



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

1

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

FULL COUNCIL

31st March 2023

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend the Ordinary meeting of Duston Parish Council to be held at Duston Community Centre on Thursday 6th April 2023 commencing at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Issued by:

Gary Youens
Parish Clerk, Duston Parish Council

AGENDA

178/23. To receive apologies for absence

179/23. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2023 (APPENDIX A).

180/23. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda (*Members should disclose any interests in the business to be discussed*)

Please note, this is a public meeting and you may be filmed, recorded and published. Copies of all council papers are available to download at www.duston-pc.gov.uk

and are reminded that the disclosure of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest will require that the member withdraws from the meeting room during the transaction of that item of business).

181/23. Helen Howard, West Northamptonshire Council

182/23. Public Participation Session *(Persons wishing to address Council may register their intention to do so at the above address by telephone or email by 12 noon on the day of the meeting and may speak for a maximum of 3 minutes).*

183/23. Bank Reconciliations

- To approve bank reconciliations for January 2023 (APPENDIX B)

184/23. Payment of Invoices

- To note invoice payments for January 2023 (APPENDIX C)

185/23. Updates from Committees

- a) To receive a report in the form of draft minutes from the Environment Committee (APPENDIX D)
- b) To receive a report in the form of draft minutes from the Community Services Committee (APPENDIX E)

186/23. Recommendation From Environment Committee

- a) To receive and note the results of the consultation and Report (APPENDIX F)
- b) To discuss and agree on the way forward

187/23. Recommendation From Environment Committee

- To approve new play equipment in three parks (APPENDIX G)
 - a) Mendip Park to seek expenditure from Section 106
 - b) Duston Wildes "Quarry" expenditure from Community Infrastructure Levy
 - c) Haydown Green expenditure from Community Infrastructure Levy

188/23. Recommendation from the Environment Committee

- a) To approve use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the purchase of a commemorative bench for the Coronation of King Charles III (APPENDIX H)
- b) To delegate to the Clerk the installation of the Coronation Commemorative bench

189/23. Recommendation From Community Services Committee

- To approve a Grant Application from Duston Scouts and offer £1000 (APPENDIX I)

190/23. Duston Parish Council Bank Mandate

- To discuss the situation with Duston Parish Council Bank Mandate (Unity Bank & Barclays Bank) and how to proceed.

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191/23. Electoral Ward Boundary Review

- To contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and support their proposal that the new electoral ward of Duston is exactly the same boundary as the Parish Council. Give support in general that they have tried to base electoral wards on parish boundaries (APPENDIX J)

192/23. Skate Ramp(s) in Duston

- a) To decide whether this is a project whether Duston Parish Council wants to consider
- b) If so, to decide which Committee to delegate responsibility for a feasibility review and report back to Council in due course with recommendations

193/23. Police Liaison Report

- To receive a report from Cllr Iain Liddon

194/23. Planter In Limehurst Square Area

- a) To purchase a planter for the area of Limehurst Square using Community Infrastructure Levy (subject to permission of WNC Highways).
- b) Delegate to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairs of the Environment Committee & Community Services Committee.

195/23. Communications and Engagement Policy

- To approve the revised Communications and Engagement Policy (APPENDIX K)

196/23. Disciplinary and Grievance Policy and Procedures

- To approve the Disciplinary and Grievance Policy Procedures (APPENDIX L)

197/23. Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation

- To approve the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation (APPENDIX M)

198/23. Sickness Absence Policy

- To approve the Sickness Absence Policy (APPENDIX O)



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

FULL COUNCIL
MINUTES THURSDAY 2nd MARCH 2023 7PM

PRESENT

CHAIR: P Enright-King

COUNCILLORS : Golby, Ingram, Liddon, Maitland, Stonehouse, Roper, Ennis-Clark, Mumford

155/23. To receive apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllrs Bottwood, Hinch and Barnes

156/23. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2nd February 2023

- **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday the 2nd of February were approved as a true record and signed by the chair.

157/23. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- Cllr Ingram declared a non-pecuniary interest upon agenda item 164/23. Duston Good Neighbours Scheme (DGNS), declaring that they are a member of Duston Old People's Welfare Association.

158/23. Alan Burns, West Northamptonshire Council

- Alan Burns, the newly appointed Town and Parish Council Liaison Officer, attended the Council meeting. He spoke upon his role and its aim to foster and joint working relationship between West Northamptonshire Council and Town / Parish / Community Councils. Areas for joint working include S106, Community Infrastructure Levy, Climate Change and local area partnerships.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the introduction from the Town and Parish Council Liaison Officer in the form of a verbal presentation was noted.
 - b) That Alan Burns was thanked for attending the meeting

159/23. Public Participation Session

- One member of public was in attendance, they spoke upon item 161/23.

160/23. Updates from Committees

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the report in the form of draft minutes from the Environment Committee was noted.
 - b) That the report in the form of draft minutes from the Planning Committee was noted.
 - c) That the report in the form of draft minutes from the Resources and General Purposes Committee was noted.

161/23. Recommendation from Environment Committee

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) The Council approved the recommendation by the Environment Committee to install a land drainage system (a "soakway") to help reduce the amount of standing water in Medip Park entrance.
 - b) To be funded through Community Infrastructure Levy.

162/23. Recommendation from Environment Committee

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) To note the discussion on the problems of parking around Duston Eldean Primary School and Millway Primary School.
 - b) To fund no-parking banners, A frames, signage flyers etc from the DPC Grants budget.

- c) The Clerk to discuss progressing this further with both Duston Eldean Primary School and Millway Primary School.

163/23. Armed Forces Covenant

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That Armed Forces Covenant is adopted and signed by the Chair and Clerk (APPENDIX E)
 - b) That the signed Armed Forces Covenant is placed on a wall inside Duston Community Centre.

164/23. Duston Good Neighbours Scheme (DGNS)

- **RESOLVED:** That the BCD Manager actively seeks a central co-ordinator for the DGNS in order to get the project back on track and operational.

165/23. Grow Together Allotment Sub-Committee Report

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the aims & objectives of The Grow Together Allotment, set out in the presentation, were approved and adopted (APPENDIX F).
 - b) That the minutes of The Grow Together Sub-Committee held on Thursday the 9th of February were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair (APPENDIX G).

166/23. Tree Policy

- **RESOLVED:** That the Tree Management Policy was adopted (APPENDIX H)

167/23. Councillor Officer Protocol

- **RESOLVED:** That the Councillor / Officer Protocol was adopted (APPENDIX I)

168/23. Coronation Plans

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the update in the form of a verbal report from the Clerk was noted
 - b) That the discussions surrounding the Coronation Plans were noted.

169/23. 2023 Events & Initiatives Update

- **RESOLVED:**

- a) That the written report from the BCD Manager was noted (APPENDIX J).
- b) That Alison Grantham and Sarah Percival are thanked for their work.

