

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

PARKS DEPARTMENT
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Your Ref:

Our Ref: 31 January 2017

Date:

A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2017 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE at 6.30pm

THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

Mr I Morris M.C.I.H
Town Clerk

A G E N D A

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED OF THE NEED TO DISCLOSE ANY INTEREST, PREJUDICIAL OR PERSONAL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT.

The Chairman shall now advise both Members of the committee and members of the public that part of the meeting may be recorded by both audio and video, and it may be that photographs are taken.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Members are cordially invited to inform the Deputy Town Clerk of their apologies as soon as practicable

2. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

To welcome the Paul Bradley, Chief Internal Auditor and Corporate Fraud Manager and Steve Carter, Audit Fraud Manager, Internal Audit, Risk and Fraud, DCC who will advise Members on work undertaken by Internal Audit between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017. (Circulated)

3. LEISURE GARDENS INTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS & ACTION PLAN

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report and agree actions, responsibilities and timescales as set out in the Action Plan. (Circulated)

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

5. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINTY MEETING of the 13th January 2017
(Circulated)

6. PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2017/18

To seek Members feedback on the detailed budget for 2017/18 prior to the final budget detail being presented to Council for approval in February 2017. (Circulated)

7. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 12TH JANUARY 2017
(Circulated)
For approval of the payments authorised and made.

8. PUBLICATIONS, MINUTES, BULLETINS ETC

- (a) Super Councils' Network
- (b) NALC – Benefits of membership - briefing note (Circulated)
- (c) External Auditors & their reports -
- (d) SAAA announcement of appointed auditors by county area 2017/18 – 2021/22
- (d) NALC Direct Information Service Issue 899 & 900 – copies available
- (e) Briefing Note to Members of Arrangements to count votes at the May 2017 Elections, Report of Head of Legal & Democratic Services (Circulated)
- (f) County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service public consultation (Circulated)

The majority of the information given here has been received via CDALC. Members are requested to note the information listed and given above

9. THE FUTURE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT YOUTH SERVICES, 24TH – 26TH FEBRAURY 2017, SOUTHPORT

To consider attendance by the Council at this conference (Circulated)

11. REQUESTS FOR A GRANT/CONCESSIONARY USE

- (a) Event Fundraising in aid of Muscular Dystrophy UK & Merrington Twins Wish List, use of Shotton Hall Friday 22nd December 2017
- (b) Letters of thanks & appreciation, Great North Air Ambulance

12. POLICIES

- (i) Officers Code of Conduct
- (ii) Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace

For Members to consider and approve the adoption of these policies, as considered by the scrutiny committee (Circulated)

13. BREWERY TENDERS UPDATE

To endorse the action taken on 20 January 2017 following interviews held, in scoring the five companies in terms of their presentations.

14. CLOSING OF THE ACCOUNTS

To give approval for Mr Stuart Wilbur, RBS Software, to complete the year end accounts on the Town Council's behalf. (Circulated)

15. CASH COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

To approve the continued use of Loomis for the provision of the banking pick up service. (Circulated)

16. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO PASS THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

17. PETERLEE SHOW 2017 - VARIOUS

To approve the tenders as detailed in the report of the Show Co Ordinator and to confirm the entertainment agreed at the Show Working Party held on 30 January 2017. To also approve the booking of the Pantomime for 2018. (Circulated)

PLANNING COMMITTEE

18. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

19. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

For consideration and comment (None received to date this moth)

20. DELEGATED PLANNING DECISIONS

- (i) Land to the front of 10 – 14 Burt Close, change of use of public open space to car parking spaces
- (ii) Asda, SurteesRoad, retention of non illuminated signage
- (iii) 35 Eastfield, erection of detached 2 storey dwelling to the west of 35 Eastfield

ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

21. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

22. OVERTIME & ADDITIONAL COSTS REPORT (Circulated)
Members are requested to note the information given

23. ABSENCE REPORT (Circulated)

24. LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD

Mr Harriman will complete his 25years service with the Town Council on 16th March, (he started in 1992 with the Town Council). It is recommended he be presented with an appropriate token to mark his 25 years service, in line with the Council's policy.

**FINANCE, PLANNING &
ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE**
06 February 2017
INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT



REPORT OF THE HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Members on work undertaken by Internal Audit between 01 April 2016 and 31 March 2017. The report aims to:
 - Provide a high level of assurance, or otherwise, on internal controls operating across the Authority that have been subject to audit.
 - Advise the Committee of significant issues where controls need to improve to effectively manage risks.
 - Advise the Committee of any amendments to the approved Internal Audit plan.
 - Advise the Committee of changes to audit processes and terminology.
 - Track progress on the response to internal audit reports and the implementation of agreed internal audit recommendations.
 - Provide an update on our performance indicators comparing actual performance against planned.

2. The appendices attached to this report are summarised below. Those marked with an asterisk are not for publication (Exempt information under Part 3 of Schedule 12a to the Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 3).

Appendix 1	Risks and Implications
Appendix 2	Progress against the Internal Audit Plan
Appendix 3	Internal Audit Performance Indicators
Appendix 4*	Overdue Actions
Appendix 5*	Reports issued with a Limited Assurance Opinion

Progress against planned work

3. A summary of the agreed plan showing the status of each audit as at 31 December 2016 is attached at Appendix 2.
4. The Appendix shows that six reviews are planned to be completed, of these:
 - Four assurance reviews are complete (draft or final report); and
 - Two assurance reviews are in progress.
5. Assurance reviews incorporate a consideration of the Council's Risk and Governance arrangements within each activity inspected. In addition the Internal Audit Service is assisting the Council in developing Policies and Procedures to support and strengthen its corporate governance framework.

6. The assurance level, if applicable, for each piece of work where a final report has been issued is shown in Appendix 2.
7. A summary of all audit reports finalised in the period is given in the table below:

Audit Area	Brief Scope	Assurance Opinion
Pavilion	An Assurance review that considered the effectiveness of the Council's financial arrangements for income collection, holding and banking at the Pavilion	Substantial
Parks	An Assurance review that considered the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for the maintenance of its parks and income collected from its parks lettings.	Moderate
Leisure Gardens	An Assurance review that considered the effectiveness of the Council's Legal, Financial and Health & Safety arrangements for the management of its leisure gardens (allotments) sites.	Limited

Amendments to Annual Audit Plan

8. There have been no amendments agreed to the annual audit plan this period.

Outstanding management response to draft reports

9. There are no management responses to outstanding Draft Reports overdue.

Response to Audit Recommendations

10. To provide independent assurance that adequate progress is made in the implementation of agreed recommendations at the appropriate service operational level, all high and medium recommendations contained within the action plans of individual audit reports are followed up by internal audit. In addition, listings of all recommendations outstanding at the end of each quarter are produced and issued to the Town Clerk to assist the Council in its own internal monitoring processes.
11. To allow the progress made at an operational level to be tracked and monitored, the numbers of all recommendations made arising from each audit complete, and evidenced as implemented, are shown in Appendix 2. It should be noted that Internal Audit will not follow up Best Practice matters raised.
12. A summary of outstanding audit recommendations i.e. those not implemented within original agreed or revised target dates, as evidenced through Internal Audit follow up, is given in the table below:

Risk	Actions	Total	Implemented			Overdue	Target	Overdue
Category	Raised	Due	(Due)	(Not due)	Total	Original	Revised	Revised
2016/17								
High	3	1	1		1	0		
Medium	24	11	11		11	0		
Total	27	12	12		12	0		

13. There are no High or Medium priority recommendations overdue against original target implementation dates.

Note: Overdue recommendations when applicable would be detailed in Appendix 4 for consideration as a Part B Agenda Item.

Unplanned work carried out this quarter

14. There have been no unplanned activities carried out during the period.

Reports issued with a Limited Assurance Opinion

15. There has been one report issued in the period that resulted in a Limited Assurance Opinion. Details of the findings that arose from the review are shown in Appendix 5 and are to be considered as a Part B Agenda Item

Performance Indicators

16. A summary of target performance indicators is given in Appendix 3.

Note: Performance indicators form part of the Internal Audit Charter which establishes the terms of reference for the provision of the Internal Audit Service to the Council. The Charter, currently being revised following a discussion with the Town Clerk, outlines how the service will be delivered and developed

Recommendation

17. Members are asked to note the progress made to date on delivering the internal audit plan for 2016/17 together with that made by managers in responding to the work of internal audit to gain assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment.

Appendix 1: Risks and Implications

Finance -

The programme of work undertaken by Internal Audit supports the Council in maintaining safe and efficient arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs

Staffing -

None

Risk -

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty -

None

Accommodation -

None

Crime and Disorder -

None

Human Rights -

None

Consultation -

None

Procurement -

None

Disability Issues -

None

Legal Implications -

None

Other Risks

Control risks identified / considered in relation to reviews undertaken

Appendix 2: Summary of the status of work undertaken and recommendations made and implemented

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES											
Reviews	Schedule	Status	Opinion	High		Medium		Best Practice			
				M	I	M	I	M	I		
Corporate Governance Risks											
Corporate Governance Arrangements	Q1-4	In Progress									
Risk Management Arrangements	Q1-4	In Progress									
Financial Management											
Core Financial Systems	Q2	Final Report	Limited	1	1	12	11				3
Pavilion	Q3	Final Report	Substantial			1					4
Parks	Q3	Final Report	Moderate			7					
Leisure Gardens	Q3	Final Report	Limited	2		4					2
Management											
Audit Planning and Reporting	Q1-4	In Progress	N/A								
Total				3	1	24	11				9

Appendix 3 Performance Indicators for 2016/17

Efficiency		Objective: To provide maximum assurance to inform the annual audit opinion	
KPI	Measure of Assessment	Target & (Frequency of Measurement)	Actual
Planned audits completed	% of planned assurance work from original approved plan complete to draft report stage as at 31 March 2017	90% (Quarterly)	67% (4 out of 6 reviews completed)
Timeliness of Draft Reports	% of draft reports issued within 30 calendar days of end of fieldwork/closure interview Average time taken is also reported for information	90% (Quarterly)	100% (4 reports issued) 7 days
Timeliness of Final Reports	% of final reports issued within 14 calendar days of receipt of management response Average time taken is also to be reported for information	95% (Quarterly)	100% (4 report issued) 1 day
Terms of Reference	% of TOR's agreed with key contact in advance of fieldwork commencing	95% (Quarterly)	100% (4 TORs issued)
Quality		Objective: To ensure that the service is effective and adding value	
KPI	Measure of Assessment	Target & (Frequency of Measurement)	Actual
Recommendations agreed	% of Recommendations made compared with recommendations accepted	95% (Quarterly)	100% (36 accepted out of 36 made)
Post Audit Customer Satisfaction Survey Feedback	% of customers scoring audit service good or above (3 out of 5) where 1 is poor and 5 is very good Average score is also reported for information	100% (Quarterly)	100% (4 out of 4 returned) Overall average score 4.33
Customers providing feedback Response	% of Customer returning satisfaction returns	70% (Quarterly)	100% (4 returns thus far from 4 surveys issued in 2016/17)

Report to: Peterlee Town Council Finance & General Purposes Committee

Date: 8th February 2017

Report of: Ian Morris, Town Clerk

Subject: Leisure Gardens Internal Audit Findings and Action Plan

Report Purpose: To provide Members with a summary of the findings of the recent Internal Audit of the Council's Leisure Gardens service, and a proposed action plan to address the weaknesses highlighted in the report.

Background: Peterlee Town Council provides a Leisure Gardens service for the people of Peterlee, with 66 gardens (sometime referred to as 'allotments'¹) split across two sites – Lowhills Road (49 gardens) and Thorntree Gill (17 gardens). The budget allocation for the service in 2016/17 is £8,160 (gross)/£6,120 (net).

In October 2016 Durham County Council (DCC)'s Internal Audit service carried out an audit of the Town Council's Leisure Gardens Service as part of the Council's 2016/17 Internal Audit Plan. The findings of the report were provided to the Town Clerk in a final report on 22nd December 2017.

The report concludes with a 'limited' assurance opinion, which means that the auditors have found weaknesses in key areas in the Council's system of control for the Leisure Gardens service, which put the Council's objectives for the service at significant risk.

The Internal Audit report provides a series of recommendations classified as high and low importance. It concludes with an action plan within which the Town Clerk has confirmed a series of actions to be taken to address the findings and recommendations.

This report is intended to summarise the findings and action plan for Members, and provide assurance that the issues raised are being dealt with satisfactorily.

Action Plan: A summary action plan of findings and recommendations from the internal audit report is provided as Appendix A to this report.

The key actions and timescales to address the weaknesses highlighted in the report are:

¹ For an interesting review of the history of the allotment and leisure garden movement, see 'Allotment Gardens: A Reflection of History, Heritage, Community and Self' (Lesley Acton, 2011) <http://www.pia-journal.co.uk/articles/10.5334/pia.379/>

Action	Responsible Person(s)	Proposed Timescale
Development of a formal Council Policy for Leisure Gardens.	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor	Draft Policy to Parks Committee: 13/02/17 Consultation with Leisure Gardeners: 14/02/17 – 28/02/17 Final policy to Council: 20/03/2017
Review of Thorntree Gill (TG) constitution in line with new policy	Town Clerk Thorntree Gill LG Committee	Following adoption of new policy by Council. Complete by 31/03/17
Seek and support formation of new committee for Lowhills Road (LR) Leisure Gardens. Develop new constitution from LR Committee	Town Clerk Town Clerk & LR Committee members	TC to write to all Lowhills Road gardeners by 22/02/2017 seeking volunteers to work with Council on development of new committee & constitution. New constitution in place by 31/03/2017
Agree and implement KPI monitoring framework, e.g.: - voids - lettings - waiting list - funding	Town Clerk TG & LR Committees	Draft KPI framework will be included in the Council's Leisure Gardens Policy: 20/03/2017 Agreement with site Committees on detail of monitoring reports: 31/03/2017
Agree and Implement a regular inspection regime for both sites	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor	Inspection regime will be included in the Council's Leisure Gardens Policy: 20/03/2017 Outcomes of inspections will be included in Parks Supervisor's regular reports to Parks Committee: From April 2017
Work with the Committees of the two sites to agree medium term (1-3 years) repairs and improvement priorities	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor TG & LR Committees	By 31 st October 2017, to inform 2018/19 budget setting process.

Recommendation:

Members are recommended to note the contents of this report and agree the actions, responsibilities and timescales as set out in the action plan above.

Members are also recommended to approve the inclusion of a follow-up Audit of the Leisure Gardens service as part of the 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan.

