

# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

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## AGENDA

### ORDINARY MEETING OF HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Date / Time: Tuesday 17 March 2026 at 7.30pm

Venue: Horley Baptist Church (Ramsey Room), 289 Court Lodge Road, Horley, RH6 8RG

#### 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 17 March 2026, 7.30pm**, at the Horley Baptist Church (Ramsey Room), 289 Court Lodge Road, Horley, Surrey RH6 8RG. The Agenda for the meeting is attached to this Summons.

Yours sincerely

Joan Walsh  
Chief Executive Officer

#### Members' Apologies:

If required, a Member must submit their apologies for this meeting by sending an email to: [info@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk) 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***

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 Chair. If it appears that the number of speakers is likely to unreasonably delay the disposal of business items on the agenda, the Chair may direct that a question or comment is submitted in writing which shall be answered in due course.

# **HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

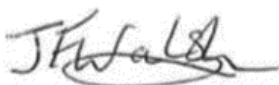
**An Ordinary Meeting of Horley Town Council will be held at the Horley Baptist Church (Ramsey Room), 289 Court Lodge Road, Horley RH6 8RG on Tuesday 17 March 2026, at 7.30pm**  
**All correspondence and papers referred to in the public part of the agenda are available to view on the website**

## **AGENDA**

**The meeting will be preceded at 6.00pm with a private briefing by YMCA East Surrey on its valuable work and services in the community.**

- 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 27 January 2026.
- 5 Full Council Updates**
- 6 Committee Reports**  
To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees:  
**Planning and Development Committee** held on [10 February 2026](#) and 10 March 2026
- 7 Council Chair's Report**  
To receive a report of events attended by the Chair or representative since the Full Council meeting held on 27 January 2026.
- 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.
  - ii) To receive an update from Cllr Mike George as a Member of the NALC National Assembly.
  - iii) To receive any other updates from the National and County Associations.
- 9 Borough, County Council and Other Updates**
  - i) To note that the next SCC/RBBC/HTC Joint Council meeting is due to be held on 23 March 2026.
  - ii) To note that the next RBBC/HTC Liaison Meeting is due to be held on 8 June 2026.
- 10 Internal Control and Risk Assessment Review 2025/26 (attached)**  
To approve the annual review of the effectiveness of the Town Council's system of internal control, Risk Assessment and Management paper.
- 11 Council Meetings for the 2026/27 Municipal Year (attached)**
  - i) To consider the meetings calendar for final approval at the Annual Council meeting.
  - ii) To consider proposals for Sub-Committees, Outside Bodies and Working Groups (attached) for final approval at the Annual Council meeting.
- 12 Town Councillor Vacancy: Horley West Ward:**  
To note confirmation that the vacancy may be filled through co-option and to agree the way forward.
- 13 Local Government Elections: East Surrey Unitary Council, 7 May 2026**  
To note information received.
- 14 Horley Remembrance Proposal**  
To approve the Horley WI proposal to decorate Memorial Garden railings with knitted poppies, supported by the Horley branch of the Royal British Legion.

- 15 Council Policies** – To consider the following policies for adoption:
- i) Complaints Policy and Procedures incorporating Habitual Correspondence and Vexatious Complaints.
  - ii) Football Booking Policy, Court Lodge Fields.
  - iii) Co-Option Policy
  - iv) Prevention of Sexual Harassment and General Harassment Policy and Procedures (readoption).
- 16 Outside Bodies**  
To receive any updates from the Town Council representatives on the following Outside Bodies:
- i) Borough Standards Committee (meeting held on 3 March 2026).
  - ii) Royal British Legion
  - iii) To receive an update from any other Outside Bodies following recent meetings or events.
- 17 LGR and Devolution**
- i) **LGR and Devolution Working Group:** To receive an update from the Chair on the recent meeting.
  - ii) **Community Asset and Support Programme (CATSP):** To receive an update on submissions made by the Town Council on asset transfers for grounds maintenance of parks/green spaces and application to upgrade the Innes Pavilion, Court Lodge Fields, at Stage 2 of the process.
  - iii) **Public Surveys:** To receive the results of the recent surveys on community projects through the neighbourhood Community Infrastructure (CIL) funding and other potential grants to upgrade a much-valued community asset.
- 18 Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS) - Horley Edmonds Community Fund (HECF)**
- i) To note receipt of the quarterly HECF Statement for the period 1 October 2025 to 31 December 2025.
  - ii) To receive an update on any other matters
- 19 CIL SIP (2) 18: HTC Offices Expansion and Sustainability Project**  
To receive an update on the progress with the capital project.
- 20 Communications Received**
- 21 Diary Dates**
- 22 Items for Future Consideration:** To note urgent business for inclusion on future agenda.
- 23 Press Release:** To agree items for inclusion.
- 24 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.”
- 25 Confidential Minutes** **CONFIDENTIAL**  
To approve the confidential minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 27 January 2026.
- 26 Langshott Allotments** **CONFIDENTIAL**  
To note correspondence received from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and outline proposal (Subject to Contract).
- 27 Town Award Nomination** **CONFIDENTIAL**  
To consider an application received.
- 28 Staffing Matters** **CONFIDENTIAL**
- i) To receive a report of the Staff Committee meeting, held on 5 March 2026.
  - iii) Salary Review 2026/27 - To approve the recommendations of the Staff Committee.



**Signed: Chief Executive Officer**  
**12 March 2026**

**Date of Next Meeting – 5 May 2026 (Annual Meeting)**



# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Horley Town Council held on Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 7.30pm

<b>Present</b>	<b>Cllrs</b>	Hannah Avery	Lynnette Easterbrook (Chair)	Samantha Marshall
		Jante Baird	Emma Fagan (Vice Chair)	Sam Mearing
		Jordan Beech	Mike George	Martin Saunders
		Michael Blacker	Jerry Hudson	Tom Turner
		Lynne Burnham	Cecilia Hughes	Steve Wotton
		Victoria Chester	Robert Marr	

**\* Absent**

**In Attendance**

J Walsh (Chief Executive Officer) (CEO)  
S Adeniji (Assistant Chief Executive Officer and RFO)  
J Stay (Planning and Support Officer)

The meeting was preceded with a private briefing by the Reigate & Banstead Citizens Advice Bureau on its valuable work and services in the local community.

**C 6264 Apologies and Reasons for Absence**

**RESOLVED: that apologies received from Cllrs Fagan and Hughes, be accepted. Cllr Burnham joined the meeting during Agenda Item 9i) Borough, County Council and Other Updates.**

**C 6265 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

1. Cllr Marr declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in **Agenda Item 16 HTC Grants Scheme – Funding Application by St Bartholomew’s Church** as he is a member of St Bartholomew’s Church, Leigh.
2. Cllr Easterbrook declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in **Agenda Item 20ii) Communications Working Group** due to her involvement in the Horley Community Arts Festival.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6266 HTC Grants Scheme – Funding Applications**

A representative from St Bartholomew’s Church presented details of the grant request for maintenance of the New Churchyard. Although the church accounts were positive overall, most of the finances are held in restricted funds and the available funds were in deficit last year. The church is requesting a grant for grass, tree and hedge maintenance. The CEO informed Members that the recommended grant sum with inflationary increase is £7,000. Cllr George proposed and Cllr Saunders seconded that the grant be approved. Cllr Marr abstained.

**C 6266) RESOLVED: that Standing Orders be suspended to move Agenda Item 17 HTC Grants Scheme – Funding Application from St Bartholomew’s Church, Horley to the Public Forum part of the meeting, be approved.**

**C 6267 RESOLVED: that the grant application through the HTC Grant Scheme 2025/26 from St Bartholomew’s Church, Horley in the total sum of £7,000, be approved.**

**C 6268 Minutes**

**RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on [9 December 2025](#), be approved.**

**C 6269 Full Council Updates**

**C 6245 – Horley Town Council Precept for the Financial Year 2026/27**

The CEO reported that the precept claim has been made to Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and that the Budget Statement has been posted on website and included on the newsletter.

**C 6253 – Michael Crescent Centenary Park – Air Quality Monitoring Station Lease**

The CEO reported that the Heads of Terms for the air quality monitoring station Lease Agreement had been agreed and were with both Councils' solicitors to draft the documentation.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6270 Committee Reports**

**RESOLVED: that the approved Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on [16 December 2025](#) and the unapproved Minutes of [13 January 2026](#), be received.**

**C 6271 Council Chair's Report**

The Chair's Report, which was previously circulated to the Members for information, was received.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC) and National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**

**C 6272** Cllr George gave the following updates from SALC:

- There were two well attended Clerk/Councillor Forums held recently and included updates from SALC and NALC along with a presentation from the SCC Countryside Access team.
- A presentation on CiLCA (LG qualification) was received from Celia Price, SALC's trainer.
- **SALC's report entitled 'Strong Vibrant Communities' had been published with HTC as one of the six contributing councils in its editorial and funding and included case studies on the Café Pavilion, Horley Recreation Ground and sports pitches at Court Lodge Fields.** The report had been widely circulated to Surrey Borough and District Leaders/CEOs; all Surrey MPs; to Government Departments via NALC; to the press and on social media.
- Long serving SALC Office Manager/Trainer, Anna Beams is leaving in March when her successor will join as the Business Support Manager.
- SALC are nominating a clerk and councillor to attend one of the Royal Garden Parties.
- LGR: The Surrey Structural Change Order had been laid before parliament and should become law in March 2026.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6273** The CEO gave the following updates from NALC and SALC:

- **Highways Matters:** The SALC Clerk Forum discussed highways issues and the FixMyStreet platform that had mixed feedback which Surrey Highways were investigating.
- **LGR and Devolution:** The National and County LG Associations had recommended that town and parish councils ensure sufficient reserves are set aside for, inter alia, asset transfers, possible contested elections in May 2027 and staffing requirements which were all being followed by HTC as part of the Council's forward plan.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

## Borough, County Council and Other Updates

C 6274

### SCC/RBBC/HTC Joint Council Meeting

The CEO advised that the draft notes from 19 January 2026 Joint Council meeting had been circulated to Members, for information. She gave the following updates:

- HTC had participated in Stage 1 EOI of the RBBC Community Asset Transfer Scheme and made a request to submit a single Business Plan for all four sites for the Stage 2 submission which was accepted. Additionally, a grant application to upgrade the Innes Sports Pavilion would be made.
- Cllr Biggs reported that the first meetings of the Joint Committees for East and West Surrey had taken place and the Shadow Authority is expected to take over from the Joint Committee on 21 May 2026. He will provide an LGR update at the HTC Annual Town Public Forum in May.
- HTC is working with the local MP's office and SCC to address the persistent flooding at the A23 pedestrian crossing by Tesco Express, Brighton Road, Horley.
- Concerns were raised about a recent violent incident which highlighted the importance of visible policing and stronger community reassurance for public safety.
- HTC congratulated RBBC on winning the Green World Award for the solar powered 'Big Belly' litter bins, which was led by the Neighbourhood Services portfolio holder, Cllr Hannah Avery.
- The next meeting will take place on 23 March 2026.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

C 6275

### RBBC/HTC Liaison Meetings

The CEO advised that the next meeting will take place on 5 February 2026. The closing date for receipt of items is 28 January. Agenda items included legal agreements for asset transfers and double taxation; the latest information on the mayoral elections being postponed, CGR Final Recommendations update; transfer of the Westvale Neighbourhood Hall; and Tanyard Meadows redevelopment.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

C 6276

### Internal Audit Matters

The Assistant CEO/RFO presented Councillors' Audit Certificates for October, November and December 2025. He advised that the first internal audit for 2025/26 took place with no major issues to report and has been signed off. Thanks were given to Cllrs Marshall and Hughes.