170/23. Welcome to Duston Signs

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) As part of the Four Year Plan the Council purchases three (not two) additional "Welcome To Duston Signs" and posts. Size of sign 950 x 500mm. Cost is £1790 + £65 carriage and VAT.
 - b) To install one adjacent to Access Storage on Tollgate Way, one at the entrance of Weggs Farm Road facing New Sandy Lane and entrance to Costwold Avenue from Harlestone Road.
 - c) To be paid for using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

171/23. Internal Controls Councillor Report

- **RESOLVED:** That the latest Internal Controls Councillor Report was received and noted (APPENDIX K).

172/23. Bank Reconciliations

- **RESOLVED:** That the bank reconciliations for December 2022 were approved (APPENDIX L)

173/23. Payment of Invoices

- **RESOLVED:** That the invoice payments for December 2022 were noted (APPENDIX M)

The meeting closed at 8:54pm

Date: 03/03/2023

Duston Parish Council

Page 1

Time: 17:51

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/01/2023
for Cashbook 1 - Current A/c 03573680**

User: NG

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Barclays Community A/c 3680	31/01/2023	1	41,135.61
			<hr/> 41,135.61
<u>Unpresented Cheques (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			41,135.61
<u>Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			41,135.61
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	41,135.61
		Difference is :-	0.00

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/01/2023
for Cashbook 2 - Business Saver A/c 63253058**

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Business Saver A/c 3058	31/01/2023	1	713,555.21
			<hr/> 713,555.21
<u>Unpresented Cheques (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			713,555.21
<u>Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			713,555.21
			<hr/>
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	713,555.21
		Difference is :-	0.00

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/01/2023
for Cashbook 5 - Petty Cash**

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Petty Cash	31/01/2023	1	131.40
			<u>131.40</u>
<u>Unpresented Cheques (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			131.40
<u>Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			131.40
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	131.40
		Difference is :-	0.00

Duston Parish Council

Petty cash count and reconciliation

Jan-23

Float	
Per count	
20	100.00
10	10.00
5	5.00
2	8.00
1	6.00
0.5	1.00
0.2	0.80
0.1	0.10
0.05	0.45
0.02	0.04
0.01	0.01
	<u>131.40</u> IN TIN

In safe 0.00

131.40 Agreed

Reconciliation to RBS

Jan-23

In tin b'wd	128.40	
Cash received (trf from bankings sheets)		
Trf in from cash takings	5.50	
Trf to Facilities float	-2.50	
Trf in from facilities		
	<u>131.40</u>	
Cash paid out in month	<u>0.00</u>	
= Cash in tin	131.40	0.00
Balance per RBS	<u>131.40</u>	

Petty cash expenses paid

Ref	Description	£
		<u> </u>
		<u> </u>

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/01/2023
for Cashbook 9 - Unity Current 20456870**

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Unity Bank - current account	31/01/2023	1	1,445.85
			<u>1,445.85</u>
<u>Unpresented Cheques (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			1,445.85
<u>Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)</u>		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			1,445.85
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	1,445.85
		Difference is :-	0.00

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/01/2023
for Cashbook 8 - Facilities float**

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Facilities float	31/01/2023	1	33.61
			<u>33.61</u>
<u>Unpresented Cheques (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			33.61
<u>Receipts not Banked/Cleared (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			33.61
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	33.61
		Difference is :-	0.00

Duston Parish Council

PURCHASE LEDGER INVOICE LISTING

03/03/2023
17:28

Purchase Ledger for Month No 10

Order by Supplier A/c

Invoice Date	Invoice Number	Ref No	Supplier A/c Name	Supplier A/c Code	Net Value	VAT	Invoice Total	Nominal Ledger Analysis			Analysis Description
								A/C	Centre	Amount	
19/01/2023	122589		1ST REACTION	1ST001	70.00	14.00	84.00	4226	101	70.00	1st Reaction maintenance DCC
31/01/2023	E2016572704		ALLSTAR	ALL001	58.33	11.66	69.99	4145	212	58.33	Allstar fuel
31/01/2023	AVIVAJAN23		AVIVA	AVIVA001	480.81	0.00	480.81	4000	101	212.38	AVIVAJAN23/AVIVA
								4000	211	62.36	AVIVAJAN23/AVIVA
								4006	101	159.30	AVIVAJAN23/AVIVA
								4006	211	46.77	AVIVAJAN23/AVIVA
19/01/2023	CHGJAN23		BARCLAYS	B0001	31.95	0.00	31.95	4125	201	31.95	Bank charges
10/01/2023	9918		BARNETT LAND	BARN01	1,100.00	220.00	1,320.00	4226	211	1,100.00	Barnet plants, planting Timken
13/01/2023	BCARDJAN23		BARCLAYCARD	BCARD	334.22	62.19	396.41	4225	101	63.16	BCARD JAN23
								4019	201	32.99	BCARD JAN23
								4151	101	63.41	BCARD JAN23
								4115	201	19.67	BCARD JAN23
								4060	201	120.00	SLCC QUALIFICATION FEE
								4101	201	34.20	ONE DRIVE
								4015	101	0.79	BCARD PARKING
03/01/2023	520675168		BRITISH GAS	BRIT01	2,443.75	488.75	2,932.50	4206	101	2,443.75	B Gas DCC elec 1.12-31.12
16/01/2023	8163		COMPLETE GROUND MAN.	CGM001	5,335.00	1,067.00	6,402.00	4226	211	5,335.00	CGM tree works Duston spinney
16/01/2023	8164		COMPLETE GROUND MAN.	CGM001	1,250.00	250.00	1,500.00	4226	211	1,250.00	CGM tree and shrub work
19/01/2023	8168		COMPLETE GROUND MAN.	CGM001	425.00	85.00	510.00	4226	211	425.00	CGM emergency tree works
31/01/2023	8171		COMPLETE GROUND MAN.	CGM001	1,460.00	282.00	1,752.00	4226	211	1,460.00	CGM grounds maintenance
22/01/2023	5158		DA HEATING LTD	DA001	200.00	40.00	240.00	4225	101	200.00	DA Heat plant room/boiler
01/01/2023	230100113479		DBFB	DBFB	54.08	10.82	64.90	4231	102	54.08	DBFB St L CCTV
01/01/2023	230100113552		DBFB	DBFB	333.52	66.70	400.22	4120	201	333.52	DBFB telephones
31/01/2023	6412		NATALIE GREEN & CO.	GREE001	1,360.00	272.00	1,632.00	4050	201	1,360.00	N Green accounts & payroll Jan
31/01/2023	HMRCJAN23		HMRC	HMRC01	3,979.49	0.00	3,979.49	4000	201	1,042.22	HMRC Jan 23
								4000	101	289.19	HMRC Jan 23
								4000	102	716.80	HMRC Jan 23
								4000	211	189.92	HMRC Jan 23