Appendix A: Action Plan of Findings and Recommendations – extract from PTC Leisure Gardens Internal Audit report December 2016

Action Ref	Finding	Potential Impact	Priority	Recommendation	Management Comment	Responsibility Timescale
01	There are no formal agreements in place between the Council and the Associations that would be used to deal with any potential breaches of the agreed arrangements or legislation.	Ineffective decision making process Reputational damage	High	A formalised policy be drawn up by the Council for agreement with each association to establish respective responsibilities.	A Policy will be developed in Q4 to set out the basic requirements for the provision of Leisure Gardens by Peterlee Town Council. This policy will include the expected working arrangements for any relationships with local Associations.	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor Draft policy report to Parks Committee 13 February 2017
02	Following the dissolution of the PLGA each Association is required to have a written constitution in place. Whilst a draft constitution has been produced by Thorntree Gill, and presented to the Council for review, at the time of the audit no constitution has been received from Lowhills Road.	Ineffective decision making process Reputational damage	High	The Thorntree Gill constitution should be reviewed by the Council to ensure it complies with the Council's Leisure Gardens Policy. Work be undertaken with officials from Lowhills Road to develop and agree its Constitution. Constitutions should then be reviewed on an agreed periodical basis.	The constitutions of the two Associations needs to be reviewed/developed in line with the policy. This work will follow the approval of the new policy in February 2017.	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor 31 March 2017

Action Ref	Finding	Potential Impact	Priority	Recommendation	Management Comment	Responsibility Timescale
03	There is no monitoring by the Council of the arrangements in place for each association's management of the Leisure Gardens sites and their effectiveness, nor is any information reported to the Council.	Ineffective decision making process Reputational damage	Medium	Monitoring arrangements should be established and agreed with the Leisure Gardeners Associations so that information can be reported to the Council.	The basic requirements of the monitoring regime will be expressed in the new policy and then confirmed in detail in the new constitution arrangements.	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor 31 March 2017
04	Information is currently not provided by either of the Leisure Gardeners Associations with regards to Waiting Lists	Ineffective decision making process Reputational damage	Medium	Lowhills Road and Thorntree Gill Leisure Gardeners Associations should provide the Council with details of the number of allotments occupied, tenants' details, the number of unoccupied / available plots and details of the waiting lists. These details should be reviewed on a regular basis to establish if the demand for Leisure Gardens is being met.	These details have now been obtained from both sites (as of December 2017). The review process will be expressed in the new policy and then confirmed in detail in the new constitution arrangements	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor 31 March 2017

Action Ref	Finding	Potential Impact	Priority	Recommendation	Management Comment	Responsibility Timescale
05	The Parks Supervisor confirmed that inspections of the Leisure Gardens are carried out on an ad hoc basis.	Inappropriate use of sites or individual plots.	Medium	Periodic inspections should be carried out of Leisure Gardens sites with a nominated representative from the respective Leisure Gardeners Associations	The review process will be expressed in the new policy and then confirmed in detail in the new constitution arrangements	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor 31 March 2017
06	A budget of £5,410 has been provided for 2016/17 for both of the Leisure Garden sites and costs associated with their maintenance. However there is currently no rationale with regards to how this budget should be allocated over both sites	Overspend of budget Budgets not apportioned correctly or fairly.	Medium	A medium term planned maintenance programme be developed as the mechanism for determining annual budget allocations for the Leisure Gardeners Associations.	A short term reactive maintenance programme will be developed once the 2017/8 budget is agreed and this will be developed into a medium term budget once the policy and constitutional arrangements are in place, ahead of the 2018/19 financial year.	Town Clerk & Parks Supervisor 31 October 2017

Appendix 5: Reports with a Limited Assurance Opinion

Leisure Gardens

An Assurance review that considered the effectiveness of the Council's control framework in place for the management of risks associated with Leisure Gardens.

The review identified two High and four Medium Priority issues summarised below:

Constitution and formalised arrangements

- There are no formal agreements in place between the Council and the Leisure Gardeners Associations that would be used to deal with any potential breaches of the agreed arrangements or legislation.
- Following the dissolution of the Peterlee Leisure Gardeners Association (PLGA) each Association is required to have a written constitution in place. Whilst a draft constitution has been produced by Thorntree Gill, and presented to the Council for review, at the time of the audit, no constitution has been received from Lowhills Road.

Monitoring and management arrangements

- There is no monitoring by the Council of the arrangements in place for each association's management of the Leisure Gardens sites and their effectiveness, nor is any information reported to the Council.
- The Council is not provided with waiting list information by either Association that would help it to monitor the demand for leisure gardens and ensure the current provision of land is adequate.

Leisure Garden Inspections

- The Parks Supervisor confirmed that inspections of the Leisure Gardens is carried out on an ad hoc basis only.

Budget Monitoring

- A total budget of £5,410 has been allocated in 2016/17 to cover both of the Leisure Garden sites and the costs associated with their maintenance. However there is currently no rationale with regards to how this budget should be allocated between the sites.

An action plan has been prepared to address each of the recommendations highlighted and the Town Clerk has confirmed that corrective action is being taken to address recommendations identified. A follow up review is to be scheduled as a revision to the 2017/18 agreed Internal Audit Plan.

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF THE 13TH JANUARY
2017

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD ON FRIDAY 13TH JANUARY 2017

IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, PETERLEE AT 10.00AM

PRESENT:-

Mesdames:- K Hawley & S McDonnell

Messrs:- W M Jeffrey & A Watson

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence had been submitted.

44. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING of the 2nd December 2016, a copy of which had been previously circulated, were accepted.

45. SCRUTINY FORWARD PLAN

The Town Clerk spoke about the role of scrutiny and how they could be more actively involved. He suggested he could set up shared folders for Members to access and he could include information and research on the areas that the group were considering. The Chair felt that this would be an excellent way of being able to engage and become more involved in the scrutiny work of the council.

The Town Clerk mentioned the area of opening hours and the opening and closing of the Town's parks and cemetery. He referred to feedback from other councils around the country about the opening and closing of parks and play areas where there was a move to leaving areas open for the public and residents to access.

Members considered and agreed the list to be used as a programme of work :-

- (a) The restructure
- (b) Use of reserves
- (c) The ongoing review of policies

(d) Public engagement

(e) Leisure Gardens

It was felt that the restructure could now become a standard agenda item, along with policies. The issue of public engagement could be considered along with the use of reserves, with a view to getting some public involvement in the Councils priorities and programmes of improvement. Members said they would welcome the opportunity to regularly meet with residents and get them more actively engaged on a one to one basis in the Council's business.

Members also agreed the need for a mission statement and to set objectives and noted it was the intention to draft and then publish a council plan with the new council was elected in May 2017.

ACTIONS:-

- **It was agreed Policies and the re structure be standard agenda items;**
- **A set of shared folders be established in Office 365 for the future scrutiny projects;**
- **A project brief be prepared for the use of reserves and circulated to Members as soon as practicable.**

46. USE OF THE BAR AREA, THE PAVILION

To consider a motion submitted by the Scrutiny Working Group that "exclusive room hire by private, public or community groups will be prioritised over an open public bar, other than when a clear commercial or community opportunity exists (such as sporting events, Peterlee Show, etc).

The Town Clerk and Facilities Manager to be granted plenary powers to discern between private and community use as appropriate. A summary report on hire of the bar area to be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee on a quarterly basis as part of the quarterly budget outturn report for the Pavilion."

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF THE 13TH JANUARY
2017

AGREED this be submitted to the Council Meeting for consideration.

47. POLICIES – UPDATE

(a) Equality & Diversity

(b) Dismissal Policy

Members were circulated with drafts of these policies for feedback. It was asked if they could be “shared” in the folder set up for this Group.

AGREED policies be placed on the shared drive for this group.

48. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed the next meeting be held on **Friday 3rd February 2017 at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Shotton Hall.**

Report to: Peterlee Town Council Finance & General Purposes Committee

Date: 6th February 2017

Report of: Ian Morris, Town Clerk

Subject: Peterlee Town Council draft budget 2017/8

Report Purpose: To seek Members feedback on the detailed budget for 2017/18.

Background: At the Full Council meeting on Monday 23rd January 2017 Members approved a total budget for 2017/18 and set the precept figure of £1,256,977 – representing a 2% reduction in individual taxpayer precept contributions compared to 2016/17.

Headlines: Total projected expenditure 2017/8: £2,475,050 (up £209,473 from 2016/167)

Total projected income (before precept): £1,117,930 (up £190,160 from 2016/17)

Projected use of Reserves: £100,143 (up £14,304 from 2016/17)

Precept demand: £1,256,977

Average Council Tax Band D cost: £289.00 (down 2% from £294.90 in 2016/17)

Commentary: The draft budgets provide for a total turnover (gross expenditure) of £2,475,050 for 2017/8, an increase of £209,473 from 2016/17.

A number of pressures including:

- reduction in revenue support grant (c£48,000);
- annual pay rises and increments (c£20,000);
- employers pension costs (c£3,000), and
- other inflation (c£51,000)

have been offset by:

- ambitious targets for increased income generation (c£122,000 (net));
- efficiencies identified by Managers from their discretionary budgets (c£69,000, representing 15% of discretionary budget spend);
- an increasing tax base (c£30,000), and
- use of reserves (c£100,000).

Members have agreed that the 2017/18 precept sum be set at £1,256,977 which will equate to a Council Tax band D payment of £289.00, representing a 2% reduction from £294.90 in 2016/17.

Details: At recent meetings members have raised questions about a number of detailed budget areas. These include:

Budget area	2016/17	2017/18	Comment
Town Twinning	£1,500	£5,500	Increase due to 2017 being a hosting year.
Mayors Personal Allowance and Civic Duties	£1,500 + £5,000 = £6,500	£1,500 + £5,000 = £6,500	No increase for 2017/18 budget
Fireworks Display	£10,000	£15,000	Estimated additional costs of holding event on bonfire night in 2017 (Sunday)
Remembrance Parade	Nil	£2,000	Potential costs for organizing 2017 remembrance day parade.

The detailed draft budget for 2017/18 is included as appendix 1 to this report.

Members are reminded that the precept request agreed by Council has now been formally submitted to Durham County Council. As such any changes to detail budgets must be met from within the identified income/expenditure streams or from use of reserves.

Recommendation:

Members are recommended to note the contents of this report and to provide feedback on the itemised areas of expenditure itemised in this report or in the appended detailed budgets, prior to the final detail budget being presented to Council for approval in February 2017.

**Peterlee Town Council 2016/17
Forward Budget Detail - By Centre**

Note :- (-) Net Expenditure means INCOME is greater than EXPENDITURE

		Current Year Budget	Next Year Budget		
101 Central & Civic HQ Costs				Variance %	
4000	Salaries, Wages, Superan, NI	197300	219747	22447	11%
4003	Overtime	1500	1575	75	5%
4010	Cleaning Wages	4040	5633	1593	39%
4011	Facilities Staff - Wages	10000	10000	0	0%
4099	Pension Cont - Former Staff	12000	4500	-7500	-63%
4100	Training & Development - Staff	12000	12000	0	0%
4175	Personnel Services	20000	20000	0	0%
4190	Wages Processing DCC	5000	5000	0	0%
4200	Electricity	3500	3675	175	5%
4201	Gas	4000	4200	200	5%
4202	Water	840	882	42	5%
4205	Rates	2875	3019	144	5%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	300	300	0	0%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4220	Window Cleaning	400	400	0	0%
4225	Cleaning Materials	7000	7000	0	0%
4230	Furniture	250	250	0	0%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	2000	1000	-1000	-50%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	2000	5000	3000	150%
4350	Small Plant & Tools	6000	1000	-5000	-83%
4400	Telephones	1150	1150	0	0%
4401	Mobile Phone	1950	2200	250	13%
4405	Postage	6000	4500	-1500	-25%
4406	Petty Cash	400	200	-200	-50%
4410	Office Machine Hire & Mtce	13000	13000	0	0%
4412	Stationery & New Office Equip	5000	10000	5000	100%
4420	Publicity/Council Publications	4000	2000	-2000	-50%
4425	Insurance	85000	90000	5000	6%
4498	Health & Safety	3750	3750	0	0%
4499	Occupational Health	3000	3000	0	0%
4500	Fuel & Oils	14500	15225	725	5%
4501	Road Fund Tax	650	650	0	0%
4502	Vehicle Maintenance/Spares	16000	16000	0	0%
4503	Motor Insurance XS	500	500	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		446,155	467606	21451	5%
Total Income		0	0	0	0
Costs - Net Expenditure		446,155	467606	21451	5%

102 Democratic Costs					
4101	Training & Dev - Councillors	5000	7500	2500	50%
4125	Mayors Personal Allowance	1500	1500	0	0%
4126	Mayors Civic Duties	5000	5000	0	0%
4127	Participation Allowances	28000	28280	280	1%
4470	Civic Regalia	1000	1000	0	0%
4530	Twinning	1500	5500	4000	267%
Total Over Head Expenditure		42000	48780	6780	16%
Costs - Net Expenditure		42000	48780	6780	16%
103 Corporate Management					
4426	Subs to L.A. Bodies	3400	4000	600	18%
4430	Elections	6000	14000	8000	133%
4450	Audit Fees	6000	6900	900	15%
4455	Banking Pick Up Service	750	1000	250	33%
4458	Card Machine/Bank Fees	2500	5000	2500	100%
Total Over Head Expenditure		18650	30900	12250	66%
Management - Net Expenditure		18650	30900	12250	66%
105 Other Costs and income					
4460	General Fund	1000	500	-500	-50%
4461	Castle Eden Dene Centre	5000	5000	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		6000	5500	-500	-8%
1045	Precept Received	1251968	1256977	5009	0%
1046	Precept Support Grant	288198	238870	-49328	-17%
1209	Bank Interest	8000	2000	-6000	-75%
Total Income		1548166	1497847	-50319	-3%
Income - Net Expenditure		-1542166	-1492347	49819	-3%

201 S/Hall Banqueting Suite

4000	Salaries, Wages, Superan, NI	99070	103350	4280	4%
4003	Overtime	8500	8925	425	5%
4006	Building Maint. Contracts	1000	1000	0	0%
4010	Cleaning Wages	7210	11266	4056	56%
4070	Wages - Shotton Hall Grounds	24900	25644	744	3%
4174	Clothing & Uniforms	500	500	0	0%
4200	Electricity	12000	12600	600	5%
4201	Gas	10000	10500	500	5%
4202	Water	2500	2625	125	5%
4205	Rates	9660	10143	483	5%
4208	Licences	3500	3500	0	0%
4209	Trade Refuse Costs	1200	1200	0	0%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	1000	1000	0	0%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4213	Hygiene Services	2250	1125	-1125	-50%
4215	Refreshments	1300	1843	543	42%
4220	Window Cleaning	600	600	0	0%
4230	Furniture	5000	3000	-2000	-40%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	3000	1000	-2000	-67%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	3500	2500	-1000	-29%
4400	Telephones	3850	0	-3850	-100%
4420	Publicity/Council Publications	2900	4110	1210	42%
4421	Shotton Hall Events	2000	2835	835	42%
4424	Bond	6000	0	-6000	-100%
Total Over Head Expenditure		211690	209516	-2174	-1%
1305	Electricity Refunds - Caterer	4500	4725	225	5%
1306	Gas Refunds - Caterer	1600	1600	0	0%
1312	Miscellaneous Income	500	0	-500	-100%
1319	Hire Income	68000	92000	24000	35%
1320	Refreshment Income	2000	2970	970	49%
1321	Hire of Equipment	1500	2228	728	49%
1322	Shotton Hall Events	5000	7425	2425	49%
1323	Hire Chair covers etc	0	3267	3267	#DIV/0!
1324	Hire disco lights etc	0	5495	5495	#DIV/0!
Total Income		83100	119710	36610	44%
Suite - Net Expenditure		128590	89806	-38784	-30%

210 Shotton Hall Bar					
4005	Bar Gas	450	638	188	42%
4030	Bar Wages - Casuals	29330	41533	12203	42%
4214	Stocktaking Fees	1000	1100	100	10%
4570	Bar Purchases	68000	96390	28390	42%
Total Over Head Expenditure		98780	139661	40881	41%
1315	Bar Income	175000	259875	84875	49%
Total Income		175000	259875	84875	49%
Shotton Hall Bar - Net Expenditure		-76220	-120214	-43994	58%
215 Shotton Hall Catering					
4572	Catering Expenditure	125000	177188	52188	42%
Total Over Head Expenditure		125000	177188	52188	42%
1329	Catering Franchise	20000	20000	0	0%
1330	Catering Income	130000	193050	63050	49%
Total Income		150000	213050	63050	42%
Catering - Net Expenditure		-25000	-35862	-10862	43%