**RESOLVED: that the Councillors' Audit Certificates for October, November and December 2025, be received.**

C 6277

### Financial Matters

The Assistant CEO/RFO presented the financial reports, including bank reconciliations and a summary of receipts and payments up to 31 December 2025. These were reconciled and signed off during the internal audit. It was reported there was a slight overspend with the insurance costs and the by-election. There was also an overspend on the Café in the Park, however future costs will be met by the tenant. HTC will remain responsible for, inter alia, maintaining the ventilation, air conditioning, fire curtains and building exterior under its legal obligations as landlord.

**RESOLVED: that the financial reports, including bank reconciliations and a summary of receipts and payments, up to 31 December 2025, be approved.**

### Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS) – Horley Edmonds Community Fund (HECF)

C 6278

The Assistant CEO/RFO reported that the Town Council has received a grant application from Horley Lions for £2,500 towards providing support to households and individuals who are

**C 6278)** struggling to keep warm this winter. CFS had concerns regarding due diligence, up to date safeguarding policy and Horley Lions's accounting system. Subject to Horley Lions's compliance with the requirements of CFS, the grant application was approved, proposed by Cllr Avery and seconded by Cllr Marshall.

***RESOLVED: that the grant application from Horley Lions for its 'Warm Over Winter' campaign, in the full amount requested of £2,500 subject to compliance by CFS, be approved, and the Community Foundation for Surrey be notified accordingly.***

**C 6279** The Assistant CEO/RFO reported that the Town Council has received a grant application from SparkFish – Secondary Transition for £1,500 towards working with children in East Surrey during the transition from primary to secondary school. It was noted that SparkFish were previously awarded a grant in May 2025 and an end of grant report had not been received. Because of this, it was decided that the grant application will be rejected and to invite a representative or current youth worker from Oakwood School to advise on the work and benefits that the previous grant has given. SparkFish can then reapply for funding through the Small Grant Scheme if required. This was proposed by Cllr George and seconded by Cllr Mearing.

***RESOLVED: that the grant application from SparkFish, in the sum of £1,500, be rejected, and the Community Foundation for Surrey be notified accordingly.***

**C 6280** The Assistant CEO/RFO reported that the Town Council has received a grant application from YMCA East Surrey for £1,500 towards funding for youth clubs and youth work in Surrey. It was agreed to approve the grant subject to it helping Horley residents only and to ask for YMCA East Surrey's plans for development of the outdoor area next to the premises. This was proposed by Cllr Wotton and seconded by Cllr Burnham.

***RESOLVED: that the grant application from YMCA East Surrey, in the sum of £1,500, be approved under the condition that it is for Horley residents only, and the Community Foundation for Surrey be notified accordingly.***

**C 6281 Meetings Calendar 2026/27**

The proposed meetings calendar for the Municipal Year 2026/27 was presented for consideration, in a similar format to previous years. Members noted that as elections for the full council would be held on 6 May, the date of the annual meeting should be changed accordingly. Any further comments from Members could be sent to the office and a final decision would be made by Council at the March Council meeting. It was requested to avoid the school holiday dates.

***RESOLVED: that the revised Meetings Calendar 2026/27 be presented for final approval at the next Full Council Meeting on 17 March 2026.***

**C 6282 Annual Town Public Forum (formerly 'Town Meeting')**

The CEO gave a detailed summary of the arrangements for the forum this year, to be held on Friday 15 May 2026 from 6.30pm. The key change will be the venue which will be the ground floor concourse area of Horley Baptist Church, due to the unexpected delays of the Town Council Offices expansion in Albert Road. Invitations are being sent to Borough and County members as well as the local MP, Chris Coghlan and enquiries were being made for a suitable guest speaker. Once confirmed, a notice will be published, advertised in the RH6 magazine and the Annual Report will be presented at the main event. Cllr Marshall recommended Surrey & Sussex Healthcare Charity as a guest speaker option.

***RESOLVED: noted.***

- C 6283**      **HTC Neighbourhood CIL**  
***RESOLVED: that the latest quarterly CIL Financial Report from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council for the period 16/09/25-15/12/25, be received.***
- C 6284**      **White Ribbon Campaign**  
Following an informative introduction from Cllr Saunders, Members discussed signing up to the [White Ribbon Campaign](#), which is a charity engaging men and boys to prevent harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls. It is thought that the Horley area has an above average rate of violence against women and girls, however the current data would require more analysis. The WR Campaign offers Accreditation and Supporter Organisation programmes. It was agreed to support the charity to raise awareness and promote the White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2026 and to liaise with local community police for more detailed analysis on the crime figures with a view to updating the Council at a future Council meeting. This was proposed by Cllr Saunders and seconded by Cllr Wotton.
- RESOLVED: that Horley Town Council supports the White Ribbon Campaign without subscription; that it will promote White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2026; and that HTC liaises with community police officers for crime statistics in Horley, for more information.***
- C 6285**      **Town Councillor Vacancy: Horley West Ward**  
***RESOLVED: that a Notice of Vacancy of Office of Town Councillor, in the Horley West ward, has been published with a deadline of 11 February 2026 to request a by-election, be noted.***
- C 6286**      **Outside Bodies - Royal British Legion**  
Cllr Marshall reported that meeting was being held on the same evening as the Full Council meeting and the minutes will be circulated in due course.
- RESOLVED: noted.***
- Working Groups**
- C 6287**      **Communication Working Group**  
Cllr Easterbrook gave an update on the meeting held on 6 January 2026 and the notes would be circulated to all Members shortly.
- RESOLVED: noted.***
- C 6288**      Cllr Easterbrook reported that the arrangements for the Horley Community Arts Festival are progressing well with good participation from a diverse range of community groups, artists and performers. RBBC were assisting with the design of the new logo for the event and it would shortly be advertised in the RH6 magazine, on Susy Radio and in East Surrey Hospital's communications.
- RESOLVED: that progress for the Horley Arts Festival in April be noted and a contribution of £350 through the General Power of Competence (GPC) towards the event, including advertising in the RH6 magazine, be approved.***
- C 6289**      **Review of Council Website**  
***RESOLVED: that procurement for a Horley Town Council website provider, in accordance with Local Government and Assertion 10 legal and accessibility requirements, be noted.***
- C 6290**      **Communications Received**  
RBBC have launched a council survey to research how people feel about living in the Borough. All members were encouraged to complete the survey which has a deadline of 23 February.
- RESOLVED: noted.***

**C 6291**      **Diary Dates**  
Tuesday 3 February 2026, 6.00pm:      HTMG Meeting (remote)  
Thursday 5 February 2026, 6.00pm:      RBBC/HTC Liaison Meeting (remote)  
Tuesday 10 February 2026, 7.30pm:      Interim Planning Meeting  
Tuesday 10 March 2026, 7.30pm:      Full Planning Meeting

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6292**      **Items for Future Consideration**  
Council Policies, Risk Management procedures, Staffing Matters and Asset Transfer considerations.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6293**      **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."

**C 6294**      **CIL SIP (2) 18 - HTC Office Expansion and Sustainability Project**      **CONFIDENTIAL**  
Members discussed approval of the expenditure for professional and architectural support during the construction phase of the project for an amount not exceeding £35,000 plus VAT and received an update on project progress.

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**SCC Your Fund Surrey – [Small Community Projects Fund](#)**      **CONFIDENTIAL**

**C 6295**      Members considered the recommendations for contract award to extend the outdoor fitness equipment at Horley Recreation Ground, up to a total sum not exceeding £26,749.00 plus VAT with funding from a grant through the scheme, supported by Cllr Andy Lynch (Ref: YFSSCP2/1022), as summarised in the Committee Decision report (appended).

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6296**      Members considered the recommendations for contract award to supply and install neurodiverse equipment and a playground shelter at Court Lodge Playground, Court Lodge Playing Fields, up to a total sum not exceeding £11,189.06 plus VAT with funding from a grant through the scheme, supported by Cllr Andy Lynch (Ref: YFSSCP2/1082), as summarised in the Committee Decision report (appended).

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**C 6297**      **HTC Project - Innes Pavilion Roof Windows**      **CONFIDENTIAL**  
Members considered the recommendations for contract award to supply and install replacement roof windows at Innes Pavilion, Court Lodge Playing Fields, Thornton Close, Horley for a sum not exceeding £6,500 excluding VAT, as summarised in the Committee Decision report (appended).

**RESOLVED: noted.**

**Meeting closed at 9.30pm**

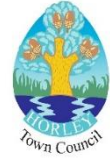
**Date of next meeting: 17 March 2026**

**Please Note: Until further notice, future meetings of Horley Town Council will be held at Horley Baptist Church (Ramsey Room, Ground Floor), 289 Court Lodge Road, Horley RH6 8RG until completion of the building works at the Town Council offices which are now underway. Further information is available on our [website](#).**

To: Cllrs Avery, Baird, Beech, Blacker, Burnham, Chester, Easterbrook, Fagan, George, Hudson, Hughes, Marr, Marshall, Mearing, Saunders, Turner, Wotton

## List of Mayoral Events - 23 January 2026 to 12 March 2026

Date	Event	Location
6 March 2026	World Day of Prayer Service	St Wilfred's Church



# HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

## Internal Control and Risk Management Policy 2025/26

### Statement on Internal Control, Risk Management and Accountability

Horley Town Council (the Council) is a local authority funded by public money and is committed to conducting its business in accordance with the law, proper standards, and best practices. We strive to ensure transparency, integrity and accountability in all our decisions and operations.

To ensure a cohesive approach to governance, this document is hereby merged with the Council's "Risk Assessment and Management" paper with the "Internal Control Policy." By consolidating these formerly separate records into this single Integrated Governance Framework, the Council provides a streamlined and comprehensive overview of how risks are identified, mitigated and audited.

In fulfilling our duties and responsibilities, we adhere to the principles of prudent financial management and highest standards of governance, including openness, fairness and efficiency. We are dedicated to responsible financial management, ethical decision-making and continuous improvement to best serve our community. Through robust policies, effective oversight, and compliance with relevant legislation, the Council aims to maintain public trust and deliver services that meet the needs and expectations of local residents.