Purchase Ledger for Month No 10

Order by Supplier A/c

Invoice Date	Invoice Number	Ref No	Supplier A/c Name	Supplier A/c Code	Net Value	VAT	Invoice Total	Nominal Ledger Analysis			
								A/C	Centre	Amount	Analysis Description
01/01/2023	LGSS DEC		NCC - PENSION	LPGS	129.29	0.00	129.29	4005	201	550.34	HMRC Jan 23
								4005	101	594.23	HMRC Jan 23
								4005	102	414.49	HMRC Jan 23
								4005	211	182.30	HMRC Jan 23
31/01/2023	LGSSJAN23		NCC - PENSION	LPGS	3,078.26	0.00	3,078.26	4000	201	306.28	LGSS DEC 22 adjustment
								4000	101	55.41	LGSS DEC 22 adjustment
								4000	102	208.84	LGSS Pension Jan 23
								4006	201	999.34	LGSS Pension Jan 23
								4006	101	868.51	LGSS Pension Jan 23
								4006	102	574.12	LGSS Pension Jan 23
23/12/2022	INV-MAC28090		MAC SYSTEMS	MACS01	135.00	27.00	162.00	4225	102	135.00	Mac Maglock rep St L
25/01/2023	DPCCFD23DEP		MOSOUNDS	MOS001	1,500.00	300.00	1,800.00	4128	215	1,500.00	Mosounds deposit DFD
18/01/2023	INV-2653		NCALC	NCALC01	50.00	10.00	60.00	4020	201	50.00	Ncalc common land course
01/01/2023	PERADV		PERSONNEL ADVICE	PAS01	480.00	0.00	480.00	4056	201	480.00	HR retainer Jan - Apr 23
27/01/2023	6595/23		P B ELECTRICAL SER.	PBE001	790.00	158.00	948.00	4225	201	790.00	PB Elec emergency ligh rep
05/01/2023	869632		PERKINS FLORISTS	PERK01	373.33	74.67	448.00	4128	215	373.33	Perkins hanking baskets
05/01/2023	264960		PATHFINDER LEGAL	PLS	219.30	43.86	263.16	4055	102	219.30	Pathfinder SL 5 lease renewal
05/01/2023	264961		PATHFINDER LEGAL	PLS	722.40	144.48	866.88	4055	102	722.40	Pathfinder SL3 lease renewal
05/01/2023	264962		PATHFINDER LEGAL	PLS	12.90	2.58	15.48	4055	102	12.90	Pathfinder legal re offices
05/01/2023	264963		PATHFINDER LEGAL	PLS	38.70	7.74	46.44	4055	201	38.70	Pathfinder land at Costwold
30/01/2023	27722		PRO-SERVICING LTD	PRO001	1,222.00	244.40	1,466.40	4226	101	1,222.00	Proservice - firedoor inspecti
20/11/2022	SMB26595		RBS	RBS01	206.25	41.25	247.50	4102	201	206.25	RBS asset reg 20.11.22-31.3.24
31/01/2023	SALARIESJAN23		SALARIES	SALARIES01	16,036.65	0.00	16,036.65	4000	201	4,179.84	SALARIESJAN23/STAFF SALARIES
								4000	101	5,709.33	SALARIESJAN23/STAFF SALARIES
								4000	102	3,953.53	SALARIESJAN23/STAFF SALARIES
								4000	211	2,157.70	SALARIESJAN23/STAFF SALARIES
								4015	201	29.25	SALARIESJAN23/STAFF SALARIES

PURCHASE LEDGER INVOICE LISTING

Purchase Ledger for Month No 10

Order by Supplier A/c

Invoice Date	Invoice Number	Ref No	Supplier A/c Name	Supplier A/c Code	Net Value	VAT	Invoice Total	Nominal Ledger Analysis			Analysis Description
								A/C	Centre	Amount	
31/01/2023	0001792551		SRCL LTD	SRCL	77.24	15.45	92.69	4128	215	7.00	SALARIESJAN23/STAFF SALARIES
13/01/2023	191900996/0002		SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	SSE01	4,431.77	886.35	5,318.12	4205	102	4,431.77	SSE Gas St L 1.12-31.12.22
12/01/2023	451877372/0010		SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	SSE01	1,252.52	250.50	1,503.02	4206	102	1,252.52	SSE St L Elec 30.9.22-31.10.22
12/01/2023	501902775/0001		SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	SSE01	5,363.56	1,072.71	6,436.27	4206	102	5,363.56	SSE Elec1.11.22-29.12.22 StL
16/01/2023	1085505599		STANNAH	ST01	253.70	50.74	304.44	4226	101	253.70	Stannah servicing 16.1-15.4
03/01/2023	TVJAN23		TV LICENSING	TV001	13.25	0.00	13.25	4062	101	13.25	TVJAN23/TV Licensing
31/01/2023	RCO1202687		VEOLIA	V0002	677.08	135.42	812.50	4155	101	464.00	Veolia waste Jan 23
31/01/2023	RCO1202688		VEOLIA	V0002	4.00	0.80	4.80	4155	102	213.08	Veolia waste Jan 23
22/01/2023	B4-583752171		VODAFONE	VODA01	112.49	16.48	128.97	4121	101	4.00	Veolia waste excess chg
05/01/2023	1548		WEL ELECTRICAL	WEL001	115.00	0.00	115.00	4225	101	56.25	Vodafone Jan 23
16/01/2023	3233		WINGS EVENTS	WINGS01	551.40	110.28	661.68	4128	215	56.24	Vodafone Jan 23
04/01/2023	424001235751		WEST NORTHANTS COUNCWNC001	WNC001	437.50	0.00	437.50	4201	201	115.00	WEL LED light units
14/01/2023	424001252873		WEST NORTHANTS COUNCWNC001	WNC001	180.00	0.00	180.00	4062	101	551.40	Wings deposit for DFD marquee
31/01/2023	242441466		WORLDPAY	WORLD001	36.18	5.12	41.30	4137	201	437.50	WNC reception space 25/12-28/3
09/01/2023	VOI0030187		ZENOFFICE	Z002	249.49	49.90	299.39	4107	201	180.00	WNC Licence fees
09/01/2023	VOI0030187B		ZENOFFICE	Z002	49.89	9.98	59.87	4107	201	36.18	Worldpay credit card chg
										249.49	Zen photocopier charges
										49.89	Zen photocopier chgs adjustmen

TOTAL INVOICES	57,715.30	6,537.83	64,253.13
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57,715.30



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES 16th MARCH 2023

Cllrs Enright-King, Ennis-Clark, Ingram, Liddon,

CHAIR: Councillor P. Enright-King

PRESENT: Cllrs Ennis-Clark, Ingram and Liddon

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr G. Youens – Clerk

Mr R. Ikavnieks – Assistant Clerk

EC078/23. To receive apologies for absence

- There were no apologies received.