221 The Pavilion (Inc Sports Fac)

4000	Salaries, Wages, Superan, NI	108740	123892	15152	14%
4003	Overtime	4000	4200	200	5%
4006	Building Maint. Contracts	3370	3400	30	1%
4009	Bistro Expenditure	11500	25600	14100	123%
4010	Cleaning Wages	18150	24222	6072	33%
4056	Wages-Helford Rd Cricket Fld	7225	7453	228	3%
4057	Wages-Helford Rd F/Fields	5395	5565	170	3%
4061	Wages-Helford Road MUGA	3400	3507	107	3%
4081	Wages-Helford Rd Grounds	8050	8304	254	3%
4174	Clothing & Uniforms	500	500	0	0%
4200	Electricity	15500	16275	775	5%
4201	Gas	8610	9041	431	5%
4202	Water	4000	4200	200	5%
4205	Rates	12130	12737	607	5%
4208	Licences	5000	500	-4500	-90%
4209	Trade Refuse Costs	1000	1000	0	0%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	2400	2400	0	0%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4213	Hygiene Services	1050	525	-525	-50%
4216	Line Cleaning Costs	1300	0	-1300	-100%
4217	Lift Maintenance Costs	2000	2000	0	0%
4220	Window Cleaning	1000	1000	0	0%
4230	Furniture	1000	1000	0	0%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	1000	1000	0	0%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	3500	2500	-1000	-29%
4400	Telephones	2940	2940	0	0%
4406	Petty Cash	200	100	-100	-50%
4410	Office Machine Hire & Mtce	1250	1250	0	0%
4412	Stationery & New Office Equip	750	750	0	0%
4420	Publicity/Council Publications	1500	1500	0	0%
4424	Bond	5000	0	-5000	-100%
4581	Pool Table Costs	950	950	0	0%
4584	Sattelite TV Costs	3000	3000	0	0%
4585	Loan Repayment	50450	50450	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		296110	322010	25900	9%
1312	Miscellaneous Income	1800	1500	-300	-17%
1314	Bistro Sales	13500	29700	16200	120%
1319	Hire Income	30000	44550	14550	49%
1320	Refreshment Income	500	743	243	49%
1321	Hire of Equipment	50	50	0	0%
1341	Pool Table Income	1000	500	-500	-50%
1507	Helford Road Cricket Facility	900	900	0	0%
1508	Helford Road Football Field	1700	1700	0	0%
1509	Helford Road MUGA	17760	18000	240	1%
Total Income		67210	97643	30433	45%

Expenditure		228900	224367	-4533	-2%
225 The Pavilion Bar					
4005	Bar Gas	550	780	230	42%
4030	Bar Wages - Casuals	21730	30802	9072	42%
4214	Stocktaking Fees	1000	1050	50	5%
4570	Bar Purchases	40000	56700	16700	42%
Total Over Head Expenditure		63280	89332	26052	41%
1315	Bar Income	83600	124146	40546	49%
Total Income		83600	124146	40546	49%
The Pavilion Bar - Net Expenditure		-20320	-34814	-14494	71%
241 Lowhills Road Community Fac					
4010	Cleaning Wages	2450	3380	930	38%
4055	Wages-lowhills Rd F/Fields	10350	5565	-4785	-46%
4079	Wages-L/Hill Rd Grounds	3130	3229	99	3%
4200	Electricity	5952	6250	298	5%
4202	Water	1995	2095	100	5%
4205	Rates	840	882	42	5%
4209	Trade Refuse Costs	250	250	0	0%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	1014	1014	0	0%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4213	Hygiene Services	200	100	-100	-50%
4220	Window Cleaning	75	75	0	0%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	500	500	0	0%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	3000	1500	-1500	-50%
4400	Telephones	250	250	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		30256	25339	-4917	-16%
1307	Water Refunds - Surestart	500	525	25	5%
1308	Electricity Refund - Surestart	1400	1470	70	5%
1319	Hire Income	5500	5500	0	0%
1506	Lowhills Road Football Field	2000	2000	0	0%
Total Income		9400	9495	95	1%
Expenditure		20856	15844	-5012	-24%

242 Lowhills Road Bowling Club

4010	Cleaning Wages	566	563	-3	0%
4054	Wages-Lowhills Rd B/Green	5680	5859	179	3%
4200	Electricity	630	662	32	5%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	250	0	-250	-100%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	300	6500	6200	2067%
Total Over Head Expenditure		7426	13584	6158	83%

1505	Lowhills Road Bowling Green	550	550	0	0%
Total Income		550	550	0	0%

Expenditure **6876** **13034** **6158** **90%**

261 Eden Lane Community Fac

4010	Cleaning Wages	3580	0	-3580	-100%
4051	Wages-Eden Lane F/Fields	8080	8335	255	3%
4080	Wages-E/Lane Grounds Maint	18625	19212	587	3%
4200	Electricity	3000	0	-3000	-100%
4201	Gas	5500	0	-5500	-100%
4202	Water	2500	0	-2500	-100%
4205	Rates	1500	0	-1500	-100%
4208	Licences	500	0	-500	-100%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	1030	0	-1030	-100%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	450	0	-450	-100%
4213	Hygiene Services	200	0	-200	-100%
4215	Refreshments	100	0	-100	-100%
4218	Sports Equipment	500	0	-500	-100%
4220	Window Cleaning	100	0	-100	-100%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	150	0	-150	-100%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	4950	1000	-3950	-80%
4400	Telephones	200	0	-200	-100%
4406	Petty Cash	50	0	-50	-100%
4410	Office Machine Hire & Mtce	50	0	-50	-100%
4420	Publicity/Council Publications	1200	0	-1200	-100%
4475	Communication Mast Exp	2200	0	-2200	-100%
Total Over Head Expenditure		54465	28547	-25918	-48%

1210	Communication Mast Rental	7322	2400	-4922	-67%
1319	Hire Income	5200	1	-5199	-100%
1332	Activities (Classes etc)	2000	0	-2000	-100%
1502	Eden Lane Football Fields	1600	800	-800	-50%
Total Income		16122	3201	-12921	-80%

Expenditure **38343** **25346** **-12997** **-34%**

262 Eden Lane Depot

4010	Cleaning Wages	4555	6196	1641	36%
4200	Electricity	5250	5513	263	5%
4202	Water	600	630	30	5%
4205	Rates	3780	3969	189	5%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	1575	1575	0	0%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4230	Furniture	250	250	0	0%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	750	500	-250	-33%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	2000	2000	0	0%
4400	Telephones	3000	1000	-2000	-67%
4410	Office Machine Hire & Mtce	3000	2000	-1000	-33%
4412	Stationery & New Office Equip	1000	2000	1000	100%
Total Over Head Expenditure		26010	25883	-127	0%

den Lane Depot - Net Expenditure **26010** **25883** **-127** **0%**

263 Eden Lane Bowling Club

4010	Cleaning Wages	566	563	-3	0%
4050	Wages-Eden Lane B/Green	3880	4002	122	3%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	250	0	-250	-100%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	500	1000	500	100%
Total Over Head Expenditure		5196	5566	370	7%

1501 Eden Lane Bowling Green 550 550 0 0%

Total Income **550** **550** **0** **0**

Club - Net Expenditure **4646** **5016** **370** **8%**

280 Woodhouse Park

4010	Cleaning Wages	3330	4506	1176	35%
4078	Wages-Woodhouse Park	30960	31937	977	3%
4200	Electricity	4024	4225	201	5%
4202	Water	630	662	32	5%
4206	Rent	1500	1500	0	0%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	750	750	0	0%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	1050	500	-550	-52%
4250	Repairs & Decoration	3000	4000	1000	33%
4400	Telephones	250	250	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		45744	48580	2836	6%

Woodhouse Park - Net Expenditure **45744** **48580** **2836** **6%**

290 Sports Development

4062	Wages - Sport Development	56950	58649	1699	3%
4065	Marketing	500	500	0	0%
4067	Activities/Events	12000	15600	3600	30%
4068	Equipment	300	300	0	0%
4069	Training & Development	600	0	-600	-100%
4073	Licences, Membership Ins	250	300	50	20%
4174	Clothing & Uniforms	200	200	0	0%
4215	Refreshments	50	50	0	0%
4412	Stationery & New Office Equip	150	150	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		71000	75749	4749	7%
1514	Coaches Forum income	0	2000	2000	
1510	Activities Ex Classes & Events	16000	20800	4800	30%
1513	Funding Grant	5000	1000	-4000	-80%
Total Income		21000	23800	2800	13%
ment - Net Expenditure		50000	51949	1949	4%

301 Parks General

4000	Salaries, Wages, Superan, NI	60150	64645	4495	7%
4001	Sick Pay	12390	12781	391	3%
4002	Holiday Pay	50580	52175	1595	3%
4003	Overtime	12000	12600	600	5%
4071	Wages-Dene Parks	16665	17191	526	3%
4072	Wages-Parks Attendants	57720	59086	1366	2%
4074	Wages-Misc. None Site Duties	2495	2574	79	3%
4075	Wages-General Open Spaces	25805	26619	814	3%
4076	Wages-Play Areas	15480	15968	488	3%
4174	Clothing & Uniforms	3000	3000	0	0%
4202	Water	175	184	9	5%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	500	500	0	0%
4240	Miscellaneous Expenditure	250	250	0	0%
4300	Equipment & Supplies	7900	7900	0	0%
4305	Manures, Fertilizers & Seeds	10000	11000	1000	10%
4310	Bedding Plants, Shrubs & Bed	20000	18000	-2000	-10%
4360	Play Equipment-Repairs	5000	5000	0	0%
4370	Tree Maint, Surveys & Services	6500	8500	2000	31%
4371	Public Seats & Bins	1500	1500	0	0%
4373	Hire of Skips	3900	6000	2100	54%
TBC	Vehicle Leasing	0	13600	13600	#DIV/0!
Total Over Head Expenditure		312010	339073	27063	9%
Total Income		0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Parks General - Net Expenditure		312010	339073	27063	9%

325 Cemetery & Burials

4000	Salaries, Wages, Superan, NI	35815	36945	1130	3%
4200	Electricity	680	714	34	5%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	0	-250	-100%
4240	MiscellaneousExpenditure	200	1200	1000	500%
4300	Equipment & Supplies	900	1000	100	11%
4502	Vehicle Maintenance/Spares	1000	0	-1000	-100%
4701	Past Burials-Contrib to Hord	8700	4350	-4350	-50%
Total Over Head Expenditure		47545	44209	-3336	-7%

1702	Burials and Charges	12000	12000	0	0%
Total Income		12000	12000	0	0%

urials - Net Expenditure **35545** **32209** **-3336** **-9%**

350 Allotments

4000	Salaries, Wages, Superan, NI	3250	3353	103	3%
4202	Water	1260	1323	63	5%
4211	Ins XS/Vandalism	250	250	0	0%
4240	MiscellaneousExpenditure	400	500	100	25%
4300	Equipment & Supplies	500	500	0	0%
4306	Allotment Access Paths	2500	2500	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		8160	8426	266	3%

1754	Allotment Rents & Water	2040	2040	0	0%
Total Income		2040	2040	0	0%

Allotments - Net Expenditure **6120** **6386** **266** **4%**

401 Town Centre Office

4200	Electricity	310	326	16	5%
4202	Water	325	341	16	5%
4205	Rates	5410	5681	271	5%
4206	Rent	12000	12000	0	0%
4207	Service Charges	3090	3090	0	0%
4210	Alarm System & CCTV	600	600	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		21735	22037	302	1%

Total Income **0** **0** **0** **#DIV/0!**

ffice - Net Expenditure **21735** **22037** **302** **1%**

410 Town Activities (S.137 Exp)

4427	Donations	11000	11000	0	0%
4715	Clock Maintenance	515	515	0	0%
4720	Gritting Service & Bins	2000	2000	0	0%
4725	Dog Fouling Maint. & Bins	2250	2250	0	0%
TBC	Remembrance Parade	0	2000	2000	#DIV/0!
Total Over Head Expenditure		15765	17765	2000	13%

Expenditure **15765** **17765** **2000** **13%**

430 Town Events

4730	Peterlee Show	50000	65000	15000	30%
4733	Garden Competition	1500	1500	0	0%
4740	Fireworks Display	10000	15000	5000	50%
4742	Mayoress at Home/Carol	2000	2000	0	0%
4751	Senior Citizens	1800	1800	0	0%
4756	Summer Events	2000	2000	0	0%
4757	Childrens Pantomine	2800	3500	700	25%
TBC	Fake Festival	0	25000	25000	#DIV/0!
Total Over Head Expenditure		70100	115800	45700	65%

Total Direct Expenditure **0** **0** **0** **#DIV/0!**

TBC	Fake Festival	0	30000	30000	
1851	Peterlee Show	11000	11000	0	0%
Total Income		11000	11000	30000	273%

Town Events - Net Expenditure **59100** **104800** **15700** **27%**

901 Capital Projects

4912	New Vehicles	38500	26000	-12500	-32%
4913	Capitalised Maint - S/Hall	50000	50000	0	0%
4920	Consultants Fees	9000	9000	0	0%
4930	Eden Lane Works	50000	25000	-25000	-50%
4940	Helford Road MUGA Sinking	45000	54000	9000	20%
4954	Organisational Strategy Fund	25000	25000	0	0%
4955	Play Equipment	25000	25000	0	0%
Total Over Head Expenditure		242500	214000	-28500	-12%

Total Income **0** **0** **0** **#DIV/0!**

Capital Projects - Net Expenditure **242500** **214000** **-28500** **-12%**

Total Budget Expenditure :	2,265,577	2475050	209473	9%
Income :	2179738	2374907	195169	9%
Net Expenditure	85,839	100143	14304	17%

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE OF THE 12TH JANUARY 2017

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,

SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON THURSDAY 12TH JANUARY 2017

PRESENT:- Councillors

C Robbins & G Cowie

17. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The accounts for payment for December 2016 amounting to £23,726.82 including all payments made for that month, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were considered.

RECOMMENDED the payments as listed, be made.

Benefits of Membership briefing note – January 2017

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and County Associations have a key national and local role including:

- building the sector's reputation with principal councils, national organisations and the media.
- lobbying the government and Parliament.
- identifying and sharing good practice.
- improving councils' capacity to do the job.
- providing high quality advice and guidance, including on legal, finance, planning, housing and other subjects.
- ensuring councils are aware of upcoming legislation and issues of potential interest to them so they can act accordingly.