### Background

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, *Regulation 4 (2)* requires "the Council to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control which includes the arrangements for the management of risk." The Council also ensures compliance with any subsequent amendments to these regulations.

An effective system of internal control is split into three parts:

- 1. Risk Assessment**
- 2. Control or procedures in place to mitigate the risks identified**
- 3. System for testing the adequacy of internal controls (Internal Audit)**

### Risk Assessment

The Council conducted a full risk assessment on 17 March 2026. In that risk assessment, it reviewed financial controls, governance and accountability, inter alia:

- Risk of consequential loss of income
- Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty
- Financial controls and records
- Compliance with HM Customs and Excise Regulations
- Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept
- Compliance with borrowing restrictions
- Business continuity, including contingency planning
- Detailed review of Council Policies (including regulatory compliance and statutory requirements)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Cybersecurity
- Protection of physical assets
- Protection of the environment and sustainability

- Safety of staff, councilors, contractors and visitors
- Security of buildings, equipment etc.
- Supplier and contractor risk management (to evaluate potential risks associated in working with external suppliers and contractors)

### Control Systems

The Council has manual reconciliations in place to detect error. Duties are segregated between staff for the operation of its banking systems, with the RFO creating payments and in turn, the Chief Executive Officer and two Councillors, authorising payments (three signatories in total). Members review summaries of receipts and payments, preventing or detecting budget overspends and unauthorised expenditure. A Member (who is neither the Chair of the Council nor a signatory) signs the bank reconciliations and the bank statements as evidence of the verification. Insurance cover is reviewed periodically **with a full Combined Annual Insurance Review completed annually through appointed Local Government approved brokers.**

### Internal Audit

An independent Auditor is in place to check that the internal controls are in place. The scope of internal audit, independence, competence, planning and reporting are shown overleaf.

### Audit Programme Content

The Local Councils Governance and Accountability Guidelines have been taken into account in establishing the range of audit work and level of testing. Audit work has been programmed under the following five areas:

1. **Corporate Governance** - This has included a review of the Council's system of administrative control for providing information and instruction to Councillors and staff in relation to their responsibilities and compliance, including legal and statutory requirements.
2. **Transparency Act Regulations** – The review has assessed data to show compliance with the relevant Transparency Act Regulations.
3. **Accounting Practices:** The Audit review has assessed the systems for recording and controlling day-to-day accounting transactions. It has included a review of controls covering the recording of income and expenditure, computerised accounting systems, petty cash and budgetary control practices. Attention has also been made to control procedures relating to periodic income and expenditure and the accounting process associated with reconciling the RIALTAS system to Local Government accounting requirements.
4. **Expenditure:** In the main, work has been conducted to review the Council's systems of incurring, validating and authorising payments. Other work included an assessment of system controls covering payroll, General Power of Competence expenditure and miscellaneous payments including expenses.
5. **Income:** The Council's systems for requesting, receiving and controlling income have been reviewed in relation to accuracy of postings, banking arrangements and debtor control.

**Annual Accounts:** Work on the 2025/26 annual accounts will include validation of the accuracy of the final accounting papers and preparation of supporting documentation required by the external auditor.

## LIST OF AUDIT PROGRAMMES

### Corporate Governance

- A1 - Control environment
- A2 - Legality

- A3 - Risk management and insurance
- A4 - Fraud and corruption
- A5 - Committee papers and Minutes
- A6 - Assets and investments

#### **Accounting Practices**

- B1 - Books of accounts
- B2 - Bank reconciliation
- B3 - Petty cash
- B4 - Budgetary control
- B5 - Reserves/cash balances

#### **Expenditure**

- C1 - Accounts for payment
- C2 - Payroll
- C3 - General Power of Competence
- C4 - Capital
- C5 - Miscellaneous income and expenses

#### **Income**

- D1 - Receipts and banking arrangements
- D2 - Precept and grants
- D3 - Main areas of expected income
- D4 - Miscellaneous income

#### **Annual Accounts**

- E1 -Year-end controls
- E2 -Year-end accounts

#### **Other**

- F1 - Salary Payments and PAYE in Real Time (RTI)
- F2 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

#### **Audit Follow-up and Reporting**

Following an internal audit, any recommendations for improvements will be reviewed by Full Council. A documented action plan will be developed to address any identified issues, ensuring continuous improvement of the Internal Control System. Progress against audit recommendations will be monitored and formally reviewed at subsequent Council meetings.

**Annual review of the effectiveness of internal control and the management of risk 2025/26**

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Yes or No	Areas for Development
<b>1. Scope of internal audit</b>	<p>Terms of reference for internal audit were approved by Full Council on 16.05.23 and will be presented for readoption at the Annual Meeting on 4-5 May 2026.</p> <p>Internal audit work takes into account both the Council's risk assessment and wider internal control arrangements</p> <p>Internal audit work covers the Council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>
<b>2. Independence</b>	<p>Internal audit has direct access to those charged with governance (see Financial Regulations)</p> <p>Reports are made to management in the name of the Internal Auditor</p> <p>Internal Auditor does not have any other role within the Council</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>
<b>3. Competence</b>	<p>There is no evidence of a failure to carry out internal audit work ethically, with integrity and objectivity</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>
<b>4. Relationships</b>	<p>All responsible officers (Chief Executive Officer/RFO and Finance Lead) are consulted on the internal audit plan.</p> <p>Respective responsibilities for officers and internal audit are defined in relation to internal control, risk management and fraud and corruption matters (job descriptions and engagement letter)</p> <p>The responsibilities of council members are understood; training of members is carried out as necessary</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No development necessary</p>

<b>5. Audit Planning and Reporting</b>	The annual Internal Audit Plan properly takes account of all the risks facing the Council and has been approved by the Council following the adoption of the Risk Assessment and Management Paper 2025/26.	Yes	No development necessary
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Horley Town Council has considered the effectiveness of the Internal Audit control including the arrangements for the management of risk. The review was conducted by Full Council.



**HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT 2025/26**

Area	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Control
Assets	Protection of physical assets	L	M	All buildings insured. Value increased annually by index linking and/or revaluation following a professional underwriting survey (most recently carried out by our insurers in March 2021).
	Security of buildings, equipment etc	M	H	Security, <u>fire/smoke and panic alarms</u> installed at the Council Buildings and serviced and tested regularly, in accordance with current regulations. Passwords and keys strictly restricted to nominated personnel. Additional automatic exit points (motion detected locks) installed on the interior of the two Council Office entry doors to enable safe access and to comply with health and safety regulations. Contents insured. <u>Temporary Arrangements are currently in place while the Council Office expansion project is underway with the security of the building under the responsibility of the appointed contractor during possession (up until 1 May 2026)</u> . Smartguard Security act as keyholder and attend to callouts to all Council Buildings. Six monthly checks of Fire Panel (with automatic alarm monitoring) carried out by contractor at Council Offices, Innes Pavilion and Café Pavilion along with routine testing. The Café has had a full risk assessment carried out following final completion. The Café has been valued and is insured.
	Climate Change & Environmental Risks	M	H	Adoption of a Horley Town Council Incident Emergency <u>and Resilience Plan</u>

<b>Finance</b>	<b>Banking</b>	L	M	Accounts are spread between our bankers, HSBC, and other approved Deposit Takers to mitigate financial risks.
	<b>Business Continuity</b>	L	M	Insurance cover is £450,000 (to cover loss of income and relocating office during maximum indemnity period of 24 months).
	<b>Loss of cash</b>	L	H	Liability limited to £2,000. No petty cash is kept <b>on Council premises</b> and most receipts are cashless transactions. Safe used for storage of all cash receipts, mayoral chain of office etc. Office keys strictly restricted to nominated personnel.
	<b>Financial controls and records</b>	L	M	Monthly reconciliation prepared by RFO, checked by Chief Executive Officer and reported to Council quarterly. Three signatures on internet banking have been retained for good practice. Two nominated Councillors conduct a review prior to Council meetings and Internal Auditor checks procedures and External Auditors review our accounts.
	<b>Compliance with HMRC Regulations</b>	L	M	VAT payments and claims calculated by RFO and checked by the Chief Executive Officer. Internal and external auditor provides double check. Appropriate systems in place to comply with new legislation on VAT rules and mandatory submissions of VAT Returns to HMRC electronically.
	<b>Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept</b>	L	M	Full Council receive detailed budget vs. actual reports. Precept derived directly from this, the Town Plan and committees' review of requirements.
	<b>Compliance with borrowing restrictions</b>	L	L	Advice sought from Surrey Association of Local Councils and internal auditor as appropriate.
	<b>Investment Strategy &amp; Policy</b>	L	M	Horley Town Council has an Investment Strategy & Policy, which is reviewed annually to ensure prudent financial management and compliance with relevant regulations.

<b>Liability</b>	<b>Risk to third party, property, or individuals</b>	M	M	Public Liability Insurance held amounting to £10m cover. Open spaces checked regularly. Playgrounds, equipment, and trees checked regularly. Incidents fully investigated if damage reported. A full tree survey of all the trees in the Councils' open spaces is conducted every three years, it was completed most recently in May 2023 and the next one is planned for May 2026. In the interim, all recommended tree works identified by our contractors have been completed and the Council's grounds contractors continue to monitor all our trees and any issues identified so that these are remedied promptly.
	<b>Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership (especially playgrounds)</b>	H	H	Daily and weekly reports of inspections of multi-purpose court, playgrounds and skateboard park and all other equipment as stated in the Asset Register <b>which is kept regularly updated</b> . Annual playground checks made to RoSPA criteria.
	<b>Compliance with HM Revenue and Customs Requirements</b>	L	M	Regular advice available from HMRC, and Sage etc. RFO attends regular training as appropriate with HMRC, Sage and other providers to keep up to date with requirements and good practice. Internal and external auditors carry out annual checks.
	<b>Safety of Staff and visitors</b>	L	M	Regular Health & Safety Risk Assessment checks of Council Offices particularly before public events. Fire Risk Assessments ( <b>FRAs</b> ) are undertaken by accredited Fire Protection Company at Council Offices and Innes Pavilion and modifications completed, as required. <b>A further FRA and Crime Prevention Survey (CPS) will be conducted on completion of the Council Office expansion project in May 2026 together with a panic alarm reactivated with feed to Surrey Police</b> . HTC Officers trained in accredited Fire Safety Training programme, covering new legislation. <del>A panic alarm installed with feed to Surrey Police</del> . HTC Officers each have a dedicated work mobile phone to support occasional homeworking and attending site visits.