EC079/23. To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th February 2023

- **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th of February 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

EC080/23. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- There were no interests declared.

EC081/23. Public Participation Session

- One member of the public was in attendance, they spoke upon item EC082/23. Mendip Park Entrance.

EC082/23. Mendip Park Entrance

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the installation of a soak away to be paid with Community Infrastructure Levy monies was approved, costing approximately £5000
 - b) That the installation of new locks on the current barriers at the entrance to Mendip Park to prevent non-authorised vehicular access was approved.

EC083/23. Park Consultations

- The Committee was presented two reports outlining the results for the Mendip Park Consultation and the Hardlands Road Consultation.

There were 176 responses to the Mendip Park Consultation. To the question 'Would Mendip Park benefit from having an additional gated entrance connecting Sam Harrison Way to the Park?' 137 responses were in favor, other responses were in favor with specific conditions, 31 responses were against, and 4 responses were inapplicable.

There were 52 responses to the Hardlands Road Consultation. To the question 'Would Hardlands Road POS benefit from having a sheltered seating area?' 18 responses were in favor, 34 responses were against.

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the Mendip Park Consultation was received.
 - b) That the Hardlands Road POS Consultation was received. This to be presented at the next Full Council meeting in April.
 - c) Mendip Park lockable gate and decreasing anti-social behaviour in the park is considered at the next Environment Committee.

EC084/23. Play Equipment

- The Clerk gave a presentation to Committee on new play equipment for the Quarry, Haydown Green and Mendip Park. It was felt that new equipment in various parks

would be welcomed by residents. The Four Year Plan identified the Quarry and Haydown Green in particular needing new play equipment.

- A skate ramp may need more careful consideration and probably a specific public consultation.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the Clerks presentation on new play equipment was noted.
 - b) To recommend to the next Full Council that need play equipment is installed in the Quarry, Haydown Green and Mendip Park. The Quarry and Haydown Green is paid for from Community Infrastructure Levy. Mendip Park is paid from Section 106.

EC085/23. Schedule of Ground Keeping Works

- The Committee discussed the current schedule of works undertaken by contractors (CGM and Barnett).
- **RESOLVED:** That the update from the Clerk regarding Ground Keeping work was noted.

EC086/23. Planters in Duston

- **RESOLVED:** To note the current list of various planters (APPENDIX C)

EC087/23. Cameras In Park

- Committee discussed SD cameras. Whilst recognising they are benefits there are also legal / data protection obstacles to this.
- **RESOLVED:** To discuss SD cameras in DPC owned Parks at a further meeting.

EC088/23. Air Pollution in Duston

- The Clerk will soon have a meeting with Duston Eldean Primary School and Millway Primary School and will report back.

EC089/23. Dog Fouling

- Committee discussed anti-dog fouling posters in Duston. The posters were welcome but this may continue to be a problem due to the behaviour of a minority.
- **RESOLVED:** The Clerk to check that all anti- dog fouling posters are at the correct height.

EC090/23. Installation of Benches

- Duston Old People Welfare Association (DOPWA) is asking Duston Parish Council help to install a bench outside the Coop, adjacent to the bus stop, on Main Road. DOWPA would pay for the bench to commemorate their 130 year history in Duston.
- A Coronation bench for Hardlands Road was discussed, perhaps replace one of the old green ones. The green benches were installed by the Parish Council nearly twenty years ago. However, it would need to be ordered now so it would hopefully arrive in time. It could be paid for from Community Infrastructure Levy.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) To help DOWPA to try and install a bench outside the Coop / Bus Stop on Main Road.
 - b) To recommend to Council the purchase of a commemorative coronation bench using Community Infrastructure Levy.

The meeting finished at 8:43pm



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

Community Services Committee **MINUTES 20th March 2023**

Maitland, Roper, Liddon, Enright-King, Ennis-Clark, Golby

CHAIR: Councillor S. Maitland

PRESENT: Cllrs Ennis-Clark, Golby, Roper, Liddon, Enright-King

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Youens – Parish Clerk

Alison Grantham – BCD Manager

CSC060/23. To receive apologies for absence

- There were no apologies for absence

CSC061/23. To receive and approve the minutes of the Community Services Committee on 11th January 2023

- **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

CSC062/23. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- There were no interest declared.

CSC063/23. Public Participation Session

- There was a speaker on Limehurst Square and the need for it to be resurfaced.

CSC064/23. Working Parties Updates

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) Senior Provisions – Cllr Golby noted that Duston Parish Council are soon moving forward with Duston Good Neighbours Scheme. This could do some of the work that DOWPA have done. Cllr Golby will have a discussion with Alison Grantham in due course.
 - b) That The Grow Together Allotment – Cllr Ennis-Clark reported that full Council have approved the aims and objectives of the Grow Together Allotment. There will be reports back from the Grow Together Allotment to Committee about every quarter. The Grow Together Allotment Working Party will no longer need to meet.
 - c) Publicity – Cllr Liddon has had a meeting with Gary Youens and Alison Grantham. Cllr Golby circulated a publication produced by Moulton Parish Council.
 - d) Youth – Gary Youens (Clerk) to chase Northampton Leisure Trust for a report back on the DPC sponsored Youth Club.
 - e) Limehurst Shopping Centre – Cllr Maitland has spoke at a West Northamptonshire Council meeting about the urgency this needs to be done. Gary Youens (Clerk) to chase the letter up to try and get a formal response.

CSC065/23. Limehurst Square Resurfacing

- Cllr Maitland gave a verbal report on trying to get West Northamptonshire Council to resurface Limehurst Square. Currently some people with mobility and visual impairments find Limehurst Square a potential hazard.
- It was also noted that cracked paving slabs along Mendip Road, Cotswold Avenue and Eastfield Road are also a problem for some people.
- **RESOLVED:** The Clerk to chase up the letter sent to West Northamptonshire Council from Duston Parish Council on this issue.

CSC066/23. Grants Application Process

- Committee considered various grant awarding policies. Cllr Maitland and Cllr Liddon have been discussing the merits of each one since the last meeting.
- **RESOLVED:**

- a) The Clerk to note the discussion and bring to Council a revised Grant Awarding Policy.
- b) No changes to current procedure in how grants are approved.

CSC067/23. Grant Application

- Committee discussed the Grant Application from Duston Scouts.
- **RESOLVED:** Duston Scouts be offered £1000 instead of £550.

CSC068/23. Review of the Community Info & Wellness Fair

- **RESOLVED:** The written report (APPENDIX F) and verbal report from BCD Manager was noted.

CSC069/23. Premises Licence for St Luke's Field

- The Clerk reported that Duston Parish Council is applying for a Premises Licence for St Luke's Field. This will ensure we have all the relevant permissions in place for Duston Fun Day and any other community events held there.