Some of the direct benefits of membership for local councils are set out below:

- access to, and direct influence over, a national family of county associations and national body working together to help them provide services to their communities, understand the legal and financial framework in which they work, and provide a strong national voice in the media and to government.
- lobbying and campaigning for policy and other changes to make the work of councils easier, recent successes include:
 - successfully lobbying against the extension of referenda principles to local councils, a continuing battle
 - setting up an independent company – SAAA – to procure external audit services for our councils to save them time and money;
 - successfully slowing the withdrawal of council tax support funding, ensuring £120 million has been passed on to local councils since 2013;
 - securing £4.7 million for a Transparency Fund to help smaller councils comply with new transparency rules;
 - impending regulations to increase the number of people required to trigger a parish poll to reduce vexatious use;
 - extension of role of ombudsman to cover local councils;
 - persuading the Treasury to consider giving the sector a share of business rates and exempting public conveniences from business rates, with new powers for principal councils to provide full relief to local councils from 2018;
 - new work to promote and support the role of local councils in devolution including during the passage of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, a dedicated area on the website, a free joint conference with the Local Government Association and development of new guidance and case studies;

- securing government funding for councils getting involved in Our Place, financial support for county associations and communities through the new councils programme (£1m) and a continuation of grant support for councils to develop a neighbourhood plan (£22.5m);
- securing measures in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and Neighbourhood Planning Bill 2017 to support and strengthen neighbourhood planning.
- a package of work to better support and engage with larger councils, including a new fees cap at £1750, extending the Direct Access Scheme to 500 local councils, establishing a new national 'Super Councils Network' including LGA associate membership, facilitating a 'coastal towns' special interest group, new resources such as a procurement toolkit and eHub to facilitate online networking and sharing of information and practice, greater involvement with national work and meetings with government, new events such as access to parliamentary receptions, introduction of roundtables and leadership development events with LGA, and a dedicated conference for larger councils.
- up-to-date advice and guidance through member only websites, publications such as our national journal LCR, Chief Executive's bulletin, DIS, and e-newsletter; toolkits and conferences on an extensive range of subjects including devolution, securing external funding, neighbourhood planning, affordable housing, procurement, and using social media; our website had over 350,000 page views last year.
- to improve your council and enhance the skills of councilors and clerks, including through nationally agreed training such as the Certificate in Local Council Administration, participating in the Local Council Award Scheme, councillors benefitting from other National Training Strategy initiatives such as the Good Councillors Guide and attending personal development and training events;
- access to advice on financial and audit matters through collective procurement of audit services, using the practitioners guide to audit, and model financial standing orders.
- up-to-date information on the legal and financial framework in which councils work including access to model standing orders and around 110 legal topic notes and briefings.
- written and telephone advice from a dedicated resource of three highly experienced solicitors and an external expert on finance and audit; our team dealt with around 650 queries last year.
- communications advice and guidance including media relations, marketing and help with crisis communications.
- advice and guidance on your role as employers on everything from contracts, disciplinary procedures and performance management, to recruitment and pay; this year we published an updated version of the popular councillors guide to good employment.

Affiliation fee for NALC services – 6.73p per elector in 2017/18 and 6.86p per elector in 2018/19

Kay Tweddle

From: Stephen Ragg <Stephen.Ragg@durham.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2017 13:48
Subject: External Auditors and Their Reports

Afternoon All

Following the demise of the Audit Commission, The Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA) became responsible for appointing auditors to local public bodies and for overseeing the delivery of consistent, high-quality and effective external audit services. Following completion of the 2015/16 audit process the PSAA has produced a report focusing on the performance of both principal council and parish council audits for 2015/16. This is their second report and summarises the results of auditors' work at 497 principal bodies and 9,756 small bodies for 2015/16. The report covers the timeliness and quality of financial reporting, auditors' local value for money work, and the extent to which auditors used their statutory reporting powers. A link to their website and further reports and information on which councils received qualified audits etc can be found in the link below.

<http://www.psa.co.uk/appointing-auditors/terms-of-appointment/reports-on-the-results-of-auditors-work/>

Small bodies included in this report were required to prepare their 2015/16 accounting statements in accordance with statutory requirements and timetables, as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and proper practices in the form of the Practitioners' Guide approved by the Joint Practitioners' Advisory Group and published jointly by the National Association of Local Councils, the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Association of Drainage Authorities.

Small bodies complete their accounting statements in the form of an annual return. The annual return includes the:

- accounting statements
- annual governance statement (AGS); and
- external auditor's certificate and opinion.

According to this report, parish councils (Small bodies) were required to publish their 2015/16 accounting statements together with any certificate or opinion entered by the local auditor, and the AGS on a website, by 30 September 2016. In practice, small bodies fulfil this requirement by publishing the annual return. Parish Meetings can meet this requirement by posting their annual return in a conspicuous place.

Using the above link you will be able to read that

- For small bodies, auditors were able to issue their opinion on the annual return by 30 September 2016 for 97 per cent of parish councils however this is down from 99 per cent the previous year.
- The number of qualified opinions issued to parish councils remained consistent with the previous year at 14 per cent or 1,342 parish councils. Using the link above you can find details of these councils.
- The most common reason for Annual Governance Statement (AGS) qualifications for small bodies for 2015/16 related to accounts preparation, followed by risk management arrangements and the response of audited bodies to internal and external audit reports.
- I'm pleased to report that no Public Interest Reports were issued for parish councils in County Durham.

If you want to read this report in full please use the link shown above.

The PSAA will most likely publish a similar report at this time next year focusing on the final year of their involvement with parish council Audits of the 16/17 accounts.

As you will be aware the new Smaller Audit Appointments Authority has just released details of the new Auditors (Mazars LLC) who will be undertaking audits of parish councils from 17/18 accounts onwards.

Steve
County Durham Association of Local Councils

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cdalc@durham.gov.uk

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Kay Tweddle

From: Stephen Ragg <Stephen.Ragg@durham.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 January 2017 08:59
Subject: Arrangements to Count the Votes at the May 2017 Elections
Attachments: Briefing Note to Members of Arrangements to Count the Votes.docx

Dear All

Please find attached details of a briefing paper I have received from David Collingwood - Electoral Services Manager at Durham County Council. This paper provides more detailed information of the count and verification process for the counting of votes following the 4 May ballot.

Please note that the counting of parish council votes for contested elections will not start until Saturday morning (6 May) and this will be held in Spennymoor Leisure Centre.

Should you have any queries regarding this process please contact David Collingwood on 03000 261201 or email david.collingwood@durham.gov.uk

Steve Ragg
County Durham Association of Local Councils

03000 269921
cdalc@durham.gov.uk

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Briefing Note for Members

25 January, 2017



Report of Returning Officer

Report of Colette Longbottom, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To advise members of arrangements to count the votes cast in the County and Parish Council elections taking place 4 May, 2017.

Background

- 2 At the first all out Durham County and Parish Council elections in 2013 the verification and counting of the votes was split between two venues, Spennymoor Leisure Centre and the Louisa Centre, Stanley. The allocation of Divisions to count venues was based on the distance between the Division and the count venue
- 3 Ballot boxes were taken in at Close of Poll on the Thursday night, the verification for both County and Parish ballot papers was undertaken on the Friday morning with the counting of the votes for the County Divisions taking place on the Friday afternoon and those for the contested Parish areas on the Saturday.
- 4 Although the above process worked well, I believe there are areas for improvement by taking a different approach in May 2017.
- 5 I am arranging that ballot boxes be taken in, and the number of ballots at both County and Parish elections be 'verified' on the Thursday night following close of poll. The large number of vehicles attending to drop off ballot boxes means that we need to retain both of the existing venues for this process. Following verification the ballot papers will be sealed in boxes for each Division and Parish, and be securely stored overnight.
- 6 The counting of the votes, both County and Parish, will take place at a single venue, Spennymoor Leisure Centre.
- 7 The County elections will be counted on the Friday, commencing at 11.00am.
- 8 Depending on the number of contested Parish elections, they will be counted on the Saturday, again at Spennymoor Leisure Centre.

- 9 To achieve this, the ballot papers securely stored overnight will be brought together at Spennymoor Leisure Centre Friday morning ready for the County count to commence at 11.00am.
- 10 It should be noted that the count at Spennymoor Leisure Centre will take place in two rooms, the Sports Hall and the North Stage Ballroom. Count table numbers would reduce by 6. Whilst the counting may take a little longer it will start earlier in the day and should be concluded by 5.30pm which is a similar time to the last set of county and parish elections. I am also arranging that count supervisors use laptop computers in order that the totalling up can be done on excel which will be quicker and prevent human error in adding up.
- 11 The Electoral team will all be working together at the same venue which provides for cover and support. The Returning Officer and deputies will be in one place which will ensure consistency in the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers. The Declarations of Results will be announced from one venue which will allow the overall picture to be seen without delay and will aid the Communications Team.
- 12 This arrangement will also prove cost effective as savings will be made by not using the Louisa Centre, Stanley for 2 additional days and as such, venue and table hire costs will be reduced.
- 13 Division counts will be allocated to specific tables. We could either start with the counts for the three member divisions (as they are the most complicated), followed by the two member divisions and finally the single member divisions. Alternatively we could allocate tables three, two and single member divisions from the beginning which would have the benefit of spacing out the timings of the declarations.
- 14 Wherever the counting of the votes takes place, parking will be an issue.
- 15 Discussions have been held with a view to transporting count staff from the park and ride (P&R) facilities in Durham. Both Howlands and Sniperley P&R are at capacity and cannot be used for this purpose. The Belmont P&R would be available for use.
- 16 I am also looking into other possible alternatives such as Durham Gate to locate a temporary P&R.
- 17 This will be at a cost to the County Council but should mean that sufficient parking will be available within Spennymoor for candidates and agents. There is also potential to transport candidates and agents from the park and ride facility at Belmont.
- 18 In addition to using a P&R arrangement, I am also looking to "reserve" one of the Council car parks in the area for the sole use of candidates and agents.

Recommendations and reasons

- 19 Members to note the changed arrangements to centralise the Counting of the Votes and Declaration of Results at the 4 May elections into one venue at Spennymoor Leisure Centre.

Contact: David Collingwood Tel: 03000 261 201

Kay Tweddle

From: Stephen Ragg <Stephen.Ragg@durham.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2017 09:54
Subject: County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service public consultation

A public consultation is taking place to help County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) plan for the future provision of services. The consultation will run for 12 weeks until Monday 20 February 2016.

A document giving background information about the consultation and CDDFRS and can be viewed at http://bit.ly/consultation_2017-18

Three consultation questions, including information relating to each one, are set out in this document. Answers and comments can be submitted online via the survey at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/consultation2017-18/

For a hard copy of the document please call 0845 3058383 or email ServiceHQ@ddf.fire.gov.uk

Funding for the fire and rescue service comes from two main sources: a government grant, providing approximately 35 per cent of the total, and precept payments from local tax-payers and non-domestic rate-payers in County Durham and Darlington, which make up the remaining 65 per cent.

Since 2010, CDDFRS has transformed the way it provides services to the community in response to a £6m cut in central government funding. In 2016 the Fire Authority agreed to accept the government's offer of a four year funding settlement. This settlement still results in a reduction in government funding of 19 per cent in the medium term, forcing the Service to consider further proposals to reduce costs.

Before decisions are made CDDFRS is keen to consult people living and working in the area about three proposals which could affect spending and the way the Service operates.

Colin Bage, deputy chief fire officer for County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service, said: "We would be very grateful if people could spare a few minutes to take part in our consultation. This is your fire and rescue service, funded by you and in existence to protect the community. Your help is invaluable to us as we prepare to make decisions about future spending priorities.

"It is important to stress that of the three proposals we are consulting on, none of them include closure of fire stations in County Durham and Darlington, reduction in the number of fire appliances that we run or fewer firefighters. In fact, we are currently recruiting our first intake of firefighter apprentices and we will be beginning another round of whole-time firefighter recruitment in the New Year.

"The three proposals we are consulting on cover further collaboration with partner organisations such as police, ambulance, local councils and health services. We hope our 12 week consultation will give everyone living and working in our area time to express their views."

Councillor Michele Hodgson, chair of County Durham and Darlington Fire Authority, said:

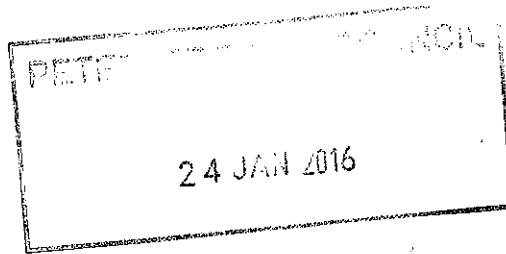
"Protecting front line services continues to be our priority. These three proposals are designed to ensure that we continue to work efficiently and effectively with other emergency services and partner agencies to ensure our local communities are safe despite the financial challenges we face."

Steve Ragg
County Durham Association of Local Councils

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General Secretary

**Councillor
Brian Nelson**

Council Offices
6 Goatbeck Terrace
Langley Moor
Durham, DH7 8JJ

Office: 0191 378 9947
Mobile: 07791 574 879

16/1/2017

The Future for Local Government Youth Services

24th-26th February 2017 The Royal Clifton Hotel & Spa, Southport

The National Association of Councillors will be holding its next conference in Southport and the subject will be The Future for Local Government Youth Services. Local Government is under great pressure to reduce spending and is therefore having to cut or reorganise services. Many authorities are looking at ways to deliver youth services in ways that have not been considered in the past. Many smaller Parish & Town Councils are getting more involved than they have in the past.

This conference will hear from experts that have delivered relevant, modern and sustainable youth provision models. Councillors at all levels need to hear about these new innovations in youth service delivery.

I have attached an application/booking form for your convenience.

Accommodation may be limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

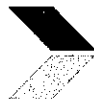
Yours Faithfully

Cllr Brian Nelson

General Secretary

National Association of Councillors

Representing local government councillors nationwide

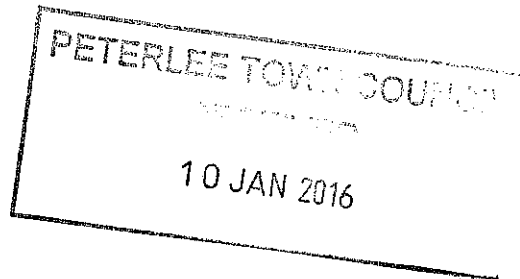


COMMUNITY-POWERED
EMERGENCY CARE

Great North Air Ambulance
Northumberland Wing
The Imperial Centre
Grange Road
Darlington DL1 5NQ

T: 01325 487 263
F: 01325 489 819

Ms K Tweddle
Deputy Town Clerk
Peterlee Town Council
Shotton Hall
PETERLEE
SR8 2PH



Our Reference: 15800

9 January 2017

Dear Ms Tweddle,

Thank you for choosing to support the Great North Air Ambulance Service.

Last year, we flew 869 missions across our region. We were there when those people needed us most. To enable us to continue to provide this service, we must raise £4.5m every year. We can only achieve this with the generous support of people like you.

Your donation of £250.00 from Councillors R Kyle, K Liddell, S Miles, R J Curtis and C Watkins will help toward the continued funding of life-saving services.

Our 2015-2016 annual report has been finalised and we are currently awaiting printed copies. Once we have received these I will post a copy to you for your information which I hope you will find useful.

Best wishes

Laura Simpson
On behalf of Great North Air Ambulance Service

Privacy Notice: (Please read)

From time to time we may wish to contact you by email, post or telephone. If you do not wish us to do this please let us know by calling 01325 487263, emailing info@greatnorthairambulance.co.uk or completing the contact preferences form on our website.

Code of Conduct



Version: 1
September 2016

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1 Introduction

1.1 What is the Code about?

Peterlee Town Council expects high standards of conduct from its employees. This document sets out the minimum standards we expect of you and provides a framework to help you understand the protocols which apply to you and gives guidance to help you comply with them.

All employees of Peterlee Town Council must maintain the standards and integrity of this Code and carry out their duties honestly and fairly.

1.2 Who does the policy and procedure apply to?

This Code covers all employees of Peterlee Town Council. Where applicable this Code will also apply to agency workers, contractors, consultants or third parties providing work or services for, or on behalf of, the Council.