				<p><del>Additional security measures to control access to the premises following recommendations received from the Surrey Police Crime Reduction Officer as a result of his site survey in March 2023 will be addressed by the Office Expansion and Sustainability Project expected to be completed in 2026</del></p> <p>Detailed Workplace Risk Assessments, Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments are kept under regular review, documented with all safety and security measures put in place in line with Government guidelines. <del>This will incorporate workstation assessments for every staff member when the reconfigured Council office is reopened in May 2026.</del> A Homeworking Policy has been adopted. A Visitor signing book is in place to effectively ensure safety and security of visitors, employees, and property especially in case of fire.</p>
<b>Legal Liability</b>	<b>Confirmation that activities are within legal powers</b>	L	H	The Chief Executive Officer clarifies legal position on any new proposal. Legal advice is sought where necessary.
	<b>Proper and timely reporting via the Minutes</b>	L	M	Full Council meets every six weeks and receives and reviews cycle of minutes. Minutes made available to press and public via website.
	<b>General Data Protection (GDPR)</b>	L	L	Councillors and staff will ensure full compliance with current legislation during Council business. A dedicated email inbox named 'Data Protection' is in place to receive enquiries received and this will be managed by HTC Officers. The Chief Executive Officer will oversee the process and sign all correspondence as the appointed Data Protection Officer (DPO). There is no requirement for individual Town Councillors to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
	<b>Proper document</b>	L	M	Leases and legal documents are locked in secure cabinets.

	<b>control</b>			Scanned electronic copies of all such documents are kept in a secure, confidential area on office computer server. Other data storage to comply with Data Protection Act and subsequent legislation (General Data Protection Regulations).
<b>Admin</b>	<b>Data integrity and resilience</b>	M	H	Broadband used for all internet traffic, real-time virus scans on all workstations and the dedicated server and use of up-to-date virus libraries. All data is stored in SharePoint. A copy of the data in SharePoint is backed-up to the <b>iCloud and supported by the Council's appointed IT provider.</b> <del>Council's server and, in turn, backed up to external disks as an extra security measure.</del> Security software has been set up on HTC Officers' laptops and other Council owned devices (eg iPads) with multi-factor authentication as extra verification of identity by the user. All Staff and Councillors have been provided with a Cyber Security Training Guide and ongoing support from the Council's IT provider. Passwords are securely stored in a '1 Password Manager'. Cyber Training carried out for all Councillors and Staff, most recently in March 2024. HTC is accredited by Cyber Essentials, which is reviewed annually. Cyber Essentials is an effective, government backed scheme that helps to protect our organisation, against a range of the most common cyber-attacks.
<b>Councillor Propriety</b>	<b>Registers of Interests</b>	L	H	Members' Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests completed by all members and reviewed regularly. These are available for public inspection on website or at the Town Council offices by prior appointment.

**Adopted by Horley Town Council: 17 March 2026**  
**Next Review Date: March 2027**

**Horley Town Council**  
**Calendar of Meetings 2026 - 2027**

Tue	05-May	2026	Annual Council
Tue	15-May	2026	Annual Town Public Forum
Tue	12-May	2026	Planning (Full)
Tue	02-Jun	2026	Environment Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	09-Jun	2026	Planning (Interim)
Tue	16-Jun	2026	Full Council (AGAR)
Tue	30-Jun	2026	Leisure
Tue	07-Jul	2026	Communications Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	14-Jul	2026	Planning (Full)
Tue	28-Jul	2026	Full Council
Tue	18-Aug	2026	Planning (Interim)
Tue	01-Sep	2026	Environment Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	08-Sep	2026	Full Council
Tue	22-Sep	2026	Planning (Full)
Tue	29-Sep	2026	Communications Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	13-Oct	2026	Leisure
Tue	20-Oct	2026	Planning (Interim)
Tue	27-Oct	2026	Full Council
Tue	17-Nov	2026	Planning (Full)
Tue	01-Dec	2026	Environment Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	08-Dec	2026	Full Council (Precept)
Tue	15-Dec	2026	Planning (Interim)
Tue	05-Jan	2027	Communications Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	12-Jan	2027	Planning (Full)
Tue	19-Jan	2027	Leisure
Tue	26-Jan	2027	Full Council
Tue	09-Feb	2027	Planning (Interim)
Tue	09-Mar	2027	Planning (Full)
Tue	16-Mar	2027	Full Council
Tue	23-Mar	2027	Environment Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	30-Mar	2027	Communications Working Group 6.30pm (Remote)
Tue	06-Apr	2027	Planning (Interim)
Tue	20-Apr	2027	Leisure
Tue	11-May	2027	Annual Council
Tue	14-May	2027	Annual Town Public Forum

**HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL 2026/27**  
**CHAIR & TOWN MAYOR: (       )**  
**VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL: (       )**  
**Committee Membership – 2026/27**

<b>Staff Committee</b>	<b>Leisure &amp; Amenities Committee</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Development Committee</b>
<b>Council Chair –</b>	<b>L&amp;A Chair –</b>	<b>P&amp;D Chair –</b>
<b>Council Vice-Chair –</b>	<b>L&amp;A Vice-Chair –</b>	<b>P&amp;D Vice-Chair –</b>
<b>Finance Lead Member –</b>	Hannah Avery	Michael Blacker
<b>Leisure &amp; Amenities Chair –</b>	Jante Baird	Victoria Chester
<b>Planning &amp; Development Chair –</b>	Jordan Beech	Lynnette Easterbrook
	Lynne Burnham	Emma Fagan
	Lynnette Easterbrook	Mike George
	Emma Fagan	Jerry Hudson
	Cec Hughes	Cec Hughes
	Robert Marr	Sam Mearing
	Samantha Marshall	Martin Saunders
	Tom Turner	Tom Turner
		Steve Wotton

<p><b>Environment Working Group</b> <i>Reporting to Full Council</i></p> <p>Hannah Avery Jordan Beech Jante Baird Michael Blacker Victoria Chester Lynnette Easterbrook Mike George Samantha Mearing Martin Saunders Steve Wotton Non-Councillor Mike Humphrey</p>	<p><b>Communication Working Group</b> <i>Reporting to Full Council</i></p> <p>Jante Baird Lynne Burnham Lynnette Easterbrook Mike George Samantha Marshall Martin Saunders</p>	<p><b>Town Plan Working Group</b> <i>Reporting to Full Council</i></p> <p>Hannah Avery Jante Baird Victoria Chester Lynnette Easterbrook Mike George Robert Marr</p>
<p><b>Resilience Working Group</b> <i>Reporting to Full Council</i></p> <p>Jante Baird Mike George Robert Marr Tom Turner</p>	<p><b>LGR and Devolution Working Group</b> <i>Reporting to Full Council</i></p> <p>Mike George Robert Marr Tom Turner</p>	<p><b>Office Expansion Working Group</b> <i>Reporting to Full Council</i></p> <p>Mike George Cec Hughes Robert Marr</p>



# Horley Town Council

## Complaints Policy and Procedures

### incorporating Habitual Correspondence and Vexatious Complaints

## Part One – Complaints Policy and Procedures

### 1. INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this policy, Horley Town Council is referred to as ‘the Council’. It is based on the framework suggested by the National Association of Local Councils and is intended to assist with any complaints that anyone may have about the Council’s administration and procedures.

### 2. AIM OF POLICY

The Council is committed to providing the best possible service, to make improvements where needed and learn for the future. We wish to hear about your experiences, so that we can continuously improve. We aim to:

- Make it easy for you to contact us about any issues
- Listen and work with you on further actions as required
- Solve problems at an early stage
- Prevent problems happening again
- Recognise good service

### 3. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy covers complaints against employees, agents or contractors acting on behalf of the Council and may be dealt with separately through our disciplinary policy, as appropriate. All Town Councillors are required to observe the adopted Reigate & Banstead Borough Council Member Code of Conduct. Any complaints against Members will be considered in the first instance by the Monitoring Officer at Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.

**Complaints against policy decisions made by the Council must be referred to the Council.**

The Council will not acknowledge or consider, under any circumstances, complaints that are submitted anonymously. We aim to operate in a way that is open, transparent, fair and to provide efficient and appropriate services to the community of Horley.

The Council welcomes feedback from the public at all times. Complaints should be directed through the Council offices, marked for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or nominated officer and not through individual Councillors.

### 4. WHAT CONSTITUTES A COMPLAINT?

**Definition of a Complaint:** *Generally, this will be about the Council’s procedures or administration. It may be an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council’s action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken (or the service provided by the Council) or a person or organisation acting on behalf of the Council.*

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, perhaps about:

- The service you have received
- Things you think we should have done, or have not done
- The actions of staff, agents or contractors working on behalf of the Council

## 5. WHAT IS A COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE?

Our **Complaints Procedure** is the way the Council manages the report of a complaint and aims to ensure the process is:

- Publicised and well documented
- Easy to access and use
- Helpful and receptive, not adversarial
- Objective and based on clear procedures
- Capable of putting things right where necessary
- Sensitive to the needs and circumstances of the complainant
- Adequately resourced and supported by Members and staff
- Kept under regular review for patterns of complaints and service improvements

We aim to handle most problems informally. Where this is not possible or practical, or you remain dissatisfied, we have a formal 3-Stage Complaints Procedure to follow.

## 6. HOW TO INITIATE A COMPLAINT

If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified verbally to a Member or to the CEO or nominated officer, every attempt shall be made to satisfy the complainant speedily and informally. If those attempts fail, the complainant will be asked to put the complaint formally in writing to the CEO or nominated officer and will be assured that the matter will be dealt with promptly on receipt.

If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the CEO or nominated officer, then they can put it **in writing addressed for the attention of the Council Chair, marked confidential and sent to: Horley Town Council, Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, Horley RH6 7HZ**. The CEO or nominated officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant of the date when the matter will be considered.

## 7. HANDLING AN INFORMAL COMPLAINT

An informal complaint should always be directed to the CEO or nominated officer in the first instance through either verbal or written communication. It may be that the matter you are concerned about could be dealt with in a less formal manner or given as constructive feedback. The complaint will be reported to the Council by the CEO or nominated officer along with measures taken to respond to the issues raised and any improvement measures to be made which will be documented by the Council.

The Council will always aim to listen and to do everything possible to deal with the problem. It is, however, not always appropriate to deal with all complaints from members of the public under the Complaints Procedure. For instance, the Council receives queries, problems and comments as part of its day-to-day business and they should not all be regarded as complaints. It is hoped that less formal measures or explanations provided by the Council will resolve most issues and any measures for improvement implemented promptly by the Council.

## 8. HANDLING A FORMAL COMPLAINT – 3-STAGE PROCESS

A formal complaint should be sent in writing to the CEO or nominated officer, in the first instance, who will document all the information along with any supporting evidence. Alternatively, the complaint may be submitted to the Chair of the Council.

### **Stage 1**

We will send you a written acknowledgement of your complaint within five working days. This will tell you who will be dealing with your complaint and the timeframe for investigation. We will ask you if you wish to make a verbal representation to the Council and to be accompanied. We will tell you what will happen next and a meeting will be arranged at the Council offices. You must inform us at the outset if you wish your complaint to be treated confidentially. If so, we will comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Act. The Council shall defer dealing with any complaint only if it is of the opinion that legal advice is necessary. The complaint shall then be dealt with as soon as is practicable after the date when the advice has been received.