CSC070/23. Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III

- The Clerk said residents will be allowed to use Duston Sports Centre Field to have a picnic. They can also use the cafe where there might be a cake and complementary drink.

CSC071/23. Annual Parish Meeting

- The Annual Parish Meeting is on 18th April at 7:30pm, Duston Community Centre. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant is likely to attend.

CSC072/23. Future Events

- **RESOLVED:** To send ideas for future events to the Clerk for consideration.

Meeting was closed at 8:24pm



Full Council 6th April 2023

Hardlands Road Public Open Space Consultation

182/23. To Receive Recommendations from the Environment Committee.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform and display to the Council the data collected from the Hardlands Road Public Open Space Consultation and recommend the next steps for Council to take.

2. Background

2.1 During the Full Council meeting on the 3rd of November 2022, Duston Parish Council (DPC), as per 102/22. 'Recommendations from the Environments Committee item B, resolved to conduct a public consultation to understand the public's perception on installing a sheltered seating area at Hardlands Road Public Open Space (POS).

2.2 The public consultation opened on the 31st of January 2023 and closed on the 1st of March 2023.

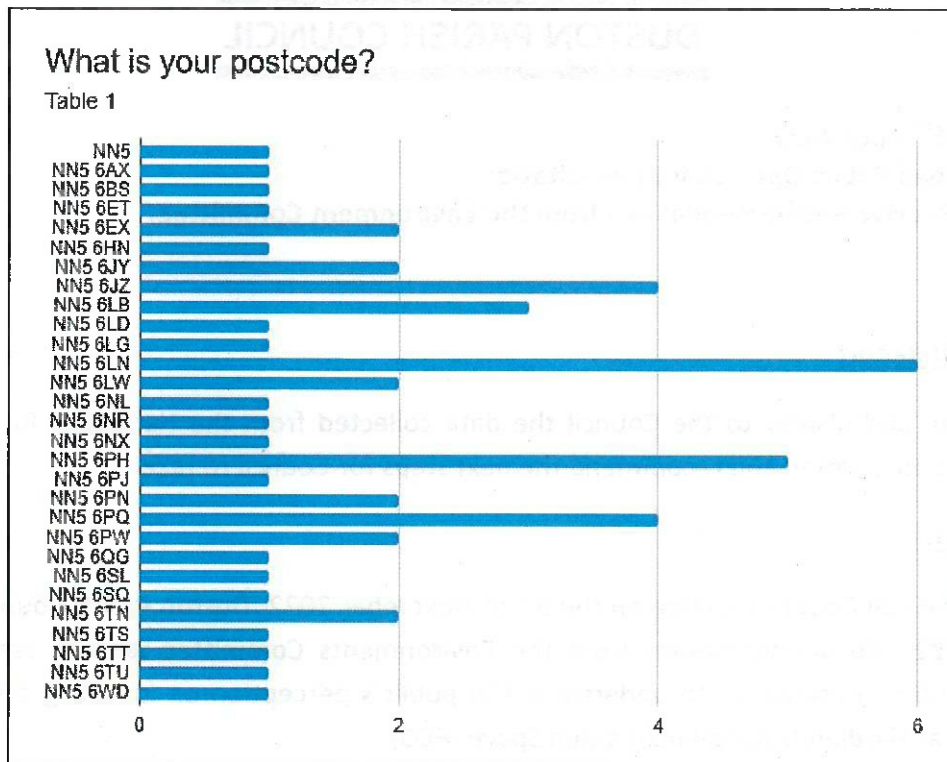
2.3 60 Letters notifying the residents of the public consultation and how to participate (scanning a QR code, following the links on the DPC Social Media/Website or alternatively collecting a physical copy from the Community Centre) were posted to dwellings in the direct vicinity of the public open space (Dwellings on Hardlands Road, Castle Ave, and the houses close to the space on Sir John Pascoe Way and Rosette Close)

2.4 Furthermore, posters were placed upon Lamp posts and other street furniture in conjunction with social media posts. This was done to inform residents who do not live adjacent to the Hardlands Road POS that a consultation was being conducted.

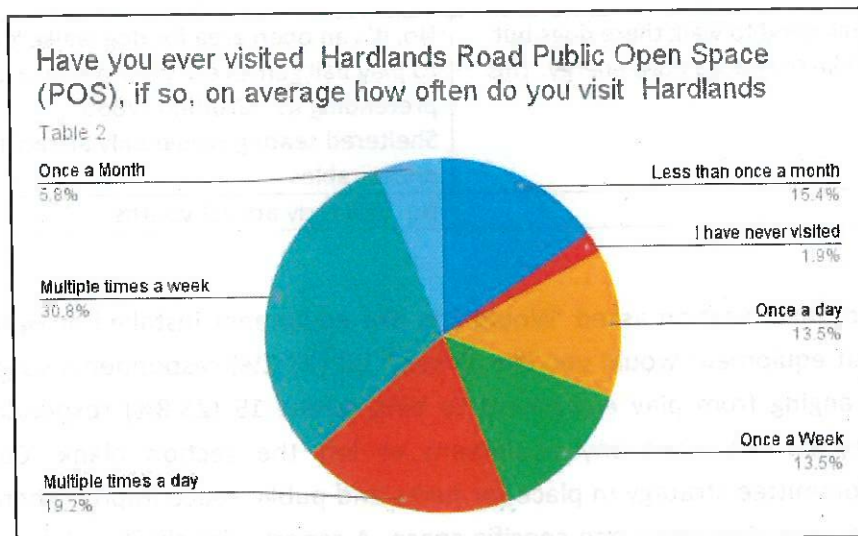
3. Findings

3.1 There were 52 individual responses received. 49 (94.2%) Responses were submitted online, with three (5.8%) being turned in physically.

3.2 The first question that was asked was 'What is your postcode?' Table 1 displays the breakdown of where respondents live based upon postcode. The four most common postcodes were NN5 6LN (11.5%, Hardlands Road), NN5 6JZ (7.7% Castle Ave), NN5 6PH (9.6%, Stephen Bennett Cl) and NN5 6PQ (7.7%, Sir John Pascoe Way).



3.3 The second question that was asked enquired about often the individual respondent visits Hardlands Road Public Open Space. Table 2 displays the breakdown of how frequently the respondents visit the site.



3.4 The third question asked to the residents was 'If you have never or rarely visit Hardlands Road POS, what's stopping you?' as to identify any potential issues that are isolating individuals from using the space. A majority of responses (64.4%) were left blank or responded with text that reaffirmed that they visit Hardlands POS often (I do visit, N/A, See above etc.) Six (11.5%) respondents stated that a lack of equipment / things to do was a factor in why they never or rarely visit Hardlands Road POS. Two responses (3.8%) commented about the space being too close to busy road.

