which local authority type

- Town or Parish Council
- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

c) a member of the public

d) a local government sector body – please state

## **The proposal for remote attendance**

The government intends to legislate to give local authorities the flexibility to allow elected members to attend formal council meetings remotely. We believe that this modernising measure of providing broad flexibility to enable remote attendance will have the dual positive impacts of diversifying the representation of those willing and able to stand for elected office and enhance the resilience of local authorities in the face of local or national emergencies.

The intent is that this legislative change would give local authorities the flexibility to allow members to attend remotely.

**Question 2**

Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Yes/No

If you answered No to the above question please go directly to question 4.

**Question 3**

If you answered Yes to the above question, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance.
- b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies.
- c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.
- d) [Free text box]

**Question 4**

If you are an elected member can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?

- yes
- no
- I am not an elected member

**Question 4a**

If you answered No please use the free text below

[Free text box]

### **Question 4b**

If you answered Yes, could you indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely

- very occasionally
- from time to time
- regularly but not always
- all the time

### **Question 5**

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- less than 10%
- more than 10% but less than 50%
- more than 50% but less than 90%
- most of them 90% to 100%

### **Question 6**

The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a twelve-month calendar period.
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances.
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence.
- d) [Free text box]

### **Question 7**

Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Please tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.

b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.

c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.

d) Other [Free text box]

### Question 8

Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

#### Should be considered because

#### Should not be considered because

---

It is a positive modernising measure.

Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.

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It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils.

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Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.

It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

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**Should be considered because**

**Should not be considered because**

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Free text box – please state any other reasons

### **Question 9**

In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics, for example those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

Please tick an option below:

- it would benefit members
- it would disadvantage members
- neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

[Free text box]

## **Proxy voting**

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence.

It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

### **Question 10**

In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- yes
- no
- unsure

### **Question 11**

If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?

Please select all that apply:

- physical or medical conditions
- caring responsibilities
- parental leave or other responsibilities
- other [Free text box]

### **Question 12**

Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?

[Free text box]

### **Question 13**

If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?

[Free text box]

## **About this consultation**

This consultation has been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure>).

## **Annex A: Personal data**

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under the Data Protection Act 2018. Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name address and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

## **1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [dataprotection@communities.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@communities.gov.uk)

## **2. Why we are collecting your personal data**

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

## **3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data**

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, MHCLG may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

## **4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data**

We use a third-party platform, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance, your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based servers.

## **5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.**

Your personal data will be held for 2 years from the closure of the consultation.

## **6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure**

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a) to see what data we have about you
- b) to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c) to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d) to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> (<https://ico.org.uk/>), or telephone 0303 123 1113.

## **7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas**

## **8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making**

## **9. Your personal data will be stored on a secure government IT system**

Your data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible after the consultation has closed, and it will be stored there for the standard 2 years of retention before it is deleted.