### **Stage 2**

Following further investigation arising from your complaint and any meeting held, we will aim to respond within 10 working days, however this may need to be extended to a reasonable timeframe, and we will keep you updated during this time. We will inform you of the outcome and any steps taken to resolve the matter in writing, usually by email, or by post.

### **Stage 3**

If you are dissatisfied with our written response to your complaint, you can request that your complaint is escalated to Stage 3. This will be an independent investigation by someone, nominated by the CEO or by the Council Chair, as appropriate. At Stage 3, we aim to complete the investigation process within 20 working days, unless an extension is required for more complex issues. You will be notified in writing of the Council's decision on the matter and the nature of any action to be taken will be clearly set out in the response.

## **9. APPEAL PROCESS**

You have a right to appeal, using the same communication channels and contact details. A Panel of Council Leaders shall use delegated powers to adjudicate the matter on behalf of the Council and will receive a full summary of the complaint from the CEO or nominated officer and any steps taken to resolve the matter. The decision of the Panel shall be final.

## **10. OTHER FORMS OF CORRESPONDENCE**

This policy is not restricted to complaints, it covers the full range of any contact including correspondence, such as, general requests for information and advice, raising concerns on local issues or services and formal Freedom of Information Requests (FOIA).

This policy further identifies:

- Actions and behaviours from the correspondent which may be considered to be abusive, vexatious or unreasonably persistent.
- Action we can take to stop or curtail this behaviour.
- Considerations before further action is taken.
- Who can decide to implement such action.
- How to implement the action.
- What the correspondent can do to challenge the decision of the Council.

## **11. COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

We also welcome your positive and constructive comments to help us improve our service. Do please tell us what you think we do well; make suggestions for improvements; or any other comments you would like to make. To do this, you can write to us at the Council Offices; email us at: [info@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk) or use the contact features on our website.

# Part Two – Habitual Correspondence and Vexatious Complaints

## 1. HABITUAL CORRESPONDENCE AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

The Council is committed to responding to all forms of communication received, including handling any complaints from residents in an open and transparent way that is fair and equal to everyone. Overall, it is a straightforward process, but there can be occasions where a small number of people who, because of the frequency, nature or tone of their contact with the Council, may adversely affect our capacity to provide a proper service to other residents. We will refer to these parties as ‘unreasonably persistent’ or ‘vexatious’ and this policy will apply.

For clarification, unreasonable or unreasonably persistent parties who correspond or make complaints that:

- clearly do not have any serious purpose or value
- are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- have the effect of harassing the Council or can be seen as obsessive or unreasonable.

This policy identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group, or a group of complainants, may be considered ‘habitual or vexatious’ and ways of responding to these situations.

## 2. DEFINITIONS OF ‘HABITUAL CORRESPONDENCE’ AND ‘VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS’

‘Habitual’ means ‘done repeatedly or as a habit’. ‘Vexatious’ means troublesome and is recognised in law as ‘denoting an action or the bringer of an action without sufficient grounds for winning but purely to cause annoyance’ and in the context of the Council, means acting to cause annoyance to the Council. Complainants (and/or anyone acting on their behalf) may be deemed to be habitual or vexatious where previous or current contact with them shows that they meet one of the following criteria:

- Persistently pursuing a complaint where the Council’s Complaints Policy and Procedures have been fully and properly implemented and exhausted.
- Persistently changing the substance of a complaint; or continually raising new issues; or seeking to prolong contact by continually raising further concerns or questions upon receipt of a response whilst the complaint is being addressed. (Care must be taken, however, not to disregard new issues which are significantly different from the original complaint as they need to be addressed as a separate complaint).
- Repeatedly unwilling to accept documentary evidence given as being factual or deny receipt of an adequate response in spite of correspondence specifically answering their questions; or do not accept that facts can sometimes be difficult to verify when a long period of time has elapsed.
- Repeatedly not clearly identifying the precise issues which they wish to have investigated, despite reasonable efforts by the Council to help them specify their concerns; and/or where the concerns identified are not within the remit of the Council to investigate.
- Regularly focusing on a trivial matter to an extent which is out of proportion to its significance and continuing to focus on this point. It is recognised that determining what is a trivial matter can be subjective and careful judgement will be used in applying this criteria.
- Having, in the course of addressing a registered complaint, had an excessive number of contacts with the Council – placing unreasonable demands on staff or members. For the purposes of determining an excessive number, contact may be in person, by telephone, letter or email. Discretion will be used in determining the precise number of excessive contacts applicable under this section, using judgement based on the specific circumstances of each individual case.
- Having harassed; or been personally abusive; or verbally aggressive on one or more occasion towards staff or Members who are dealing with the complaint. These will be documented.

- Having knowingly recorded meetings or face to face/telephone conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of other parties involved.
- Making unreasonable demands on the Council and failing to accept that these may be unreasonable, for example, insisting on responses to complaints or enquiries being provided more urgently than is reasonable or within the Council's Policy & Complaints Procedures; or normal recognised practice.

### **3. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH HABITUAL CORRESPONDENCE OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS**

If a complainant has threatened or used physical violence towards staff or Members at any time, this in itself will cause personal contact with the complainant, and/or their representatives to be discontinued and the complaint will, thereafter, only be continued through written communication. All such instances will be documented. Where complainants have been identified as habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out above, the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council will as appropriate take one or more of the following courses of action:

- The complainant will be notified in writing why their complaint has been classified as vexatious.
- The complainant will be advised that the Council has responded fully to the points raised and has tried to resolve the complaint but that there is nothing more to add and that continuing contact on the matter will serve no useful purpose.
- The complainant will be advised that the correspondence is at an end and advised they are being treated as a persistent or vexatious complainant and, as such, the Council does not intend to engage in any further correspondence.
- The Council will decline further contact with the complainant, either in person, by telephone, letter, email or by any other means.
- The complainant may be informed that the Council may seek legal advice on unreasonable or vexatious complaints.
- The Council will suspend all contact with the complainant in connection with the issues relating to the complaint being considered habitual and/or vexatious, while seeking advice or guidance from a solicitor or other relevant agency, such as the Local Government Ombudsman or External Auditor as deemed appropriate.
- The complainant will be notified of the contact details of the Local Government Ombudsman and invited to contact that office if they wish to take the matter further.

### **4. WITHDRAWING HABITUAL OR VEXATIOUS STATUS**

Once a complainant has been determined to be habitual and/or vexatious, their status will be kept under review. There will be an opportunity, however, if they subsequently demonstrate a more reasonable approach or if they submit a further complaint for which the normal complaints procedure would appear appropriate, to have their status reviewed and normal channels of communication may be resumed.

Habitual correspondence or vexatious complaints can be difficult to handle in that they are time consuming and may be deemed as a wasteful demand on Council resources.

There may be occasions when despite having tried to respond to complaints or correspondence, there is nothing further which can be reasonably done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem. This includes the repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of any matter where either lengthy explanations of the Council's actions or stance have already been provided; or the basis of the request does not fall within the jurisdiction and responsibility of the Council to respond.

## 5. ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOURS OF UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

Correspondents, complainants or anyone acting on their behalf may be deemed to be vexatious or unreasonably persistent if one or more of the following applies:

- Refusing to outline the basis leading to their dissatisfaction on the handling of the matter or specify the grounds of a complaint.
- Making what appear to be groundless complaints about the persons dealing with the contact/complaint.
- Taking an excessive ‘scattergun’ approach – complaining officially to the Council as well as raising the same complaint with other bodies such as the principal authorities/Councillors/local MP/Police/Local Government Ombudsman.
- Changing the basis of the query/complaint as the investigation moves forward and/or denying earlier statements.
- Raising trivial information and expecting this to be taken into account or raising lots of detailed but unimportant questions and insisting they are answered.
- Making excessive demands on the Council’s time and resources with lengthy phone calls, emails to Councillors or the Proper Officer, or detailed frequent letters and expecting immediate replies.
- Making repeat contacts/complaints after the matter has been fully investigated and completed.
- Refusing to accept the final decision on a matter.
- Refusing to accept a matter is outside the remit of the Complaints Procedure.
- Persistently contacting the Council through different routes about the same issue.
- Refusing to accept that matters aren’t within the Council’s power to investigate if the matter is the responsibility of another organisation.
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a Complaint Procedure.
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are outside the Council’s jurisdiction.
- Insisting that a matter is handled in a manner that conflicts with the Council’s adopted policies, Complaints Procedure or recognised good practice.
- Refusing to co-operate with the Council’s investigation process on handling complaints.
- Making unjustified complaints about Members and/or staff who are trying to deal with the issues.
- Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Refusing to accept the decision; repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence.

The above list is not exhaustive, merely explanatory of examples of unreasonable requests. Where a request is considered to be vexatious or persistent, the Council may take the decision not to provide the information requested, as appropriate, informing the complainant that any further correspondence on the matter will not be acknowledged or replied to.

## 6. AGGRESSIVE OR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Aggressive or abusive behaviour is not restricted to physical harm but also includes behaviour or language (verbal or written) that may cause any Councillor, Council employees or anyone working on their behalf to feel threatened or at risk of abuse. This may include (but is not limited to):

**Threats, violence, physical advances, verbal abuse, written or online abuse on social media, derogatory comments, rudeness, inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations.**

## 7. HOW WE WILL DECIDE TO IMPLEMENT THIS POLICY IN REGARD TO HABITUAL CORRESPONDENCE OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

This policy will be used as a last resort once all measures have been taken to resolve issues, including the Council’s complaint procedures. We will make sure we have communicated appropriately with the party or parties concerned and make sure no new information that will affect the decision has been put forward. The party or parties will receive one written warning confirming that if their

actions/behaviour continues, it will result in the Council treating them as ‘unreasonably persistent or vexatious’ and future contact may be restricted or withdrawn.

Any ‘aggressive complaints’ where a complainant demonstrates lack of civility and respect to being unreasonably persistent, offensive, abusive or threatening, **will not be tolerated by the Council.**

Complaints will be seen to be vexatious in any situation where violence or abusive language has been used or threatened towards Councillors, staff or others acting on behalf of the Council, at any time. This will mean that contact with the complainant will cease immediately and the complainant will only be permitted to contact the Council in writing. All such incidents will be documented on Council records and reported to the Police. A decision to restrict contact may be taken according to the level and nature of the party’s contacts with us, the following actions may also be taken:

- Requesting contact in a specific form (eg by letter only).
- Requesting contact be made with a named officer only.
- Setting the number of telephone calls that will be accepted (eg one call a week).
- Refusing to deal with future correspondence on the same matter if a decision has already been reached.

The party will receive a copy of this policy with a covering letter explaining that the policy has been applied and how it will affect their contact with us. The letter will outline the length of time the restrictions will be in place and how they can ask for the restricted status to be reviewed at the end of this period.

## **8. ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL**

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in consultation with the Council Chair, will investigate any complaints/complainant’s behaviour that are considered to come under the above definitions in paragraph 4 above. Where cases relate to the Council Chair or the CEO, the matter will be delegated to the Council Vice-Chair and Assistant CEO to investigate, or vice-versa.