1.3 Responsibilities

All employees of the Council have a responsibility to ensure they comply with this Code along with any other policies or procedures referred to in this document. Employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to councillors and fellow employees with impartiality.

1.4 Monitoring

All information will be handled sensitively and used only for its proper purpose. However confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as information might have to be disclosed where an issue results in formal proceedings.

1.5 Publicising/distribution of the Code

A copy of this Code is available from your manager and copy can also be viewed on cloud storage at (insert link here).

New employees will be informed of the existence of this Code in recruitment and induction information.

1.6 Reviewing the Code

The operation of this Code will be kept under review and such changes will be made to the Code as deemed appropriate and in accordance with agreed consultation protocols.

2 Principles

This Code has been developed in line with the recommendations of the Nolan Committee's Standards in Public Life, establishing the Seven Principles of Public Life, which are:

Selflessness - You should act in the public interest and not in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, family, or friends.

Integrity - You should not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.

Objectivity - You must make choices on merit when making decisions on appointments, contracts, or recommending rewards and benefits for individuals.

Accountability - You are accountable for your decisions and actions, and you must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is necessary to ensure this.

Openness - You should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty - You should be truthful. You have a duty to declare any private interests relating to your work and you need to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership - You should promote and support these principles in your behaviour and be willing to challenge poor behaviour whenever it occurs.

2.1 When working on behalf of Peterlee Town Council, you must:

- act in the interests of the Council when carrying out your duties, and in accordance with the Nola principles of public life of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- comply with the service requirements, policies and standards, legislation and other professional standards which apply to your role;
- declare to the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk to the personnel committee) any potential or actual conflicts of interest or relationships that may impact on your work, or that of the Council;
- report any concerns or breaches of this Code, or any other Council policies, to your manager;
- ask your manager if you are unsure what is required of you.

3 Declaration forms

Declaration forms (CCE1 – CCE4) are to be completed as detailed in this Code. All declaration forms are available from the cloud based storage her (insert link here) and will be held by the Town Clerk (or nominated representative) to be stored onto a central register. A copy of the completed declaration form will also be placed on an employee's personal file. All forms will be acknowledged and recorded whether approved or declined. The forms must be completed in full.

Form CCE1	Declaration of Relationships with External Contractor or Supplier
Form CCE2	Declaration of Personal Interests
Form CCE3	Request for Approval to Undertake Outside Work
Form CCE4	Declaration of Offers of Hospitality/Gifts

4 Procedure

4.1 Personal conduct

As an employee and representative of the Council, you are expected to conduct yourself to the highest standards and act with honesty, integrity and professionalism.

You must:

- carry out the full requirements of your role, as detailed in your contract of employment (statement of particulars), job description and Council policies and procedures;
- attend work in accordance with the terms of your contract of employment (statement of particulars) and comply with the Council's Attendance Management Policy and Procedure;
- act in an appropriate manner in any situation where you can be readily identified as a Council employee, whether at work or otherwise;
- maintain acceptable standards of appearance and personal hygiene;
- wear, and maintain in a reasonable condition, Council uniform, clothing and personal protective equipment, if provided to you;
- report any shortfalls in the provision of Council services to your manager;
- report any concerns / allegations / suspicions of fraud, corruption, bribery, theft or other irregularity, as a matter of urgency, to your manager;
- keep relationships with councillors, employees, contractors or partners, potential contractors or service users, on a professional basis.

You must not:

- engage in any conduct or behaviour that is harmful to the reputation of the Council, its services or interests, or conduct which brings the Council into disrepute, even when outside of work;
- be under the influence of alcohol or unprescribed drugs so as to adversely affect your work;
- misuse your official position or seek to use information obtained in the course of your work, for personal interests or the interests of others;
- criticise the Council either through media, social media, verbal or written communication.

4.2 Protecting confidential information

Maintaining confidentiality of sensitive information is essential. Information must only be disclosed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 which covers manual and computerised information, including emails.

You must:

- obtain manager approval prior to taking any paper records/hard copy material off site which contain personal or confidential information;
- report any suspected data losses or security breaches immediately to your manager and to the Town Clerk;
- label and store information documents to allow access to authorised users and restrict unauthorised users;

- refer any media or press enquiries to the Town Clerk immediately, and follow his instructions;
- check with your manager if you are in doubt about whether you can provide information to a third party.

You must not:

- disclose your computer password / login details to anyone;
- use information or facilities provided, for unauthorised personal use, improper or commercial gain, or for fraudulent or malicious activities;
- compromise the security of Council information, for example by installing unauthorised software, inappropriately securing information or interfering with standard security settings;
- disclose any confidential information relating to the Council, service users, employees or anyone else who has contact with the Council, either whilst at work or outside of work, unless you have express permission to do so;
- release any information relating to an employee's private affairs unless their consent has first been obtained, unless there is a statutory duty on the Council to provide this information.

4.3 Internet and social networking

Internet access for personal use is at the Council's discretion and must not affect an employee's performance or productivity at work.

The Council may monitor the use of the internet for legitimate business reasons, including compliance with this Code. By using the internet whilst at work and/or from a Council-provided device, employees are deemed to have consented to the monitoring, recording and auditing of internet use.

You must:

- make it clear when posting information or comments on social networking sites that any personal views expressed do not represent those of Peterlee Town Council;
- inform your manager immediately if you have acted inappropriately when using social media, even if the mistake has since been resolved;
- report to your manager any instances where you believe another employee has posted inappropriate or offensive comments on social networking sites.

You must not:

- post information on social networking sites which is confidential to the Council, its suppliers, customers or contractors;
- post entries on social networking sites about work colleagues, customers or any other person linked to the Council which are derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive in any way or which could bring the Council into disrepute.

4.4 Political neutrality

Employees of the Council are required to work with all councillors, not just those of the majority group.

You must try at all times to:

- remain politically neutral and objective in your work role.

You must not:

- allow your personal or political opinions to interfere with your work;
- display political posters, including election material, in Council buildings or areas.

Certain posts within the Council are deemed to be 'politically restricted' due to the nature of the job. Your job description will state whether your post is politically restricted. If you hold a politically restricted post you must not:

- stand as a candidate for public elected office for another Parish or Town Council;
- hold office in a political party;
- canvass at elections or act as an election agent or sub-agent for a candidate for election;
- speak or write publicly, demonstrating support for a political party.

4.5 Working with councillors

Mutual respect, trust and courtesy between employees and councillors is essential to good local government.

You must:

- give appropriate and impartial advice to councillors when requested;
- ensure working relationships are kept on a professional basis;
- speak to your manager if you are unsure what information you are able to provide to councillors.

You must not:

- form close personal relationships with councillors which could damage your working relationship.

4.6 Working with the public, service users and colleagues

You must:

- be polite, courteous and helpful when dealing with all members of the local community, customers, councillors and fellow employees;
- treat all groups and individuals with respect, value their opinions and beliefs and behave in an appropriate manner;
- keep all service users' money, personal records, information and correspondence secure in accordance with the Council procedures, and the Data Protection Act;
- advise your manager if you have any concerns about the standard of service being provided to service user.

You must not:

- discriminate unfairly in the provision of facilities, services, employment practices or any other area of Council duties;
- form inappropriate close personal relationships with service users, their relatives or carers;
- give any service information to anyone except those authorised to receive it.

4.7 Criminal convictions/loss of licence or qualification

You must inform your manager immediately if you:

- receive any criminal conviction, caution or are held on bail, or placed under bond during your employment with the Council, either within or outside of your normal working hours;
- receive any driving convictions that result in the loss of your driving licence;
- have engaged in behaviour that has resulted in loss of licence, affiliation, accreditation or qualification that may impact on your ability to carry out the duties of your contracted role.

However, if your post is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, as well as the above, you must also inform your manager immediately if you are subject to a criminal investigation. If you are unsure about whether your post requires a DBS check, please seek clarification from the Town Clerk (or nominated representative). All information you provide in this regard will be dealt with in strict confidence.

4.8 Gifts and hospitality

Gifts, hospitality or benefits in kind offered to you must be treated with caution in order to avoid any suggestion of improper motives or conduct.

It is a serious criminal offence under the Bribery Act 2010 to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or neglecting to do something, or showing favour or disfavour to any person in your official capacity. If an allegation is made against you, it will be for you to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained. Offences can carry a maximum of 10 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine for an individual. For the avoidance of doubt, you must:

- complete form CCE4 to seek approval from the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk from the personnel committee) if you are offered any gifts, hospitality or advantage, other than token gifts of a nominal value before you accept such items;
- use tact and courtesy if you need to refuse a gift or hospitality;
- report to your manager any gifts which are delivered to your place of work where you may have a problem returning it;
- under no circumstances should gifts or hospitality be accepted that include attendance at sporting events;
- report to the Town Clerk (or nominated representative) any approaches made to you which could be viewed as being aimed at obtaining some form of preferential treatment.

In order to protect the Council and its employees from any suggestion of improper motives or conduct, members of staff and their families are not allowed to accept gifts or legacies from current or former clients.

If you are unclear about what is acceptable, ask your manager.

4.9 Handling Council money or sponsorship

Sponsorship is defined as 'an agreement between the Council and the sponsor, where the Council receives either money or a benefit in kind for an event, campaign or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits.'

Peterlee Town Council is a publicly funded organisation and as such, all employees who are authorised to be involved in financial activities and transactions on behalf of the Council must be familiar with its Financial Procedure Rules and Financial Management Standards.

If this applies to you, you must:

- use authorised Council funds in a responsible, accountable and lawful way;
- comply with the Council's financial regulations and take legal and financial advice where appropriate;
- seek value for money;
- comply with relevant policies and procedures when handling money;
- make sure that any sponsorship accepted is related to Council business and is approved by the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk from the personnel committee);
- disclose any benefit you yourself, partners, relations or close friends relating to any sponsorship the Council proposes to make;
- if you suspect financial irregularity, bribery, corruption, theft or fraud, contact your manager in the first instance. If for any reason this is not appropriate you should contact the Town Clerk (or nominated representative).

You must not:

- benefit from any contract or sponsorship that is given to or by the Council, or show any favour to a partner, spouse, relative, friend or associate.

4.10 Procurement, administering or managing Council contracts

Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires you to make a formal declaration about contracts in which you have a financial interest. It is a criminal offence to fail to comply with this. Where your role involves procuring, managing or administering Council contracts or you have any other professional or personal relationship with contractors:

You must:

- comply with the Financial Regulations and any other relevant Council procedures of orders and contracts;
- exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors;
- declare any current or previous private or personal relationships with contractors, sub-contractors or suppliers by completing form CCE1.

You must not:

- discriminate unfairly against anyone involved in the tendering and contracting process;
- disclose any confidential information relating to tenders or costs for internal or external tenders to any unauthorised person;

- Use your influence or show any special favour to current or former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates when awarding contracts to businesses relating to them or employing them in any capacity;
- play any part in the selection of tenderers if you have any direct or indirect interest in the outcome.

4.11 Intellectual property

Some aspects of the work you carry out, or produce, on behalf of the Council may be intellectual property. All creative designs, writings, report, drawings and inventions produced by employees in the course of their duties are the property of the Council.

You must not:

- disclose, publish or otherwise use the work you produce for the Council for personal gain or benefit unless you have the express written permission of the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk from the personnel committee).

4.12 Recruitment and other employment matters

You must not:

- be involved in a selection process or interview if you are related to an applicant or in a close personal relationship with them or a member of their immediate family;
- canvas on behalf of applicants for council posts, either directly or indirectly;
- be involved in, or try to influence, any employment decisions including those relating to discipline, promotion, pay adjustments, for any employee with whom you have a close personal relationship;
- ask a councillor to provide a reference for you in relation to a job within the Council.

4.13 Commitments outside work

Outside work means any paid or unpaid work, including voluntary work, undertaken in addition to your Council employment. Any requests to carry out other employment will be considered and will not be unreasonably refused, however outside work must not, in our view, conflict with Council interests or weaken public confidence in the Council, or adversely impact upon your ability to carry out your role with the Council. All approvals will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Town Clerk.

If you wish to undertake any outside work:

You must:

- obtain permission from the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk from the personnel committee) by completing form CCE3 prior to undertaking any outside work;
- inform the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk from the personnel committee) by completing another CCE3 if there are any changes relating to your outside work.

You must not:

- put yourself in a position where your duty and private interests conflict or could appear to conflict;
- seek to gain business in the course of carrying out your Council duties;

- carry out any outside work or a private interest during working hours, including making/sending or receiving telephone calls, emails, correspondence/goods;
- use any Council facilities or equipment or confidential information in relation to commitments outside of work.

4.14 Personal interests

Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires you to make a formal declaration about contracts in which you have a financial interest, that is any direct or indirect interest of monetary value, whether or not the value is readily ascertainable. It is a criminal offence to fail to comply with this.

Other financial interests could include when money other than your salary is paid into your bank account by the Council or where your address is linked to a business receiving payment from the Council.

Non-financial interests could include governorship of a local school, membership of an NHS Trust Board or involvement with an organisation or pressure group which may seek to influence the Council's policies.

You must:

- declare any financial or non-financial interests which could conflict or be seen to conflict with the Council's interests to the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk to the personnel committee) by completing form CCE2.

You must not:

- make or become involved with any professional decisions about matters in which you have a personal interest.

4.15 Using Council equipment, materials and property

The facilities and equipment provided as part of your work belong to the Council.

You must:

- comply with health and safety regulations and use personal protective equipment as required;
- take care of Council property or equipment, keeping it secure and reporting any damages or breaches in security;
- use equipment and facilities for authorised purposes only;
- use equipment and facilities appropriately and only for the purposes provided.

You must not:

- use Council equipment or property for personal gain or fraudulent activity;
- use Council vehicles for unauthorised purposes.

4.16 Reporting improper or illegal activities

In regard to all aspects of this Code, should you be concerned about any activities which you think may conflict with the Code of Conduct, carried out by yourself or other employees, you should

raise the matter with your manager or the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk to the personnel committee).

You must:

- report any activity which you believe is illegal, improper, unethical, and dangerous or a breach of Code to your manager or the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk to the personnel committee).

5 Further information

5.1 Confidentiality

All information will be handled sensitively and used only for its proper purpose.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 individuals have the right to see their own personal data held subject to the rights of confidentiality of any third parties involved in that information.

5.2 Dealing with abuses of the Code

Employees who attempt to abuse this code may face disciplinary action. The Council takes false or misleading accusations very seriously which may result in further action taken through the disciplinary procedure. This will not include ill-founded allegations that were made in good faith.

5.3 Monitoring compliance

Peterlee Town Council is required by law to protect the public funds it administers and, as part of this duty, will carry out routine monitoring to ensure compliance with this and other Council policies. This will include reviewing declarations made under this code against any information held on manual and / or electronic records and systems controlled or managed by the Council. This may also include data matching of records containing personal data held on and / or across council systems. Any breaches of the Code of Conduct identified as part of these reviews will be brought to the attention of the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk of the personnel committee) for appropriate action to be taken. Where any criminal activity is suspected or detected details may also be referred to the police and/or any other relevant bodies.