3.5 The fourth was question 'Would Hardlands Road POS benefit from having a sheltered seating area?', 18 (34.6%) respondents viewed that Hardlands Road POS would benefit from a sheltered seating area. 35 (65.4%) respondents opposed the idea that Hardlands Road POS would benefit from a sheltered seating area. Table 3 shows a random sample of five responses in favour and against.

Random Sample of responses in favour	Random Sample of responses against
Yes, would add to the area for adults to sit in the shade while children play	NO it would just encourage kids to loiter there, it's bad enough with the seat you installed on Newton Road/Reedham Close, used regularly for drug taking. Early morning dog walkers clearing up the rubbish they leave behind!
Yes - my boys often play at the Hardlands Road Green so it'd be nice to have somewhere to sit whilst they play.	No money would be better spent elsewhere. This small green just needs to be kept clean and litter free. New covered litter bins and ensuring CLEAR signage for dog waste and prosecution for littering.
Yes but it would get misused by youths just like the benches in the summer smoking and drinking in the trees.	Absolutely not as the overgrown neglected trees already give the drug users in this area a place to hide. They do not need a seat to exchange drugs on.

Yes, some older folk need to walk there dogs but also need to sit while they dogs burn energy. This would be great.	No, it's an open area for dog walkers and children to play ball games etc We walk through the trees pretending its "Gruffalo Wood" Sheltered seating would only attract the undesirables
Yes	No. Will Only attract youths

Table 3

3.6 The fifth and final question asked 'Would you like equipment installed at Hardlands Road POS? If yes, what equipment would you like to see?' 37 (71.2%) respondents suggested some improvements ranging from play equipment to bins, whilst 15 (28.8%) respondents directly stated that they do not want any equipment or left the section blank. Currently, the Environments Committee strategy in place for parks and public space improvement is to focus its attention and resources upon one specific space. A report with the breakdown of specific suggestions from respondents will be presented to the Environments Committee.

4. Recommendations

- That Council accepts the result of the consultation (18/34.6%, responses in favour, 35/65.4% responses in opposition) and does not proceed with installing a sheltered seating area at Hardlands Road Public Open Space.



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council

6th April 2023

183/23. Recommendation From Environment Committee

- To approve new play equipment in three parks
 - a) Mendip Park to seek expenditure from Section 106
 - b) Duston Wildes "Quarry" expenditure from Community Infrastructure Levy
 - c) Haydown Green expenditure from Community Infrastructure Levy

1. Purpose of Report

To approve new Play Equipment for Duston Wildes, Haydown Green and Mendip Park.

2. Background

Duston Parish Council has not installed new play equipment at the Quarry or Haydown Green for a number of years. The play areas at these two sites are in particular need of updating. Previously residents have asked for new equipment in this area.

Some new play equipment was installed in Mendip Park in 2019. Some existing play items were repainted at the same time.

The Four Year Plan (approved by Council in November 2021) identified the play areas at the Quarry and Haydown Green as in need of refurbishment.

Mendip Park is within the former Borough electoral ward of Old Duston where Section 106 has been identified from the Duston Gardens Development. It is recommend that the Clerk contact West Northamptonshire Council and ask for Section 106 to pay for Mendip Park.

3. Current Situation

The Environment Committee looked at various proposals for new play equipment. The Committee proposes:

Duston Wildes: Multiplay Unit for younger children, trampoline, spinning bowl, 2 play panels attached to railings. Remove springer and small metal climbing frame. Cost approximately £24,500 (excluding VAT)

Haydown Green: Multiplay unit, a springy and a play panel. The existing climbing frame and wet pour to be removed. As this area has residential properties adjoining this open space it was decided something for younger children would be most appropriate. Cost approximately £15,299.78 (excluding VAT).

Mendip Park: Keep all existing items but add three additional items. Two pieces of "active" equipment and a trampoline. Cost approximately £14,000 (excluding VAT).

4. Issues

This will not be funded from either the DPC revenue budget or reserves. Environment Committee recommends

- a) Duston Wildes is funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- b) Haydown Green is funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- c) Mendip Park is funded through Section 106 monies and the Clerk to write to West Northamptonshire Council to release the funds or pay the invoice.

5. Council To Consider

Council is being asked

- a) To approve this recommendation of the Environment Committee and install new play equipment at Duston Wildes "Quarry", Haydown Green and Mendip Park.
- b) To delegate to the Clerk for this project to be implemented.
- c) For the Clerk to provide regular updates to the Environment Committee until this project has been completed.



THE CORONATION OF

KING CHARLES III

6-5-2023

Have your say

We are now consulting local people on a new pattern of wards for West Northamptonshire Council. We have an open mind about our final recommendations, and we will consider every piece of evidence we receive from local groups and people, regardless of whom it is from or whether it relates to the whole council area or just a part of it. If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for West Northamptonshire we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

We aim to propose a pattern of wards for West Northamptonshire Council which delivers:

- **Electoral equality:** each councillor represents a similar number of electors.
- **Community identity:** reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- **Effective and convenient local government:** helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of electors.
 - Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
 - Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
 - Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.
- Electoral equality**
- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of electors as elsewhere in the council area?
- Community identity**
- **Transport links:** are there good links across your proposed ward? Is there any form of public transport?
 - **Community groups:** is there a parish council, residents association or another group that represents the area?
 - **Facilities:** does your pattern of wards reflect where local people go for shops, medical services, leisure facilities etc?
- Interests:** what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- **Identifiable boundaries:** are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?
- Effective local government**
- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
 - Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?

Useful tips

- Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps. You can find it at consultation.lgbce.org.uk.
- We publish all submissions we receive on our website. Go to: www.lgbce.org.uk

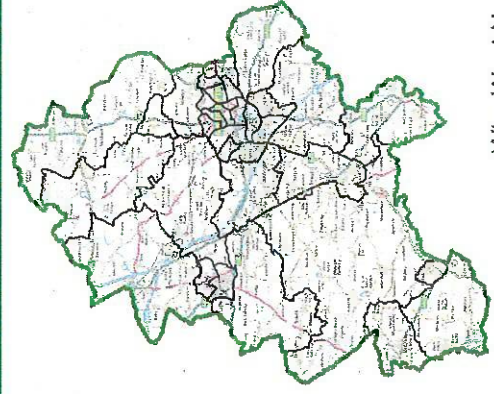
Our consultation area:

consultation.lgbce.org.uk
Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk
Twitter: @LGBCE

Write to:

Review Officer (West Northamptonshire)
LGBCE
PO Box 133
Bytham
NE24 9FE

West Northamptonshire Council
Draft Recommendations on the new electoral arrangements



Who we are

- The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.
- We are not part of government or any political party.
- We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.
- Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

Why West Northamptonshire?