## **9. RIGHT TO APPEAL - A DECISION TO RESTRICT CONTACT**

A correspondent or complainant can appeal the decision to place them on the ‘unreasonably persistent or vexatious contact list’ within 14 days of being notified of the Council’s decision. This should be done in writing to the Council, marked for the attention of the CEO (or Assistant CEO), with reasons why they want to appeal.

## **10. REVIEW AND APPEAL PROCESS**

The Appeal Process will be handled by either the CEO and Council Chair (or by the nominated officer), where their involvement has been from the outset of the case. Their decision on the matter shall be final and communicated to the correspondent or complainant within 14 days with confirmation that the matter is closed.

## **11. RECORDING AND REVIEWING RESTRICTIONS**

If a decision is made to apply this policy, the information will be shared with the Council (personal details will not normally be included). Any new matters raised under this policy will be treated on their merits. A decision to restrict contact may be reconsidered if the party shows a more acceptable and consistent approach in their contact with the Council.

### **Resources**

[Local Government Ombudsman](#)

[National Association of Local Councils](#)

*This policy was approved for adoption at the Full Council meeting held on 17 March 2026.*

*Review Date: 2029*



# Horley Town Council

## Football Booking Policy

### 1. Introduction

For the purpose of this policy, Horley Town Council is referred to as 'the Council'. The policy is to provide guidance to those who wish to book a football pitch at Court Lodge Fields, Thornton Close, Horley RH6 8RJ whether for a League match or a training session.

### 2. Contracted Teams

For Adult and Junior teams who wish to use Court Lodge Fields as their 'home ground', they must enter into a written agreement with the Council. This contract can either be one for bookings that allow the use of the Innes Pavilion Changing Rooms, or one without use of the facilities. There are differing charges for these types of bookings as shown in our scales of fees which can be found on the [football page](#) of our website. There are a number of terms and conditions for bookings, set out below:

#### 2.1 For all Adult Teams:

- The official Representative must sign the contract and prior to the start of the football season, each Football Club must submit the full names and contact details of the official Team Representative and the official Substitute.
- They must pay for a minimum of 10 matches per season which should be paid in 5 monthly instalments at the start of the season.
- A deposit of £100 per team must be lodged with the Council.
- The Team must send evidence of valid public liability insurance for £5,000,000, or a copy of their certificate of insurance.
- The Team must confirm that all their coaches know the code to access the key boxes which are fixed to either side of the Innes Pavilion exterior walls. The keys inside open the height barrier and drop-down bollard which give emergency vehicle access to the playing fields.

#### 2.2 For all Junior teams:

- The official Representative must sign the contract and prior to the start of the football season, each Football Club must submit the full names and contact details of the official Team Representative, and the official Substitute.
- Invoices from the Council will be emailed to the team representative for immediate payment every month. Charges are displayed on our website [www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/football](http://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/football)
- Any outstanding payments will incur an extra 10% charge and pitch booking requests will be declined to any team(s) with overdue accounts. Debt recovery agents will be appointed to resolve any overdue payments.
- A deposit of £100 per team must be lodged with The Council.
- The Team must send evidence of in date public liability insurance for £5,000,000, or a copy of the certificate of insurance.

- The Team must confirm that their coaches know the number to the key boxes which are fixed to either side of the Innes Pavilion exterior walls. The keys inside open the height barrier and drop-down bollard which give emergency vehicle access to the playing fields.

### **3. Team Representatives and Substitutes**

#### **3.1 Team Representatives and Substitutes must agree:**

- To liaise with Council staff on all football matters.
- To inform home and away team members and officials of fixtures and cancellations.
- To provide and install nets to the goal posts, as well as velcro strips or plastic clips to attach the nets. The use of sticky tape is strictly prohibited and a charge per match may be levied on offending teams.
- To ensure any changing rooms used by the home team and away team are left clean and tidy.
- To maintain full compliance with all the conditions listed in the contract.

#### **3.2 The Team Representative will be responsible for:**

- The supervision and control of users and visitors at the venue throughout the period of hire.
- Informing the Council of any injury sustained by any person or damage to Council property during the period of hire. The Team Representative must inform the Chief Executive Officer in writing, detailing the location, time and date of the damage/injury, the nature of it and the likely cause, by emailing: [info@horlesurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@horlesurrey-tc.gov.uk) as soon as possible.
- Ensuring that all users conduct themselves in a proper and correct manner with due consideration for others. Any form of abusive and/or threatening behaviour towards Council staff, contractors, attendants or members of the public on the site will not be tolerated for any reason and may lead to the Council cancelling all future bookings requested by Team Representative/Club, as the Council directs. Any such incidents will be investigated on a case-by-case basis.
- Ensuring no valuables are left unattended during the period of hire.
- Ensuring that all users respect the privacy of the tenant and members of the independent Martial Arts Club next door to the Innes Pavilion changing rooms and **do not** enter the premises.
- Ensuring that all users respect the privacy of residents living adjacent to the facility and respect the enjoyment of those using the children's play area.
- Ensuring that all users are made familiar with and comply with all the requirements specified in this Contract.

### **4. Contracted Teams Match Pitch Booking Procedures:**

- All pitch booking requests must be made by the Team Representative no later than 1.00 pm on the Wednesday preceding a Saturday/Sunday fixture; or by 1.00 pm on the day before a midweek fixture, by emailing: [bookings@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:bookings@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk)
- Pitches will be allocated on a rotational basis at the discretion of the Council.
- Pitch allocations will be available to view on the website at the following location [www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/football](http://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/football).
- It will be the full responsibility of all contracted teams to notify their opposing teams of weekly pitch allocations.

## **5. Contracted Teams Training Pitch Booking Procedures**

- In order to ensure effective and fair rotation of pitches, all contracted teams wishing to use Court Lodge Fields to train with their players must make a booking in advance to: [bookings@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:bookings@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk)
- These requests must be made by no later than one week in advance of the intended training date, or they may not be processed.
- Pitch bookings for training are free of charge at the discretion of the Council and may be declined in the interests of protecting the pitches at any given time and ensuring they are never overly used.
- Any football club known to use the pitches for training without prior consent from the Council may have the ability to book pitches for future fixture bookings, including those required for league matches, withdrawn.

## **6. Casual Booking Procedures for non-contracted Teams**

- Football Clubs must submit the full names and contact details of the official Team Representative on the Casual Booking application form along with the time and date they are requesting.
- All pitch fees must be paid in full before the match, an invoice for the amount will be issued.
- Charges are displayed on our website [www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/football](http://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/football)
- No refund will be given on cancellations made by the applicant less than 48 hours before the fixture.
- A 50% refund may be given on cancellations made by the applicant more than 48 hours before the fixture.

## **7. Match Cancellations and/or Postponements**

- The Council's decision to cancel any fixtures due to inclement weather or poor ground conditions shall be confirmed by a Council Officer by 1.00 pm on the Friday preceding a Saturday/Sunday fixture; or by 1.00 pm on the day before a midweek fixture.
- This will be communicated to all teams by email and updates will be provided on our website.
- The decision of the Council will be final and should then be communicated to the away team by the Team Representative.
- Cancellation of a match by a team official must be made by no later than 1.00 pm on the Friday preceding a weekend game, or within 24 hours prior to a weekday game, otherwise a charge will be made.
- The Referee may, at their discretion, cancel a match on the day in the interests of safety. However, the Council must be given written notification of any such cancellation within 24 hours of the fixture, or the pitch charge will automatically be payable.

## **8. Use of the Changing Rooms**

- Junior Teams will not be offered the use of the changing rooms due to safeguarding rules.
- The toilets will usually be opened for use by the Junior Teams and spectators.
- The doors of all changing rooms are fitted with lock-hasps and, in order to safeguard the property of the Council and teams (including other personal effects), Team Representatives are advised to provide padlocks and to remove these prior to departure.
- The washing of football boots, footballs, clothing or any other equipment in the sinks or showers is not permitted.
- The changing rooms, toilets, showers, hand basins, patios and passageways must be left in a clean and tidy condition after all matches. A charge, based on the hourly rate of restoring the premises to a reasonable state of cleanliness, shall be levied against the home team responsible for breaching this condition.

- Litter bins, adjacent to football pitches have been supplied for disposal of plastic bottles and other rubbish. A charge will be levied against the home team if litter is not removed from the grounds and building. All teams are encouraged to promote the use of reusable plastic bottles to protect the environment and keep all areas clean and tidy.

## 9. Storage Facilities

- At present, the Council cannot offer any storage facilities for equipment at the Innes Pavilion building or anywhere on the playing fields or surrounding areas.  
It is inappropriate for any Football Club or Team to place any storage facility of their own, without the express permission of the Council in writing beforehand and such practice will be deemed as breach of contract terms and this policy.

## 10. Car Park Usage

- The car park at the facility may be used and is also available to other users of the park and the general public.
- Officials and participants may use the car park free of charge to park their own vehicles, but these vehicles will be left entirely at the owner's risk.
- The Team Representative must ensure that cars parked at the facility do not cause damage to grass verges or the playing fields and **must not** restrict access to any emergency services required to respond to a call in the vicinity.

## 11. Player and Public Safety

- Glasses, bottles or other potentially dangerous objects must never be taken onto the playing fields or into the changing rooms.
- Smoking is strictly prohibited in any part of the building, and non-compliance may result in prosecution.

## 12. Disputes

- On all matters of dispute, the Chief Executive Officer or nominated officer shall be deemed to act on the matter with the full support of the Council and whose decision shall be final.
- Persistent failure to comply with these conditions may result in the withdrawal of the Council's consent to use the Court Lodge playing fields and the Innes Pavilion facilities.

***This Policy was adopted by Horley Town Council at its meeting held on 17 March 2026.***

***Review Date: 2029***

# Horley Town Council

## Co-Option Policy



### 1. INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this policy, Horley Town Council is referred to as ‘the Council’. It is based on guidance from the National Association of Local Councils. The process for co-option is only partially prescribed in law but there is best practice advice and guidelines around certain aspects of the process. Items marked in bold are prescribed in law.

### 2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy aims to explain the procedures in regard to co-option and the information contained therein is for use by Members of the Council and by the public. The policy is also to show that the Council endeavours to treat all applicants fairly, alike and to ensure that the process is also seen as open and transparent. This policy details the processes regarding co-option to be followed.

### 3. HOW A VACANCY MAY ARISE

**3.1** There are two circumstances under which the Council may proceed to fill a casual vacancy by co-option:

- When a ward seat has been left vacant because no eligible candidate stood for election at the full elections for a new council (currently every four years).
- **During the life of the Council, a ward seat falls vacant but the required 10 electors of a ward for a poll (by-election) to be called has not been made within the legally specified time period following publication of the notice of vacancy. (Refer Local Government Act 1972 s86 and 87(2)(b)).**

**3.2** The Council is not obliged to co-opt to fill any vacancy. Even if the Council invites applications for co-option, it is not obliged to select anyone from the candidates who apply. It is, however, not desirable that electors in a particular ward be left partially or fully unrepresented for a significant length of time. Neither does it contribute to effective and efficient working of the Council if there are insufficient Members to share the workload equitably; to provide a broad cross-section of skills and interests; or to achieve meeting quorums without difficulty, given that some absence is unavoidable at times.