5.4 Equality and diversity

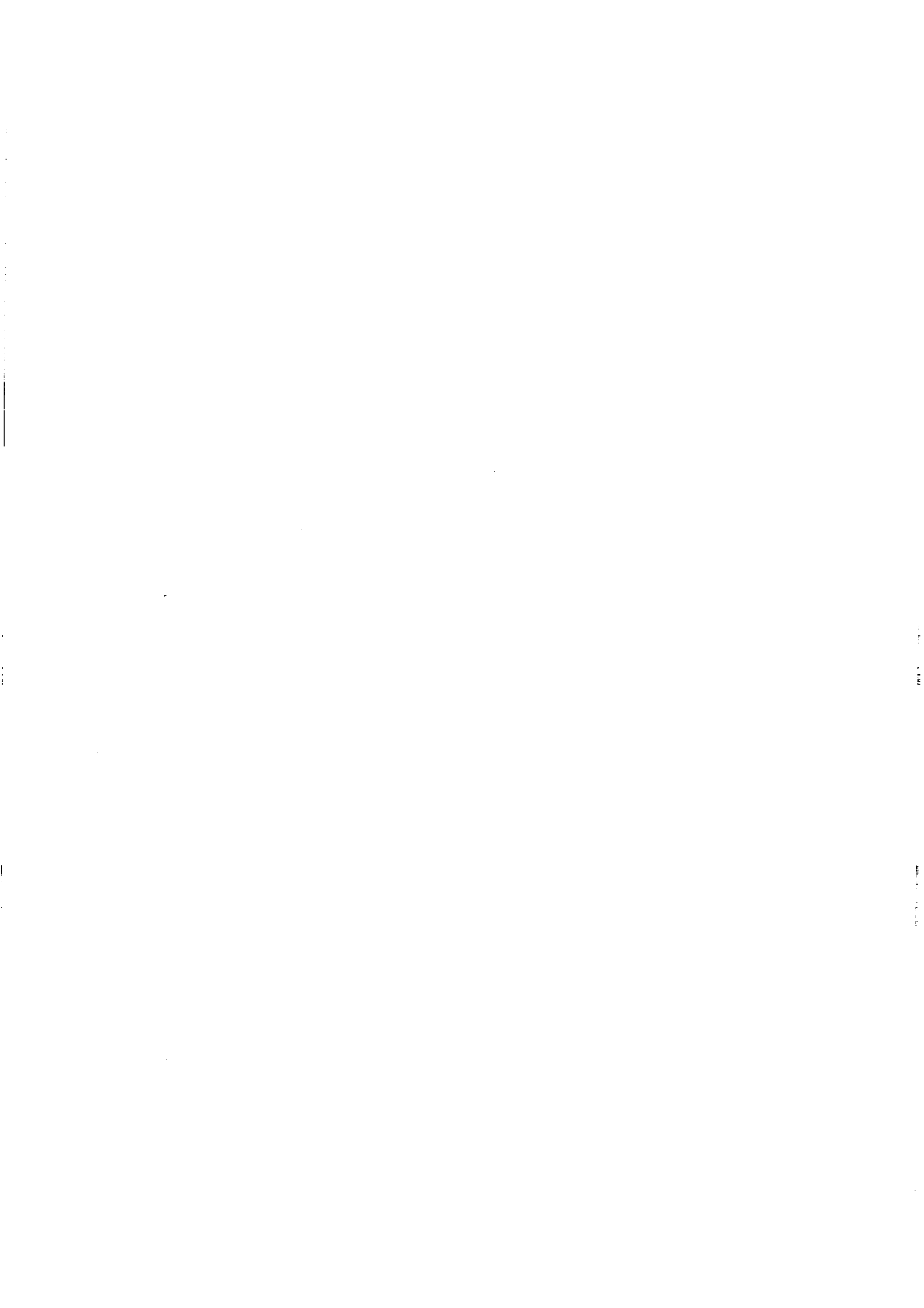
Peterlee Town Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and ensuring discrimination, harassment or victimisation is not tolerated.

Our aim is to treat people fairly, with respect and dignity. We also aim to comply with legal requirements in relation to age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

6 Contact details

If you would like any further advice or would like the document in an alternative format, please contact the Town Clerk using the contact details below:

Email: clerk@peterlee.gov.uk
Tel: 0191 586 2491



Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy Procedure and Toolkit



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1 Policy outline

1.1 What is the policy about?

Peterlee Town Council (the Council) recognises that its employees are its most valuable asset and that only through their development in a healthy and safe working environment can they contribute fully to its aims and objectives. Whilst the Council has little control over external factors, as a good employer it wishes to promote the physical, psychological and social well-being of all its employees.

1.2 Who does the policy apply to?

This policy applies to all Council employees.

1.3 Responsibility

All Council employees have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with this policy and any subsequent processes that are developed to support it.

Everyone involved in implementing this policy and any subsequent processes that are developed to support it is responsible for ensuring that it is fairly implemented and must ensure that they:

- do not breach the policy or any related processes;
- seek advice from the Town Clerk (or nominated representative), if unsure of how to implement the policy; and
- deal with any issues arising equitably without direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or trade union membership.

1.4 Monitoring

Data in relation to 'work-related stress', (**here to defined as 'mental well-being and mental ill-Health'**), will be gathered through a range of management information used for recording and reporting data, e.g. attendance management interviews, accident reporting, grievances etc. in line with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) best practice.

This data will be reviewed within the Council to identify the impact of work related mental ill-health and used to develop any further mechanisms to address significant issues.

1.5 Confidentiality

All information will be handled sensitively and used only for its proper purpose. However confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as information might have to be disclosed where an issue results in formal proceedings.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 individuals have the right to see their own personal data held subject to the rights of confidentiality of any third parties involved in that information.

1.6 Dealing with abuses of the policy

Employees who attempt to abuse this policy may face disciplinary action. The Council takes false or misleading accusations very seriously which may result in further action taken through the Disciplinary Procedure. This will not include ill-founded allegations that were made in good faith.

1.7 Publicising/distribution of the policy

A copy of this policy is available from your manager and will be made available from your manager. A copy will be made available to employees via cloud storage.

New employees should be informed of the existence of this policy during recruitment and induction information processes.

1.8 Reviewing the policy

The Town Clerk (or nominated representative) will keep the operation of this policy under review and will make such changes to the policy as deemed appropriate.

2 Procedure

2.1 Policy statement

The Council:

- is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees. The Council recognises that mental health issues in the form of 'work-related mental ill-health' is a management issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors;
- is committed to promoting the health and well-being of its employees through, for example, the promotion of opportunities to lead healthier lifestyles;
- will work towards the Stress Management Standards as identified by the HSE (a summary of the standards is provided in Section 3.4);
- will through its management, identify workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate or control as far as is reasonably practicable the risks from mental ill-health. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed;
- will provide access to confidential counselling for employees affected by work related mental ill-health where appropriate; and
- will provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement this policy.

2.2 What is mental ill-health and how can it be addressed?

The HSE define mental ill-health (stress) as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be positive if managed correctly and stress which can be detrimental to health.

However, symptoms of mental ill-health can manifest as either physical and/or psychological effects. A summary of such may include:

- physical effects – headaches, muscle tension, stomach problems, bowel and bladder problems and increased heart rate; and

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- psychological effects - irritable, anxious, mood swings, short tempered, constant worrying, low self esteem and poor concentration.

Workplace interventions to address mental ill-health related problems can be implemented at one of three levels:

- **Individual Level** – where an employee raises significant work-related mental ill-health concerns, or is experiencing related symptoms, employee focused interventions can include:
 - (i) counselling, support and advice referral to health practitioner;
 - (ii) specific work-related training and management support; and
 - (iii) processes to explore the extent to which their experience of work can reasonably and sustainably be adapted to address their concerns.
- **Management Level** – employees in all forms of employment may experience work-related mental ill-health concerns. Workplace support structures, work training and mechanisms for such concerns to be raised, and acted on at an early stage, can address problems before any overt health or well-being concerns arise.
- **Organisational Level** – an Organisational Risk Assessment involves the periodic collation of Council-wide data that indicates potential ‘hot spots’ of work related mental ill-health problems. Subsequent organisational interventions and ongoing audit measure the effectiveness of the risk management approaches taken.

2.3 Roles and responsibilities

2.3.1 Senior managers/Elected members

The ultimate responsibility in implementing the policy and provision of resources in terms of any cultural change that is required lies with the Town Clerk and Elected members.

The Town Clerk (or nominated representative) will be responsible for the initiation of further investigation and prioritisation of resources to address, as far as reasonably practicable, concerns raised through the Workplace Mental Wellbeing Report process.

2.3.2 Managers

All managers and nominated supervisors are required to:

- advise and inform their team(s) in order to increase awareness and understanding of the policy and any related issues;
- record any work related mental ill-health on the Corporate Accident/Incident/Ill Health or Near Miss Form which is available from the manager in each department or from the Town Clerk (or nominated representative). The completed form should be given in hard copy to the Town Clerk marked ‘Private and Confidential.’ In the case of the Town Clerk the completed form should be given in hard copy to the HR subcommittee;
- attend training as requested, (or arranged for them as part of their role), in good management practice and health and safety;
- ensure good communication between management and employees, particularly where there are service, organisational and procedural changes;

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- ensure that all forms of actual or perceived bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their areas of operational control, (see the Council's Grievance Policy);
- ensure that concerns, actions and issues are recorded and information passed to SMT;
- identify training requirements and ensure employees are appropriately trained to discharge their duties;
- ensure employees are provided with relevant developmental opportunities through the appraisal scheme and other training initiatives;
- monitor workloads to ensure that employees are not overloaded;
- monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that employees are not overworking;
- monitor holidays to ensure that employees are taking their full entitlement;
- be vigilant and offer additional support where appropriate to employees experiencing mental ill-health outside work; and
- ensure that employees are made aware of the opportunities to participate in health improvement activities and give reasonable support to employees to access them.

When work-related mental ill-health, or personal stressors (impacting on work-life balance), are raised by employees, or are identified through the attendance management procedures, the manager must clarify the nature of the employees concerns. They should then provide the employee with any practical options to reduce these stressors.

In the situation described above, where interpersonal issues perceived by either party may hinder the effectiveness of attempts to resolve workplace issues, the manager will facilitate the steps above to be completed by another manager, acceptable to all parties.

2.3.3 Employees

All employees are required to raise issues of concern regarding work-related mental ill-health with their manager in the first instance.

- If an employee feels that they can't raise the issue with their manager, they should approach another appropriate manager (managers, line manager) or seek advice from the Town Clerk (or nominated representative), their Trade Union. In the case of the Town Clerk, advice should be sought from the HR subcommittee.
- If unsure of how to deal with issues seek help and advice on policies and procedures from their manager, Town Clerk (or nominated representative) or Trade Union.
- Support approaches to eliminate or reduce the effects of work related mental ill-health they are experiencing offered by their managers and supervisors.
- Consider pursuing opportunities for counselling and training when offered.
- Recognise that they have a responsibility for their own personal mental ill-health and try to help themselves where possible, e.g. by attending planned

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training, taking appropriate meal breaks, planning their work where possible, raising concerns over workloads with managers.

- Make full use of external support arrangements available for non-work related mental ill-health management, e.g. their Unions, Doctors, NHS services and charitable organisations such as Mind, Rethink and Sane.

2.3.4 Trade Union/Safety Representatives

Trade Unions / Safety Representatives will be:

- meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design to consider whether such changes could precipitate mental ill-health;
- meaningfully involved in the mental ill-health risk assessment and risk management process;
- provided with access to collective and statistical data;
- provided with paid time away from normal duties to attend any relevant Trade Union training in accordance with local conditions; and
- allowed reasonable time in accordance with Council policy to conduct joint inspections of the workplace to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.

2.3.5 Occupational Health Service

Occupational Health will:

- help support individuals who have been absent with workplace mental wellbeing related ill-health and advise them and their management on a planned return to work;
- provide support and advice to individuals who are at work but are experiencing workplace mental wellbeing related health problems;
- refer individuals to workplace mental wellbeing counsellors or specialist agencies as required;
- ensure maintenance of individual employee confidentiality in any data analysis; and
- promote local and regional public health and Council priorities as they relate to employee health and wellbeing.

2.3.6 Telephone Based Counselling/Occupational Health Service (OHS)

Support for employees and managers can also be sought from Zurich Municipal by telephoning the helpline on 0117 934 2121.

It may be appropriate for a person who is suffering from mental ill-health to have the opportunity to have face-to-face access to a counsellor. In this case, the Council will give consideration to face-to-face counselling where appropriate.

2.4 Managing Mental Wellbeing/ill Health

2.4.1 Individual Level Interventions

The procedure for addressing work-related mental ill-health issues experienced by individual employees is detailed within the Mental Well-being Management Toolkit. See section 3.3, for the flowchart outlining the management process to be followed for both work and home related mental ill-health.

Tackling mental ill-health has been shown to have real financial and welfare benefits to organisations. It can for example, help improve employees morale and their commitment, reduce costs associated with absence management and in turn bring higher productivity and lower absenteeism.

The HSE has identified six broad categories of risk factors for work-related stress. The 'Mental ill-health Toolkit' provides a structured approach to individual risk assessment which includes:

- identification of the mental ill-health hazards/risks perceived by the employee;
- evaluation of the risks and recording of what needs to be done in an action plan; and
- review and revision of the assessment and actions taken.

2.4.2 Management Level Interventions

The HSE Stress Management Standards essentially represent aspects of good organisational and management practice.

Good standards of management practice can eliminate or reduce the effect of work related stressors experienced by employees and its negative impact on service delivery. Aspects of good practice include open lines of manager/employee communication, to ensure mental ill-health related problems can be raised at an early stage.

The purpose of using the Mental Wellbeing Toolkit is to further clarify the nature of work-related concerns and the extent to which employees may be open to reasonably practicable workplace modification. These conclusions must be put to the employee for their consideration. It is recognised that manager beliefs and behaviours may themselves be a source of mental ill-health to employees.

2.4.3 Organisational Level Interventions

Organisational interventions are considered a key element in good workplace mental health management by the HSE. No ideal method exists to determine whether existing control measures to prevent harm from mental health related factors are sufficient. However a suitable and sufficient standard of risk assessment at the organisational level is considered, by the HSE to include:

- a continuous quality improvement audit cycle;
- collation of routinely available data considered potential markers of mental health problems (e.g. sickness absence rates, turnover rates, incident data and so on),
- data being presented in an organisationally meaningful manner that can identify potential 'hot spots' and allow consideration by senior managers for organisational development and priority setting;
- processes to further clarify specific issues of concern in 'hot spots' to inform senior management intervention;

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- processes to develop and adopt solutions that are 'reasonably practicable', with a particular emphasis on prevention and organisational solutions; and
- provide documented and communicated workplace mental wellbeing action plans for all employees.

2.5 Equality and diversity

Peterlee Parish Town Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and ensuring discrimination, harassment or victimisation is not tolerated.

Our policy is to treat people fairly, with respect and dignity. We also comply with legal requirements in relation to age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

2.6 Contact details

If you would like any further advice or would like the document in an alternative format, please contact the Town Clerk using the contact details below:

Email: clerk@peterlee.gov.uk

Tel: 03000 265 343

3 Toolkit

3.1 Managing Mental Well-being Management Toolkit

3.1.1 Who is this toolkit for?

This Toolkit provides advice and guidance to both managers and employees on when and how to use the Mental Well-being Questionnaire (MWQ) and Mental Well-being Action Plan (MWAP).

3.1.2 When should I consider using this toolkit?

The Health and Safety Executive define 'six standards' to describe the most common aspects of work that contribute to mental well-being.

If an employee does not feel these standard definitions are true for them, in relation to their work, then this may contribute to psychological stress and/or physical ill-health.