- In 2020 the Government provided for the creation of a new local authority called West Northamptonshire Council, with effect from April 2021.
- The new authority combined Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council and South Northamptonshire District Council into a single unitary authority.
- The Commission agreed to carry out an electoral review of the new council. This will ensure the new council has electoral arrangements that reflect its functions in time for elections in May 2025.

Electoral review

- An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority, including:
- The total number of councillors representing the council's electors ('council size').
 - The names, number and boundaries of wards or electoral divisions.
 - The number of councillors for each ward or division.

Our proposals

- We propose that the council should have 76 councillors in future, representing seven one-councillor, 15 two-councillor and 13 three-councillor wards across the council area.

You have until 15 May 2023 to have your say on the recommendations

Summary of our recommendations

Our draft recommendations propose that West Northamptonshire Council should have 76 councillors.

Those councillors should represent seven one-councillor, 15 two-councillor and 13 three-councillor wards across the council area.

The boundaries of all the existing wards will change.

An outline of the proposals is shown in the map to the right. A detailed report on the recommendations and mapping is available on our website at: www.lgbce.org.uk.

We welcome comments on our draft recommendations, whether you support the proposals or wish to put forward alternative arrangements.

In particular, we welcome proposals for alternative boundaries or ward names which meet the criteria we must follow as part of electoral reviews, and which are described in more detail over the page.

Have your say at consultation.lgbce.org.uk:

- view the map of our recommendations down to street level.
- zoom into the areas that interest you most.
- find more guidance on how to have your say.
- read the full report of our recommendations.
- send us your views directly.

Stage of Review	Description
30 August 2022 - 7 November 2022	Public consultation on warding arrangements
7 March 2023 - 15 May 2023	Public consultation on draft recommendations
1 August 2023	Publication of final recommendations
May 2025	Subject to parliamentary approval - implementation of new arrangements at local elections

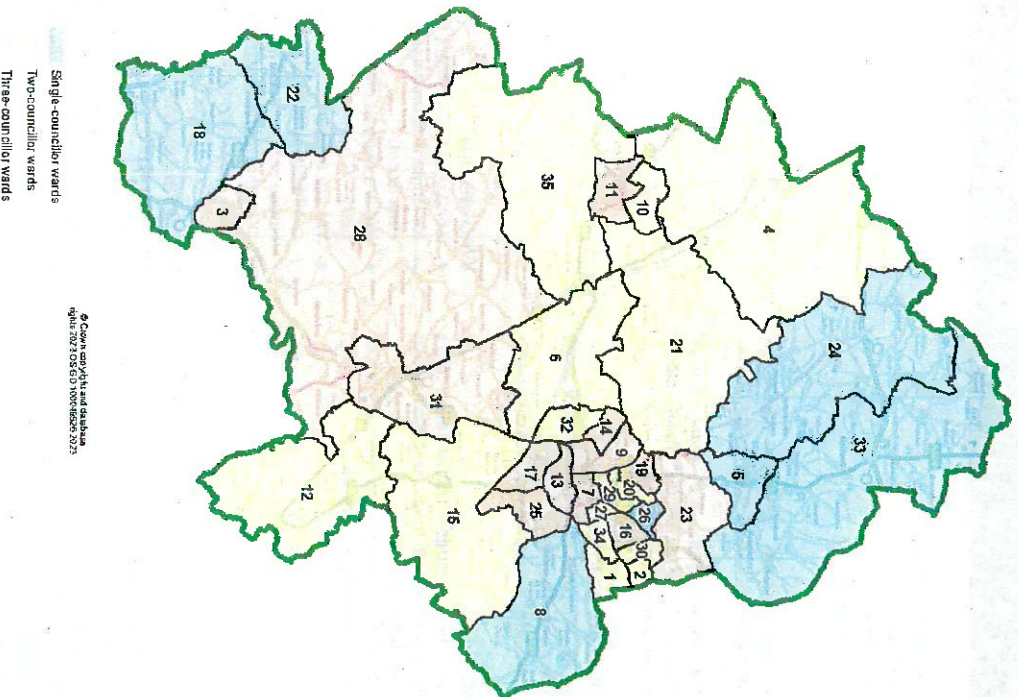
Overview of draft recommendations for West Northamptonshire Council

View this map online:

consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Follow the review on Twitter: [@LGBCE](https://twitter.com/LGBCE)

If you are viewing this page online, click on the map to go straight to our interactive consultation area.



Single-councillor wards
Two-councillor wards
Three-councillor wards

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Ward Name
1 Billing
2 Blackthorn & Rectory Farm
3 Brackley
4 Braunston & Crick
5 Brixworth
6 Campion
7 Castle
8 Cogenhoe & The Houghtons
9 Dallington Spencear
10 Daventry North
11 Daventry South
12 Deanshanger & Paulerspury
13 Delapre & Briar Hill
14 Duston
15 Hackleton & Roade
16 Headlands
17 Hunsbury
18 Kings Sutton
19 Kingsthorpe North
20 Kingsthorpe South
21 Long Buckby
22 Middleton Cheney
23 Moulton
24 Naseby
25 Nene Valley
26 Parklands
27 Phippsville
28 Silverstone & Rural South Northamptonshire
29 St George
30 Talavera
31 Towcester
32 Upton
33 Walgrave & East Farnon
34 Weston
35 Woodford & Weedon



Communications & Engagement Policy

1. Introduction

Duston Parish Council (DPC) strives to engage effectively with all local stakeholders by engaging effectively in partnership working which includes residents, councillors, employees and other stakeholders.

The overall aim is to make Council communications a two way process: to give people the information to understand accurately what we do, while also enabling the Council to make informed decisions using information received from residents and stakeholders.

The Council recognises that other bodies are crucial to the quality of life in Duston; it will strive to maintain working relationships with West Northamptonshire Council, Northamptonshire Police and other bodies.

2. Aims and objectives for community engagement

Community engagement is concerned with giving local people a voice and involving them in decisions which affect them and their community. To help achieve this the Council will -

- Engage in open dialogue with the community to understand their needs and explain how we will address those needs, using the limited resources available of the Parish Council.
- Strive to ensure that the council is fully representative of its community.
- Ensure that residents know what the council is doing on their behalf.

- Encourage members of the community to influence decisions of the Parish Council in a democratic manner.
- When appropriate, pass on the wishes of residents to other authorities and agencies.

3. Why is communication important?

Achieving the Council's aims and objectives requires good communication with residents, groups and organisations the Council works with, or provide services for. Duston Parish Council through good communication will understand and better meet the needs of residents and the community, whilst also raising the profile of the area and the Parish Council.