**3.3** To proceed with a co-option, the Council must fill co-option vacancies within 60 days of publication of the Notice of Vacancy.

**3.4** To ensure a fair and transparent process is undertaken, this policy outlines the procedure to be followed by the Council when co-option is considered.

### 4. ELIGIBILITY FOR CO-OPTION

We aim to encourage applications from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand. Councillors or parishioners can approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option. The vacancy will be advertised on the Council website/newsletter; on community noticeboards; and in media releases. The advertisement for the co-option will include:

**4.1** Method by which applications can be made. This will be by email to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at: [info@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk) or sent by post to:

**Chief Executive Officer, Horley Town Council**

**Albert Rooms 92 Albert Road, Horley, Surrey RH6 7HZ**

**4.2 Candidates must confirm their eligibility for the position of Town Councillor within the statutory rules (s.79 Local Government Act 1972), under the following criteria:**

**Age/Nationality: Must be 18 years or older and a British citizen, qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or an EU citizen.**

**Local Connection: Must satisfy at least one of the following, as stipulated in s.79 of the 1972 Act:**

- a) be registered as a local government elector for the parish/community
- b) have occupied land or premises as owner/tenant for the last 12 months
- c) have had their principal place of work in the area for the last 12 months
- d) have resided in the area (or within 3 miles of it) for the last 12 months

**4.3 Disqualification:** Must not be disqualified under s.80 of the 1972 Act, which includes holding a paid office under the authority, bankruptcy or having a prison sentence of 3+ months within the last five years.

## **5. APPLICATION PROCESS**

**5.1** On receipt of written notice from the Electoral Services Authority for the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, that a casual vacancy may be filled by means of co-option, the Council may proceed at its discretion and as soon as practicable. Following approval by the Council, the CEO will advertise the vacancy or vacancies to be filled by co-option and the advertisement will include the closing date for acceptance of requests for consideration (within 20 working days).

**5.2** Candidates will be asked to submit information about themselves by completing an application form and submitting a Personal Statement. This should include a brief description of their interest in becoming a Town Councillor and specifying any skills or qualifications which may benefit the Council.

**5.3** When applications are received, the CEO will confirm eligibility or otherwise. Any candidate(s) found to be offering inducements will be disqualified.

**5.4** The CEO will inform Members of candidates shortlisted for consideration and furnish copies of their applications, which will be treated as confidential.

## **6. MEETING ATTENDANCE FOLLOWING AN APPLICATION**

After the application deadline has passed, all eligible candidates shall be invited to attend the next Council Meeting. On acceptance, each candidate will be sent a copy of the agenda.

## **7. COMMITMENT**

It is important that potential candidates understand the commitment which is required from the role of public office as a Town Councillor. Anyone interested in standing will be encouraged to look at the [Council website](#) for more information will receive further information on request. Candidates will also be told that they are expected to attend an Induction Training Event at the Council offices, led by the CEO.

## **8. PROCESS OF CO-OPTION AT THE COUNCIL MEETING**

The candidate will be asked to make a brief verbal presentation to Full Council on why they would like to be a Town Councillor and the skills they can offer the Council (three minutes maximum per candidate). All of this, including the voting for the candidate(s), will be in the public part of the meeting Part 1). Candidates may, in turn, be asked questions by Members. In the event of a candidate being unable to attend, then their application may still be considered by Members from the application details given by the CEO.

In the event of a candidate being related to, or known to, or acquainted with a Town Councillor, then the Councillor would be expected to declare an interest and request dispensation from the Council Chair to speak and vote.

## 9. VOTING PROCEDURES

- 9.1** Only Councillors present at the meeting may vote. There will be one vote per vacancy to be filled. The Chair may have a casting vote. **The successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of those present and voting (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12).** If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and not one of them at the first count receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes and the remainder must then be put to the vote again. The process is to be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.
- 9.2** If there is more than one vacancy and the number of candidates equal the number of vacancies, all the vacancies may be filled by a single composite resolution. If the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies, each vacancy must be filled by a separate vote or series of votes.
- 9.3** The Council does not reconsider claims of candidates who were unsuccessful at previous elections.
- 9.4** Voting will be according to the agreed procedure in standing orders, namely:  
*‘Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman’s casting vote.’*
- 9.5** Voting will be conducted as per the agreed procedure in the Council’s Standing Orders, namely:  
*‘Unless Standing Orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda. At the request of two Councillors, voting on any question shall be by a signed ballot.’*
- 9.6** After the vote has been concluded, these will be verified by the Proper Officer and the Chair will declare the successful candidate(s) duly elected. A Member elected by co-option is a full Member of the Council and is eligible to receive the Basic Allowance under the Members’ Allowances Scheme. Where a Member is co-opted partway through the municipal year, the allowance is calculated pro rata for their actual period of service.

## 9. STARTING AS A COUNCILLOR

The successful candidate(s) are asked to start as a Town Councillor immediately after completing their Declaration of Acceptance of Office. **The fact that the new member has not received a summons does not make their attendance as a Councillor unlawful (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12, para 10(3)).** Where appropriate, they will be appointed to a Council committee. If an absent candidate is successful, Members must agree to them signing the Declaration of Acceptance of Office before or at the start of the next meeting. New Town Councillors must complete their Declaration (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) for the Council’s Register of Interests within 28 days of the co-option.

***This Co-Option Policy was approved for adoption by Full Council at its meeting held on 17 March 2026***

***Review Date: 2029***



# Horley Town Council

## Prevention of Sexual Harassment and General Harassment Policy and Procedures

### 1. PURPOSE

Horley Town Council (the Council) is committed to providing an inclusive, supportive and safe environment in the workplace, free from harassment, bullying and sexual harassment, fostering a culture of respect, dignity and equality. The Council promotes equality and has a number of legal obligations under equality legislation. This policy aims to prevent, address and eliminate sexual harassment, personal harassment and bullying in all council related activities and interactions. The Council will treat all such incidents seriously through prompt investigation of allegations made and the appropriate steps taken as set out in our Action Plan below.

### 2. SCOPE

Everyone associated with council-related activities has the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work. Any form of sexual harassment, general harassment or bullying at work will not be tolerated. We all have a part to play in being aware of problems and preventing any occurrences. This policy sets out the expectations for the behaviour of councillors and staff, as well as what we can do to protect colleagues from harassment, bullying or sexual harassment. This policy applies to:

- All council employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors and stakeholders.
- All activities and events organised, sponsored or affiliated with the Council.
- Interactions in-person, written, online, and through any digital communication channels.

It will be communicated using various methods, including training as appropriate together with the provision of information documents.

### 3. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment includes any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome physical contact or advances
- Inappropriate sexual comments, jokes or gestures
- Displaying or sharing sexually explicit material
- Requests for sexual favours, whether explicit or implicit
- Bullying or intimidation linked to gender or sexual orientation

### 4. DEFINITION OF PERSONAL HARASSMENT

When unwanted behaviour is about certain protected characteristics under discrimination law, then we refer to it as 'personal harassment'. The protected characteristics which apply are:

- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Disability

Unwanted behaviour can still be personal harassment even if the person being harassed does not complain or ask for it to stop. Personal harassment may be defined as behaviour that creates a

hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic. Name-calling, lewd comments, excluding colleagues, making insensitive jokes and displaying pornographic material are all examples of harassment. Even if an individual did not intend to harass someone, if their behaviour has this effect on someone else, then they may be found to have harassed them.

## **5. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is one of the following:

- Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting
- An abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm

It can take many different forms. Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- Spreading malicious rumours about someone
- Consistently putting someone down and undermining them
- Deliberately giving someone a heavier workload than everyone else
- Excluding someone from team social events

Bullying could involve a pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident. It could happen face-to-face, online, by telephone or in writing. It can be verbal and non-verbal. It is not always obvious to others. Although it is often connected to a power imbalance, that does not mean that it always involves a more senior person bullying a more junior person. It can also be directed at someone more senior than the bully. It may take the form of spreading rumours, refusing to follow instructions, undermining authority, making fun of or mocking the more senior person or spreading rumours about them. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management functions.

## **6. LEGISLATION**

The Equality Act of 2010 brought together various anti-discrimination laws into one single act, so any unlawful treatment (discrimination, harassment or victimisation) relating to one of the Equality Act protected characteristics, since 2010 is covered by this area of employment law. This means that people cannot treat you in a way that violates your dignity, or creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

The law protects individuals against sexual harassment at work. Sexual harassment means the unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which must have either:

- violated someone's dignity, whether it was intended or not
- created an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for them, whether it was intended or not.

Sexual harassment can be carried out or experienced by anyone, regardless of gender. The Equality Act 2010 protects people against sexual harassment and personal harassment related to protected characteristics, for example, a person's sex. Someone could experience both types of harassment at the same time or separately. An individual could experience sexual harassment from anyone encountered because of their job, including someone they work with, a manager, supervisor or someone else in a position of authority, high profile or influential. An individual can also experience sexual harassment from a customer, client or a member of the public.

The person engaging in unwelcome behaviour does not have to intend to be sexually harassing the other person for the behaviour to be considered sexual harassment. Regardless of what was intended, sexual harassment is defined by the nature and the impact of the behaviour, not the intention behind it. When dealing with harassment at work, prevention is of fundamental importance. By actively engaging with employees and councillors on the issue and raising awareness of the Council's stance on unacceptable behaviour, is key to avoiding instances of sexual harassment in the workplace.

## 7. AIMS

The aims of this policy are to:

- Reinforce our commitment to take prompt and appropriate action in response to any allegation of harassment, bullying or sexual harassment
- Ensure everyone understands what this means and can openly and confidently discuss concerns about inappropriate behaviour in the workplace and are clear on the policies and procedures for prevention
- Educate and inform line managers about the potential signs and impact of harassment, bullying or sexual harassment in the workplace and how they can support individuals at work
- Show the Council's important role in setting a wider example to our communities.

## 8. RESPONSIBILITIES

**All employees and councillors have a responsibility to:**

- Treat others with respect and refrain from behaviour that could be considered sexual harassment
- Report any incidents of sexual harassment promptly
- Co-operate in investigations and respect confidentiality
- Foster an inclusive and respectful environment and demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- Take personal responsibility and raise any concerns, whether this was experienced personally or witnessed
- Contribute to a respectful and productive working environment
- Treat any allegations or complaints confidentially
- Ensure that an individual is not victimised for making or being involved in a complaint.