Consider using this Toolkit when:

- such work-related psychological stressors are identified as a problem by the employee, or observed by a manager or colleague. These stressors can be an important barrier to employees providing regular and effective service, but may often be 'hidden' or 'undeclared'; and
- in appropriate situations, to raise and discuss work related stressors with an employee, such as at Attendance Management Interviews and Return to Work Interviews.

The following points are intended to help managers recognise situations when they should consider raising the possibility of work-related stress with an employee. Such stressors are often a significant contributory factor acting to:

- **reduce employee psychological well-being** - you or colleagues of your employee may notice behavioural and mood changes;
- **contribute to performance or behavioural concerns**; and
- **increase sickness absence** – this can be long or recurrent short-term absence, or attributed to physical symptoms (particularly long-term) as well as mental health related.

This Toolkit should be used alongside other policies such as the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure.

Employees should be offered a copy of the 'Tackling Mental Health Problems: An Employee Guide' Leaflet (Section 3.6). This includes details of the range of additional employee focused support available through the Council and NHS Services. This is also useful for employees who experience psychological distress not associated with work.

3.1.3 What training do I need as a manager?

Managers play a vital role in the identification and management of stress within the organisation. They are likely to see the problems causing the stress first hand, will be in the best position to notice changes in employees behaviour that may indicate a stress-related problem and will often be the first point of contact when an employee feels stressed.

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However, managers also need to think about their behaviour, and how it can either add to the stress their employees experience or help alleviate the problem. Management behaviour is often highlighted as a major factor by those suffering from work related stress.

3.1.4 My employee may have a work-related stress problem, how do I clarify it?

Ask the employee to complete the MWQ. This helps narrow down the work-place problems the employee is experiencing using the HSE stress standards as a guide. This will help focus attention on the specifics of any stressors and provide appropriate options for support.

Give the employee enough time and privacy to complete the MWQ, but try to ensure you have received it prior to any subsequent planned meeting to complete the MWAP so you can give consideration to viable support options.

The experience of stress is subjective it cannot be measured reliably and cannot be eliminated entirely from day-to-day working life.

As the manager you may not see things the same way as your employee but the purpose of the MWQ is to enable you to understand the way your employee sees the problem, not a basis for debate of the 'reality' of these perceptions.

Remember, all instances of work related mental ill-health must be recorded and on the Corporate Accident / Incident / ill health / near miss report form.

3.1.5 What if my employee finds it difficult to discuss these problems with me?

Employee perceptions of interpersonal difficulties with line managers are a well-recognised potential stressor within the workplace. In such circumstances it may be appropriate for the responsibility of implementing this Toolkit to be undertaken by another officer.

Alternatively the process can be completed by the normal manager and employee, but with the option for a Trade Union representative or work place colleague in attendance, and the meeting supported by an appropriate HR Officer.

The employee should be given the opportunity to raise any concerns about feeling able to engage in a meaningful discussion about the issues of concern with their manager, and if such concerns apply, alternative management meeting arrangements described above should be offered.

3.1.6 How do I prepare an Action Plan in response to a Questionnaire?

As the manager you should arrange a meeting with the employee within **2 weeks** of receipt of the completed MWQ.

The main purpose of the meeting is to discuss the employees MWQ responses and devise an action plan which addresses the root causes, specifically looking at areas of concern that need to be discussed, addressed and documented.

The completion of the MWQ should help you work together to develop a MWAP that recognises, prioritises and provides effective solutions, where possible, to the issues raised in the MWQ

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A jointly developed and agreed MWAP should:

1. help you set goals to work towards;
 2. help you to prioritise any actions are required;
 3. demonstrate you are serious about addressing employees' concerns; and
 4. provide something to evaluate and review against.
- Prioritising the main stressors will help identify the most likely effective interventions.
 - The 'Possible Interventions' section of this document matches types of stress with possible actions for you to consider.
 - Consider operational feasibility, the resources of the Council, and the impact on other employees when considering the feasibility of any actions explored.
 - If some actions are time limited (e.g. reduction in workload) ensure these timescales are recorded in the MWAP and regularly monitored until complete.
 - Once the interventions have been discussed, the MWAP needs to be agreed between you and the employee and, if involved, the HR representative and/or employee's trade union representative.
 - You and the employee must sign the MWQ and MWAP on completion.

3.1.7 What is the Desired Outcome of the Mental Well-being Action Plan (MWAP)?

The purpose of this policy, procedure and toolkit is to ensure that the Council has done all that reasonably can be done, accepting the organisational demands and resources issues to address the sources of psychological stressors for the individual employee as far as practicable.

Once this situation has been established the employee experiencing mental health related concerns will be able to judge whether they feel able to continue in the role.

Remember, the MWQ and MWAP are intended as a guide for managers and employees when discussing the management of mental health and may need to be adapted to suit individual circumstances.

3.1.8 What happens after the Action Plan is completed?

It is essential that the manager and employee review and evaluate any changes made to tackle work-related mental ill-health. At least one review meeting will be required, after a maximum of **4 weeks** from when the action plan was implemented.

Managers should periodically check that agreed actions are being undertaken e.g. that agreed meetings are being held, or that there is evidence that key actions have taken place.

It is important to ask the employee whether they feel the solutions are having the desired effect and review the MWAP with the employee if appropriate, noting key changes.

If you have needed to use the Managing Mental Well being Toolkit to address work related ill-health experienced by employees, you should raise this in future meetings with your manager, in order that possible team or service level stressors can be identified and proactively managed.

3.1.9 When would the toolkit be inappropriate to manage stress?

Whilst this toolkit is the preferred method of managing work-related stressors and resulting mental ill-health, it is recognised that there may be some occasions when the toolkit is not appropriate and may serve to create further unnecessary stress for those concerned.

If other management actions are the underlying trigger for the employee's psychological stress, e.g. disciplinary procedures or a suspension, timely resolution of these may prove to be more effective instead of the use of this toolkit.

In these circumstances, the option of deferring completion of this toolkit (if still considered relevant by the employee) until after the other management procedures are concluded would be a reasonable course of action.

3.1.10 What if the process does not resolve the employees concerns?

Where the employee is absent from work, and the conclusion of the process described above does not result in a return to work, or the employee continues to raise concerns in relation to health and work, Occupational Health Service referral through the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure should be made. This MUST include a signed copy of the completed MWQ and MWAP.

3.1.11 Ensure continuous mental ill-health management for colleagues?

It is important to assess the impact that workplace mental health related problems could have on the team. Losing one colleague for an extended period with a mental health related illness could have dramatic impact on the workload and morale of the rest of the team.

By taking action to tackle the causes of workplace mental ill-health early, it can help prevent or reduce the impact of these problems on the team and the organisation.

3.2 The Mental Well-being Questionnaire (MWQ) and Action Plan (MWAP)

3.2.1 General advice for managers

Everyone experiences psychological pressure on a daily basis, we actually need it to motivate us and enable us to perform at our best. However, if we experience too much pressure without the opportunity to recover, we may feel unable to cope and stress and reduced mental health well-being may result. The HSE defines stress as:

'An adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed upon them.'

Given an excess of pressure, mental ill-health can therefore happen to anyone, and should not be seen as a weakness. Instead, an individual needs to be helped to deal with these pressures. As any health related impact of stress will vary from one individual to another – and may also vary at different times of our lives – it is important that we learn to recognise mental ill-health and understand what to do to reduce it.

The toolkit recognises the fact that whilst tackling 'personal mental ill-health' is an employee's responsibility, the Council has a responsibility to help reduce any mental ill-health factors which may arise during the employment of an employee.

During management meetings such as Return to Work Interviews or Attendance Management Interviews, managers should ask employees if they consider any illness/problem has been caused or made worse by their work duties. In the event of an employee identifying that work

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

may have been influential in causing an absence/problem; managers should pursue the employee's responses to the MWQ.

The MWQ is based on the HSE advice on work related stress and provides the opportunity for you and the employee to consider appropriate actions to be taken.

In some circumstances your employee may feel conducting the MWQ process with an officer other than you more appropriate. Your employee should be given the opportunity to raise any concerns about feeling able to engage in a meaningful discussion about their mental ill-health with another manager (possibly your manager). Where such concerns are voiced, alternative management meeting arrangements as described below.

3.2.2 General advice for employees

It would be helpful if you could complete and return 'Part 1' of this MWQ and the employee response section of Part 2 of the action plan to your manager before your next meeting. This is so that you can discuss the issues raised and it can be used to develop an action plan to deal with any identified stressors. Don't worry if you don't want to/don't manage to complete the questionnaire as your manager and/or representative will talk you through it at the meeting if you would prefer.

If you are in any doubt or want anything explained beforehand please talk to your manager, or Trade Union representative. As a result of this meeting your manager will work with you to produce an action plan that will help, where possible to address the issues that you raise. Possible interventions are provided below. Please proceed to Part 1 of the questionnaire.

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(Part 1) Mental Well-being Questionnaire – For Completion by Employee

Please read and answer the following questions by indicating to what extent you feel that the following factors have influenced your wellbeing, effectiveness or attendance at work.

Following the completion of the questionnaire please provide further details/examples of the source of mental ill-health you have identified in the ‘employee response’ section of the action plan (part 2) prior to returning it to your manager or representative. Your manager will discuss with you, your responses and jointly consider with you any resulting actions.

If you would prefer your responses to be considered by somebody other than your manager then please raise this with them.

Note to Employee

From the list of statements in the table below please consider which best describe the difficulties you are experiencing in the workplace.

Employee Name..... Team..... Manager.....

Please place a 'tick' in the left or right hand columns as appropriate

Cause of mental ill-health	Possible Stressors	This is a major concern for me, and is impacting on my sense of well-being and ability to work to my full potential.	Not a significant concern for me
(1) Demands	Different people at work demand things from me that are hard to combine		
	I have unachievable deadlines		
	I have to work very intensively		
	I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do		
	I am unable to take sufficient breaks		
	I feel pressured to work long hours		
	I feel I have to work very fast		
I am under unrealistic time pressures			

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

Part 1 continued...

Cause of mental ill-health	Possible Stressors	This is a major concern for me, and is impacting on my sense of well-being and ability to work to my full potential.	Not a significant concern for me
(2) Control	I am not able to decide when to take a break I don't feel I have a say in my work speed I don't feel I have a choice in deciding how I do my work I don't feel I have a choice in deciding what work I do I don't feel I have a say over the way I do my work I feel my work time could be more flexible		
(3) Support (Manager)	I don't feel I am given enough supportive feedback on the work I do I don't feel I can rely on my manager to help me with a work problem I don't feel I can talk to my manager about something that upset or annoyed me at work I don't feel my manager supports me through emotionally demanding work I don't feel my manager encourages me enough at work		
(4) Support (Peers)	I don't feel my colleagues would help me if work became difficult I don't feel I get the help and support I need from colleagues I don't feel I get the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues My colleagues are not willing to listen to my work related problems		
(5) Relationships	I have been harassed, in the form of unkind words or behaviour There is friction or anger between colleagues I am bullied at work Relationships are strained at work		

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

Part 1 continued...

Cause of mental ill-health	Possible Stressors	This is a major concern for me, and is impacting on my sense of well-being and ability to work to my full potential.	Not a significant concern for me
(6) Role	It is not clear what is expected of me at work I do not know how to go about getting my job done I am not clear about what my duties and responsibilities are I am not clear about the goals and objectives for my department/team I do not understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation		
(7) Change	I do not have enough opportunities to question managers about changes at work I don't feel consulted about change at work When changes were made at work, I was not clear about how they would work out in practice		
(8) Other issues	Is there anything else that was a source of mental ill-health for you, at work or at home, which may have made it harder to cope with demands at work that you would normally be able to cope with?		

Please submit the completed questionnaire and the employee response section of the action plan to your manager.

Signed: (Employee) Date:

Date received by manager:

(A meeting will be arranged within 2 weeks of the Mental ill-health Questionnaire being submitted to discuss the issues raised)

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

(Part 2) Mental Health Management Action Plan – For Completion by manager in collaboration with employee

Employee Name Team Manager

<p>Summary of Employee Response</p> <p>Summarise and provide examples and details of the areas of concern identified in the Mental Well-being Questionnaire</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>List approaches that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can be reasonably implemented, given operational constraints and the resources of the Service. Specify the timescale over which the intervention can be maintained • cannot be reasonably implemented due to operational constraints and the resources of the Service 	<p>Timescale for achievement</p>
<p>Demands</p>		
<p>Control</p>		
<p>Support</p>		
<p>Relationships</p>		

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

Part 2 continued...

Role		
Change		
Other		
Date of review meeting:.....		

Signed:(Employee) Date.....

Signed:(Manager) Date.....

Signed:(Town Clerk or nominated representative) Date.....

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

(Part 3) Mental Health Management Action Plan Review – for Completion by manager in collaboration with employee

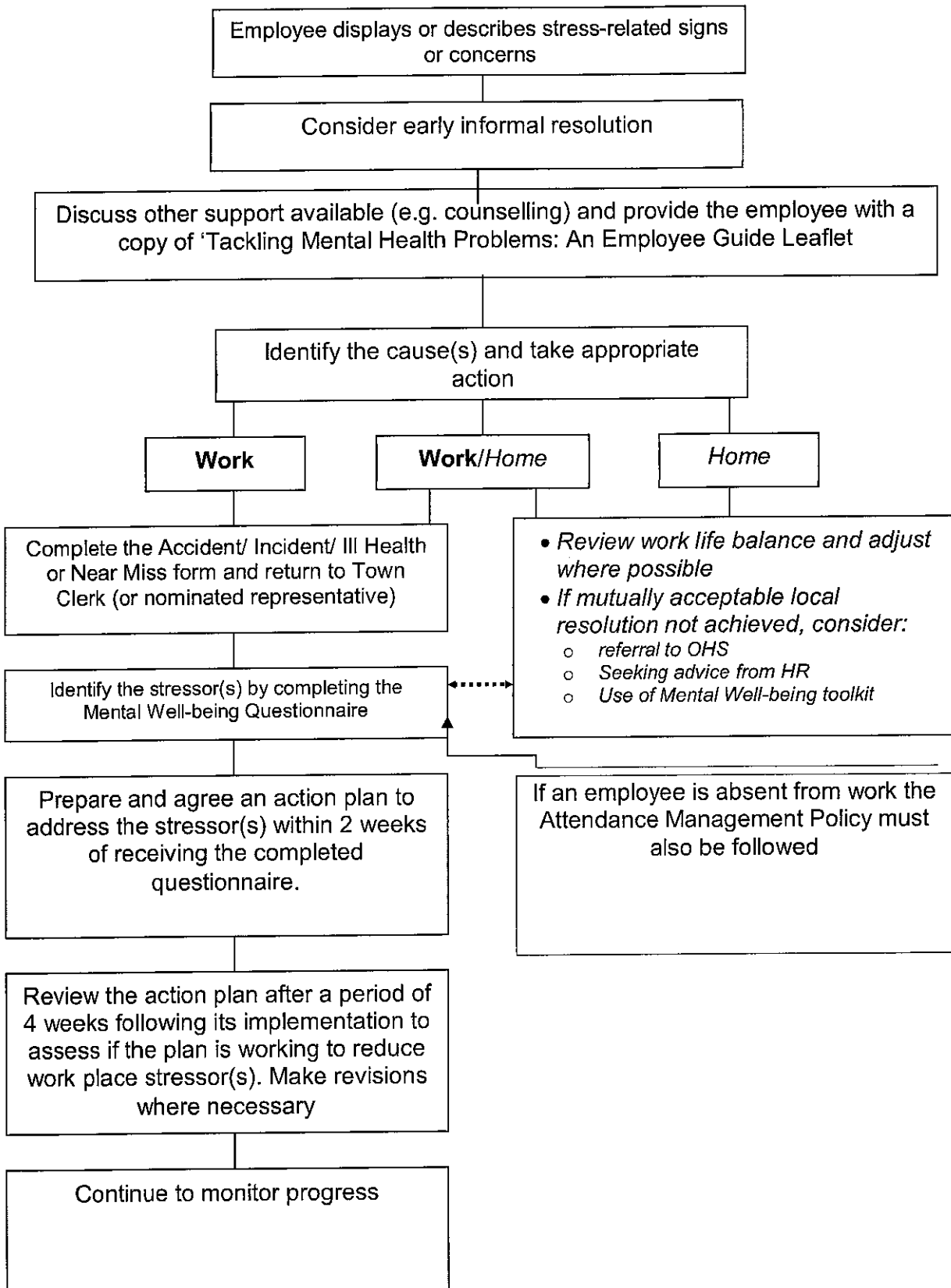
Name..... Team..... Manager.....

Actions identified	Summary of outcomes/ Further Action

Signed: (Employee) Date.....

Signed: (Manager) Date.....

3.3 Mental Wellbeing Management Procedure Flow Chart



3.4 Stress Management Standards-Summary

The HSE defines the following six elements as the primary triggers for stress. Each one is listed with the 'preferred states' intended to help avoid work related stress.

These are simple summaries, more detailed advice on possible interventions, when an employee believes these states are not true for them, is provided at section 3.5.

Change

- Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing any organisational change
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

Demands

- Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

Control

- Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way that they do their work
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

Support

- Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and managers/supervisors
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

Relationships

- Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours e.g. bullying at work
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

Role

- Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

3.5 Possible Interventions

3.5.1 Demands

- Hold regular team meetings to discuss the anticipated workload for the forthcoming week(s)
- Develop personal work plans to ensure employees know what their job involves
- Allocate sufficient resources for employees to be able to do their jobs (time, equipment etc.)
- Provide adequate training (formal or informal) and resources to help employees prioritise, or provide information on how they can seek help if they have conflicting priorities
- Consider changes to start and end times to help employees cope with pressures external to the organisation (e.g. child care, commuting etc.)
- Allow regular breaks, especially when the work is complex or emotionally demanding
- Provide realistic deadlines
- Don't ask people to do tasks they are not trained to do

3.5.2 Control

- Agree systems that enable employees to have a say over the way their work is organised or undertaken, e.g. through project meetings, team briefings etc.
- Hold regular discussion forums during the planning stages of projects to talk about the anticipated output and methods of working
- Allocate responsibility to teams to take projects forward:
 - discuss and define teams at the start of a project
 - agree objectives
 - agree roles
 - agree timescales
 - agree provision of managerial support, e.g. through regular progress meetings
- Talk about the skills people have and if they believe they are able to use these to good effect. How else would they like to use their skills?
- Allow and encourage employees to participate in decision making
- Allow employees some control over the pace of their work

3.5.3 Support

- Hold regular team meetings to discuss emerging issues or pressures
- Include 'work related mental ill-health/emerging pressures' as a standing item for staff meetings
- Ask how employees would like to access managerial support – 'open door' policies, agreed times when managers are able to discuss emerging pressures, etc.
- Use flexibility in the workplace procedures to enable employees to cope with domestic commitments
- Develop training arrangements and refresher sessions to ensure training and competencies are up-to-date and appropriate for the core functions of employees' jobs
- Talk about ways the organisation could provide support if someone is experiencing problems outside of work
- Ensure that employees receive sufficient training to undertake the core functions of their job
- Provide opportunities for career development

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

Relationships

- Communicate and display the Councils policy's for dealing with unacceptable behaviour e.g. grievance, discipline procedures
- Select or build teams which have the right blend of expertise and experience for new projects
- Provide training to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations
- Encourage good communication and provide appropriate training to aid skill development e.g. listening skills, confidence building etc.
- Discuss how individuals work together and how they can build positive relationships
- Identify ways to celebrate success e.g. informal lunches/wash-up meetings at the end of the project
- Create a culture where colleagues trust and encourage each other
- Agree which behaviours are unacceptable and ensure that people are aware of these

3.5.4 Role

- Hold regular team meetings to ensure that individuals are clear about their role and know what is planned for the coming months
- Agree specific standards of performance for jobs and individual tasks and review periodically
- Introduce or revise job descriptions to help ensure that the core functions and priorities of the post are clear
- Ensure all new employees receive a thorough induction and that all members of the team understand the roles and responsibilities of the new recruit
- Define work structures clearly, so that all team members know who is doing what, and why

3.5.5 Change

- Ensure all employees are aware of why the change is happening – agree a system for doing this
- Define and explain the key steps of the change. Ensure employee consultation is a key element of the programme
- Agree methods of communicating e.g. meetings, notice boards, letters, emails and the frequency e.g. weekly, monthly etc.
- Ensure that employees are aware of the impact of the change on their jobs
- Involve employees in discussions about how jobs might be developed and changed. Review team and individual work plans after the change to ensure team and individual objectives are clear
- Explain what the organisation wants to achieve and why it is essential that the change(s) takes place

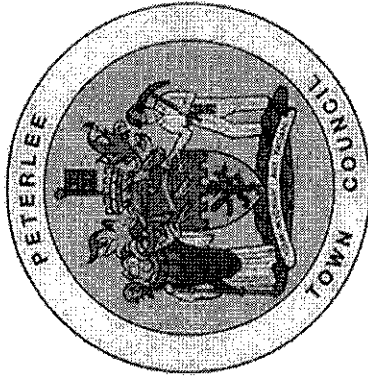
3.6 Tackling Mental Health Problems: An Employee Guide

related mental ill-health is not an illness but if intense and prolonged it can be associated with mental and physical ill health.

Individual Differences

There are a number of factors that influence an individual's vulnerability to mental ill-health and these include:

- Personal – personality, coping strategies, and training;
- Social – life events and social support; and
- Biological – inherited factors, injury or disease, medication.



Introduction

Mental ill-health is an important issue for both employers and employees. Peterlee Town Council has a policy in place and is committed to developing and implementing practices to prevent and reduce workplace mental ill-health.

This leaflet aims to help you understand the triggers and effects of workplace mental ill-health, what to do about it and what support is available.

What is Mental ill-health?

The Health and Safety Executive defines mental ill-health as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them." It can be triggered by circumstances at work, home or both. Pressure can be a good thing; it often leads to improved performance. However, when demands and pressure become too much this leads to mental ill-health. Work-

- Irritability at work and home
- Loss of appetite/overeating
- Increases smoking and drinking
- Difficulty planning, concentrating and controlling workload
- Poor relationships.

What Can You Do?

At Work:

- If possible talk to your manager. If they don't know there is a problem, they can't help
- In some cases employees may not feel confident in speaking to their managers about the issues of importance to them, or they may want confidential advice on how their concerns may potentially be addressed in general terms without initially involving their manager. If this applies to you, your Trade union can provide further guidance
- Be clear about what is happening in your area of work and how that may affect you
- Be clear about your roles and responsibilities
- Be involved in, and understand, the decision making processes in your work area
- Ask for feedback on how you do your job. If you get criticism ask for suggestions on how to improve
- Agree priorities and expectation for your work
- Discuss developing your skills with your manager
- Manage your time as effectively as possible
- Be organised – untidiness can create extra pressure

Work-related Triggers of Mental ill-health:

- Workload
- Lack of control over work
- Excessive time pressures
- Excessive or inflexible working hours
- Inadequate training
- Poor work/home balance
- Difficult relationships at work or home
- Lack of support and information
- Organisational or personal change
- Lack of clarity about role.

Effects of Mental ill-health

Physical:

- Muscular tension
- Headaches
- Excessive tiredness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Digestive problems
- Blurred vision.

Physiological/Behavioural:

- Anxiety and low mood

Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy, Procedure and Toolkit

- Discuss with your manager the possibility of altering your job to make it less stressful for you; recognising you and your colleagues needs
- Delegate where appropriate
- Take regular breaks, especially at lunchtime, to recharge your batteries
- Give feedback to the organisation when given the opportunity through surveys etc.
- Seek further help as soon as you have a problem, don't wait.

At Home (Lifestyle):

- Look after your health – reduce tea, coffee, and alcohol consumption. Quit smoking. These activities provide only temporary relief from mental ill-health symptoms, will not solve the problem, and can be harmful in themselves
- **Speak to your GP if you are worried about your health, don't wait for things to get worse**
- Eat well – take time to enjoy meals and make them healthy and well balanced. Eat

five portions of fruit and vegetables every day

- Take some exercise – go for a walk at lunchtime or in the evening, or go for a swim. This can make you feel relaxed, stretched and energetic. It's good for the mind and the heart
- Take time to relax – spend a short time alone in the day or evening to give you a sense of calm and well-being.
- Consciously make time for whatever helps you relax
- Do something you enjoy – take time and make the effort to do something that you have chosen
- Find out about complementary therapies
- Get the best out of your time – prioritise tasks both at work and home, be realistic about what you can achieve, do one thing at a time
- Allow sufficient time for journeys and pace yourself. Make some time for yourself
- Try learning relaxation techniques – some people find it helps them cope with life's pressures and stresses

Further Help

If you are unsure of how to deal with issues seek help and advice on policies and procedures from your manager, the Town Clerk (or nominated representative) or Trade Union.

Telephone Based Counselling Helpline:

Support for employees and managers can be sought from Zurich Municipal by telephoning the helpline on 0117 934 2121.

Useful Links

NHS choices provides a range of advice on mental health for all UK residents.

[ACAS Stress Management](#) with useful advice on identifying and dealing with Mental ill-health.

Human Resources – Advice & Guidance
Provide advice and guidance on all HR issues to managers and employees.
HRAdviceandGuidance@durham.gov.uk

Report To: Peterlee Town Council Finance & General Purposes Committee

Date: 6th February 2017

Subject: **Closing of Accounts - Year End Preparation**

Report of: Kay Tweddle, Deputy Town Clerk

Purpose: To seek approval for the commissioning of the Council's existing accounts system provider, RBS Ltd, for additional work to complete the year end accounts on behalf of Peterlee Town Council.

Background: Since 2007 the Town Council has engaged with the council's accounts system provider, RBS, to provide additional support to close the accounts after year end and assist in the production of the various year-end financial returns.

A qualified accountant from RBS uses various accounting records and documentation provided by the Council to:

- i. Complete the year end closedown using the RBS software;
- ii. Prepare the Annual Return, and supporting accounting statements;
- iii. Create the new financial year's budgets on the software; and
- iv. Assist in the preparation of the variances analysis for Audit purposes.

In addition, for this year's service the Town Clerk has identified a need for additional support on advice on various items of the council's budgeting and reporting procedures, VAT *de minimus* issues, and the impact of the new use of reserves policy currently being developed through the council's Scrutiny Committee.

A total of 3 days on site at Shotton Hall has been proposed, with two days to close the accounts and produce next year's budget in the software and one additional day working directly with the Town Clerk on the other issues.

Estimates: The cost of the service is £495 per day, plus mileage, an estimated total cost of £1,735 for the 3 consecutive days on site.

Under s12.1.v of the Council's Financial Regulations the current supplier RBS can be appointed for this work directly as a modification of the existing contract as per s72(1)(b) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This can be justified by the fact that the additional services require a good working understanding of the existing software and set up, and the procurement of an alternative contractor

would not be feasible from a time and cost perspective where they to be required to familiarise themselves with the software and working practices as well as completing the year end and additional services.

Budget: If approved the cost of the support will be financed from the Corporate Management Budget, (Contractors) for 2017/18.

Recommendations: **Members are recommended to approve that RBS be commissioned the provision of additional support for the year end accounts as outlined in this report at an estimated cost of £1,735, as per s12.1.v of the Council's Financial Regulations.**

Report To: Peterlee Town Council Finance & General Purposes Committee

Date: 6th February 2017

Subject: **Cash Collection Arrangements**

Report of: Kay Tweddle, Deputy Town Clerk

Purpose: To provide an update on the provision of cash collection services from the Town Council's premises by Loomis under the new arrangement.

Background: In August 2016 the Town Council were given notice by its Banker, the Co operative Bank, they were no longer to offer banking pick up services. In October 2016 approval was given to link into DCC cash collection arrangements, with a further report being made in three month's time.

The cost per site per month is £44.32, compared to £50.00 per site, (Shotton Hall only) under the previous arrangement. Members will recall that the Internal Audit report into Financial Controls , (October 2016), highlighted the issue of manual cash collection/transfer by council staff, and the recommendation to extend cash collection to both sites was subsequently approved by Council.

The new arrangements therefore ensure that the Council complies with the Internal Audit recommendation and reduces risk to the Council at a net cost of £88.64 per month.

Budget: The cost of the pick up service has been included in the 2017/18 Corporate Management Budget.

Recommendations: Members are recommended to approve the continued use of Loomis for the provision of the banking pick up service.

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL OVERTIME AND ADDITIONAL COSTS REPORT

DEPUTY TOWN CLERKS MONTHLY REPORT - February 2017									
MONTH	SHOTTON HALL	SHOTTON HALL	PARKS	CASUAL BAR	PAVILION	CLEANER	TOTAL		
	ADMIN	FACILITIES	DEPARTMENT	STAFF					
APRIL		£155.00	£1,257.00	£1,778.00			£3,190.00		
MAY		£1,390.27	£1,729.59	£2,747.73	£40.00		£5,907.59		
JUNE		£436.14	£1,749.00	£4,701.00	£189.00		£7,075.14		
JULY							£0.00		
AUG		£1,402.15	£2,877.59	£8,728.42	£60.00		£13,068.16		
SEP		£1,580.03	£1,464.40	£3,997.78			£7,042.21		
OCT		£583.89	£963.58	£4,930.17	£91.03		£6,568.67		
NOV		£79.65	£1,117.00	£2,527.96			£3,724.61		
DEC		£415.22	£1,318.00	£2,637.30			£4,370.52		
JAN		£176.00	£810.00	£2,020.00			£3,006.00		
FEB							£0.00		
MARCH							£0.00		
TOTAL	£0.00	£6,218.35	£13,286.16	£34,068.36	£380.03	£0.00	£53,952.90		

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL
REPORT OF THE DEPUTY TOWN CLERK
TO THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2017

ABSENCE REPORT – PERIOD COVERING JANUARY 2017

1. PARKS & CEMETERY DEPARTMENT

There have been no absences in the Department.

2. SHOTTON HALL ADMINISTRATION & BANQUETING SUITES

There has been one short term absence in the Department during this reporting period.

3. THE PAVILION

There have been no absences this month.

All absences are being managed in conjunction with DCC and in line with the sickness absence management policy.

This report is for Member's information only.

Members had requested further information on trends etc of sickness absence. I can advise the cost of absence in 2014/15 was £60,200. In the same period during 2015/16 it was £65,124. From January 2016 to date the cost is £20,010. The national average of absence is 6.7 days in the public sector.

A sample of absence in June of recent years is as follows:-

DEPT	2016 L/T	S/T	2015 L/T	S/T	2014 L/T	S/T
PARKS	1	2	1	5	1	2
S/HALL	0	0	0	0	0	0
S/HALL ADMIN	0	2	1	1	1	2
THE PAV	0	0	1	0	0	0
total	1	4	3	6	2	4

- Short-term absence - where there are recurrent absences that are intermittent
- Long-term absence - where the absence has exceeded 4 continuous working weeks