**All line managers have a responsibility to:**

- Undertake appropriate training to ensure they understand what sexual harassment is and their responsibilities for eliminating this in the workplace
- Monitor the workplace environment to ensure that as far as practicable, expected standards of conduct are always maintained
- Promote awareness and the complaints procedures with respect to sexual harassment as set out in this policy
- Treat complaints seriously and taking immediate action as appropriate through the Council's complaint process
- Ensure that an individual is not victimised for making, or being involved in, a complaint of sexual harassment.

**The Chief Executive Officer has a responsibility to:**

- Investigate reports of sexual harassment, personal harassment or bullying promptly and appropriately. In cases where they relate to senior officers, then the investigation will be carried out by the Council Chair or Vice-Chair.
- Undertake appropriate training to ensure there is clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to the prevention of sexual harassment, personal harassment or bullying in the workplace.
- Ensure there are clear processes in place for raising complaints.
- Promote positive working relationships with the Council and amongst employees and councillors.
- Identify potential risk factors and take prompt, reasonable action to minimise those risks.
- Ensure information and training to support the effective implementation of this policy is accessible.
- Set out clear policies and procedures to prevent sexual harassment, personal harassment or bullying in the workplace for Council approval.
- Monitor and continually evaluate their effectiveness.
- Ensure all employees, councillors and stakeholders are aware of this policy and give guidance as required.

## 9. REPORTING AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Individuals experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment, personal harassment or bullying can report the incident through the following steps:

- **Informal Resolution:** If comfortable, individuals are encouraged to address the behaviour directly with the person responsible, explaining its impact.
- **Formal Complaint:** If the issue persists or the individual is uncomfortable with informal resolution, they can report the incident confidentially to the Chief Executive Officer at: [joan.walsh@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk](mailto:joan.walsh@horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk); or in writing to the council offices, for the attention of: **Chief Executive Officer, Horley Town Council, 92 Albert Road, Horley RH6 7HZ and marked 'Strictly Confidential'**.
- (In cases where allegations are made towards a senior officer, these will be delegated to the Council Chair or Vice-Chair, as appropriate.)
- Complaints should include details of the incident(s), including dates, times, locations and any witnesses.
- **Confidentiality:** All complaints shall be handled confidentially and sensitively.

## 10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Disclosures of sexual harassment, personal harassment and/or bullying will be treated in confidence to protect an employee's privacy. However, in some instances, a matter may need to be escalated or referred onwards without agreement from the individual, particularly in circumstances which may:

- constitute a criminal offence
- constitute an occupational health and safety risk
- require disciplinary action

If a matter needs to be escalated or referred, the person handling the matter will notify the person who made the disclosure of other parties involved who have been informed.

## 11. INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

### Upon receiving a formal complaint:

- In cases of a complaint made about a staff member, the Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days and carry out an investigation as the investigating officer.
- In cases of a complaint made against senior officers, these will be referred to the Council Chair or Vice-Chair, appropriate.
- A decision in consultation with the Council Chair and Vice-Chair will, where possible, be made within 30 working days and the complainant and respondent will be informed of the outcome by the investigating officer.
- Where cases have been referred to the Council Chair or Vice-Chair for investigation, then a decision in consultation with two independent Members of the Leaders Group and the Chief Executive Officer (or delegated senior officer) shall be made.
- In the case of a complaint about a councillor, the complaint shall be referred to the local Monitoring Officer.

## 12. APPEAL PROCESS

The respondent may appeal against the outcome of a disciplinary hearing using the Council's disciplinary appeals process. The panel shall comprise two other Members of the Council Leaders Group (CLG) **not involved in the initial investigation**, whose decision shall be final.

The complainant may appeal against the outcome of their formal complaint using the **Council's Grievance/Appeals** process. The panel shall comprise two other Members of the Council Leaders Group (CLG) **not involved in the initial investigation**, whose decision shall be final.

### 13. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Employees found to have engaged in sexual harassment, personal harassment or bullying may face disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Councillors may be referred to the Monitoring Officer and subjected to Code of Conduct investigations.

Contractors or volunteers may have their association with the council terminated.

### 14. SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINANTS

The Council will provide support to individuals affected by sexual harassment, personal harassment and/or bullying including access to:

- Counselling services
- Adjustments to work arrangements where necessary
- External resources such as legal or advisory bodies

### 15. NON-RETALIATION

The Council prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports an incident of harassment, bullying or sexual harassment or participates in an investigation. Any acts of retaliation will result in disciplinary action.

### 16. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

The Council will:

- Conduct regular training sessions on sexual harassment, personal harassment and bullying prevention and awareness.
- Review this policy annually to ensure compliance with relevant laws and best practices.

### 17. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be kept under regular review by the Council, or as required by changes in legislation.

#### **Support**

Help and information is available.

- [Rape Crisis England and Wales](#)
- [The Survivors Trust](#)
- [Survivors UK](#)
- [Victim Support](#)
- [Sexual Trauma and Recovery Services \(STARS\)](#)

Find out about other [help after rape and sexual assault](#) on the NHS website.

#### **Contact the police**

- Call 999 if you believe there is immediate danger
- Call 101 if it is not an emergency

#### **Report a crime**

[Report a crime online](#) When you are reporting a crime, you can speak to a specialist officer who is trained to deal with sexual violence.

***This Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy and General Harassment Policy and Procedures was adopted at the Full Council meeting held on 17 March 2026***

***Review Date: 2027 (or when legislation or recommended practice changes)***

# Community Survey January 2026 Results

**90 respondents overall. Survey was open between 28 Jan 2026 and 19 Feb 2026. Promoted on website and social media and newsletter**

In answer to the question

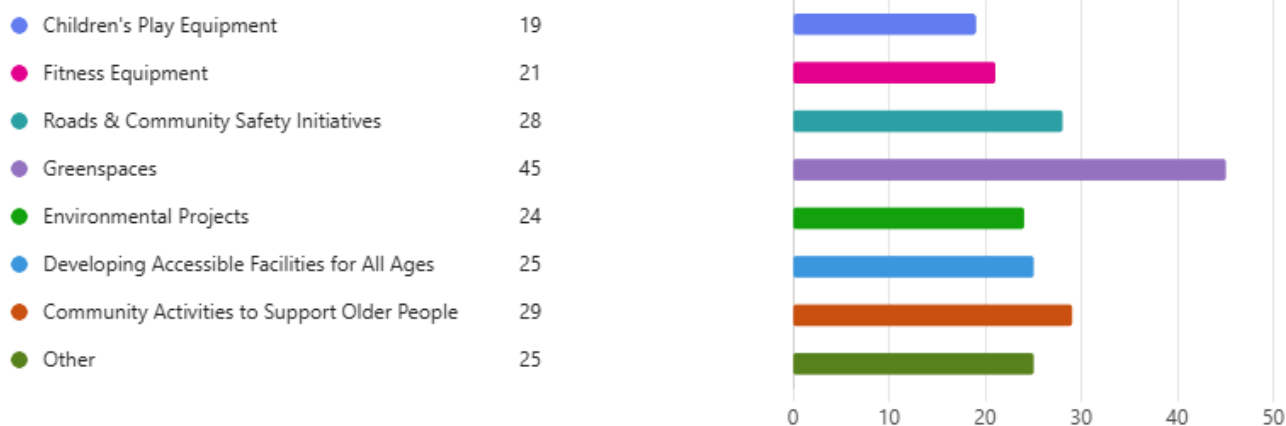
**Community Asset Transfers:** The Council has been busy in the last few years improving and adding new facilities to our existing community assets in Horley. We now have the opportunity through the Local Government Reorganisation of Surrey to take on more assets through the RBBC Community Asset Transfer & Support programme. Our intention is to have direct management of more parks and green spaces through devolution arrangements and to improve play and recreational facilities along with public safety features. Is this something you would support?

Yes **95%**

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In answer to the question

**Suggested Projects from CIL Fund:** The funds may be used on a broad range of facilities such as play areas, open spaces, parks, cultural and sports facilities, and other Horley Town Council community facilities. Please indicate below your priorities for future funding, you can tick more than one



Of the 25 'Other' –

- 9 were about 3G pitches
- 4 were about non 3G sports facilities
- 2 were about litter
- 3 were about environmental issues
- 1 was about public toilets
- 1 was about community meeting areas
- 1 was about the Local history Society
- 1 was about a community garden
- 1 was about the carboot sale
- 1 was about the pavements
- 1 was about maintenance of existing facilities

See bottom of documents for full list of comments

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## **6 Respondents to the Survey about Innes Pavilion. Survey was sent to all football teams and promoted by Cllrs**

**100%** would support Horley Town Council upgrading the facilities at the Innes Pavilion

- We would like to see an upgrade to the changing rooms. They look outdated and old. The toilets to be more accessible and the showers to be more private
  - An upgrade of any kind would be welcomed
  - Daylight accessibility for toilets allowing dog walkers and park users access to the toilets
  - Daylight accessible toilets for the general public would be good.
  - Toilets that are available during the day
  - The facilities, showers that all deliver hot water and maybe an upgrade to the toilets
- 

## **Full list of all 'other' responses**

- Clear the polluted and clogged Burstow stream and stop the constant flooding of Emlyn Meadow. Re-instate the footpath between Kingsley avenue and the A23
- More 'all weather' footpaths, or make existing footpaths accessible all year round.
- Litter picking support
- Sports facilities - more football and cricket pitches to support the size of the town (the latest park project is a start but does not deliver anywhere near enough full size sports facilities. One of the biggest issues is 3G football pitches, local teams have to regularly travel to Crawley and the British weather is getting worse, meaning more cancelled games on grass pitches with no alternatives. Demand is nowhere near to being met by current local 3G pitches.
- Re start the popular Sunday Horley car boot sales, with free all day parking to encourage the "car booters" to patronise the local cafes, pubs and local shops that wish to open.
- The area needs another modern 3G football/sports pitch. The current pitch is oversubscribed and is used by teams outside of Horley
- More 3G football pitches. The town is bursting with teams and only oakwood has the facility. We need so many more
- Sports/3G pitches in the Horley area
- Tidy up the town it looks like a third world country disgraceful state of pavements
- Sports pitches, especially football and cricket which are in very short supply locally
- 3G pitches for hire

- More 3g football pitches (at Horley town fc?)
- Horley Community Garden
- Further 3G pitch + paved running lane around perimeter of the rec on a23 , fixed chess tables on park
- We would like financial help to provide about 6 Local History Information boards throughout the Town.
- Pump track and jump line
- All weather sports provisions/ Football
- Padel Courts
- Skatepark improvements + controlled lighting
- A further 3G football pitch.
- Maintaining existing facilities which are being overlooked
- Community meeting areas with activities for adults
- Public toilets in town and parks
- Litter picking initiatives tidy up Horley, buy bags and pickers and pay an organiser give to asylum seekers to do something and give back community. Horley is so messy cans etc in every hedge and verge This is should be a pride in our community thing.
- Green spaces along Hoadley Road should be protected.