4. What should the Council be communicating?

Duston Parish Council aims to externally communicate the following:

- Information about our decisions
- Advice about our services and functions
- Information about the Council's finances
- The work of the voluntary and community sector in Duston
- Public consultations and public inquiries relevant to Duston
- Advocating Duston interests to West Northamptonshire Council and other public sector bodies
- Being an effective voice of the community
- Promoting Duston in a positive way

5. Who should we be communicating with?

Duston Parish Council's audience is wide and varied but will typically include:

- Residents (including hard to reach groups like young people)
- The Press / Media
- West Northamptonshire Council (Councillors & Officers)
- Voluntary groups and organisations
- The business community and potential investors
- DPC Councillors and staff
- Local Member of Parliament.
- Other public sector organisations (police, health, fire)
- Local schools

- Visitors to Duston

6. Methods of Communication

Duston Parish Council will provide information that is accessible, relevant and timely to meet the expectations of the community.

Different forms of communication appeal across different age and social groups and it is important to ensure that the Council considers and uses where possible all options to communicate effectively with everyone.

These are the main ways Duston Parish Council communicates externally:

- Manage the media / press effectively to promote the Council & Duston
- Publishing and distributing a Parish Council newsletter
- Ensure the Council is consistently linked to its services and functions
- Maintaining an up to date Duston Parish Council website
- Parish Council notice boards
- Using Social Media platforms
- Access to Council Meetings

6.1 Media and Press

Councils are accountable to their electorate. Accountability requires local understanding. This will be promoted by the council, explaining its objectives and policies to residents and customers. Councils use publicity to keep the public informed and to encourage public participation. The council needs to tell the public about the services it provides. Good effective publicity should aim to improve public awareness of the council's activities.

The Clerk (or a nominated officer by the Clerk) should be the first point of contact for all media and press enquiries to Duston Parish Council. Any official press release from the Parish Council is to be approved by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Council and if appropriate also the Chair of the relevant Committee. The Chairman of the Council will normally act as the spokesperson in the first instance. In the absence of the Chairman it will be the Vice-Chairman of the Council that will take this role.

Press releases will promote services and corporate decisions of the Council. Likewise, all requests for media interviews should be directed to the Clerk or an nominated officer by the Clerk.

The Clerk will be responsible for Duston Parish Council articles or advertisements in external publications. Information published will be in line with agreed policies and decisions of the Council.

For avoidance of doubt, any individual Parish Councillor(s) may issue their own personal statements to the media but they must be careful to avoid giving the impression that they speak formally on behalf of Duston Parish Council, unless properly authorised to do so.

6.2 Newsletter

From time to time Duston Parish Council may produce a direct newsletter for residents. The production of the newsletter will be overseen by the Clerk and nominated officers. The final version of the newsletter will be approved by Council and/or duly delegated Committee prior to distribution.

6.3 Duston Parish Council Services

The Parish Council will promote its services and functions to the local community. Council communications should seek to inform the public of the positive impact Duston Parish Council has in the community, and to maintain the Council's reputation. There should be a clear link between Duston Parish Council and the services it provides.

6.4 Website

The Parish Council website is the primary source of information on the Council for residents and will be kept up to date with content and routinely monitored.

The website shall contain material that arises from Council business including:

- Agendas and minutes
- Policies
- Factual information about the Parish Council and Parish Councillors
- Reports, Surveys or any other material derived from the Parish Council

The website may also contain:

- Latest Parish News and Local Events
- Details about local Community Groups
- Links to local external (useful) resources
- Links to the relevant local public sector bodies where appropriate.

Any Councillor may submit material for inclusion on the website to the Clerk provided that it is consistent with this policy and corporate decisions of Duston Parish Council. It must also be within any limits of technical feasibility to upload.

6.5 Notice boards

Typically the notice board will contain

- The title of the parish council "Duston Parish Council"
- The name, address, telephone number and email address of the Clerk

- List of Parish Councillors and their contact details
- Agenda for forthcoming meetings
- Minutes of meetings
- Parish Council facilities, services and events

Locked noticeboards are intended generally for Parish Council specific information although consideration will be given by the Clerk to using the space for notices pertaining to activities of interest or other important information relevant to Duston.

5.6 Social Media

Social media can be a useful way to communicate with residents and other local stakeholders. All Parish Council social media channels should only be used for the business of the authority and never for private use. Social media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activity that could bring Duston Parish Council into disrepute.

Public social media posts made by officers or councillors (either officially or in a private capacity) which contain content that is abusive, illegal, prohibited or in any way may cause serious reputational damage to the council or the office of councillor will be subject to appropriate action under the council's disciplinary or code of conduct policies.

The Duston Parish Council logo will be the authority's social media profile image.

A generic email account (office@duston-pc.gov.uk) will be used for a lead point of contact.

The Clerk will authorise which officers have access to corporate social media accounts. Officers are encouraged to engage with social media within their day-to-day responsibilities and this includes:

- Details of local events within Duston that may be of interest to residents.
- Sharing photographs from past events
- Notifications about press releases when they are sent out
- Promote the voluntary sector and community sector in Duston
- Progress updates about activities and projects the Parish Council are undertaking.
- Help residents with information relating to Duston or Duston Parish Council.
- Inform residents about news relevant to Duston

Officers will not enter into debate through DPC social media channels. However, points of clarification may be given.

Some general guidelines for Councillors and Officers when using social media:

- If you are unsure of what you are posting, do not post it. Social media sites are in the public domain and it is important to ensure you are confident of the nature of the information you publish.
- Be tasteful, civil and polite.
- Don't make promises or raise expectations that may not be able to be delivered.
- Handle complex queries via another channel, such as over the phone, letter or via email.
- Stay on topic.
- Don't disclose personal information such as home addresses, telephone numbers or personal email addresses.
- Don't post any information that infringes copyright law.
- Don't engage with 'internet trolls'. Don't feed the trolls as they thrive on emotional response to their provocation
- Don't post comments that you would not be prepared to make in writing or in face-to-face contact.
- Although DPC encourages free speech, it does not tolerate any comments or posts from third party users which encourage hate speech or comments which are hateful, obscene, potentially libellous, derogative, racist etc. Any posts of this nature should be removed or deleted.

5.7 Access to Council Meetings

All Duston Parish Council meetings must be open to the general public except in limited defined circumstances where the law requires or allows the meeting to be closed to the public. In addition, the Council must allow any member of the public to take photographs, film and audio-record the proceedings, and report on all public meetings.

The Council sets aside time for public participation (15 minutes) during which members of the public may make a representation, contribution, suggestion or ask a question. Councillors with a prejudicial interest in an agenda item may speak during public participation (and then leave the room when the item is considered). Other than when invited to do so by the Chair, members of the public are not permitted to speak at the meeting as this confuses the roles of councillors, who participate in the meeting, and members of the public who observe it.

A member of the public has up to 3 minutes to address the Council/Committee. If there is a possibility that a large number of people will wish to speak, the Chair will encourage people not to repeat comments made by earlier speakers or ask for a single representative to be appointed. Public participation takes place near the start of the meeting immediately after declaration of interests to make everyone aware if a member has a prejudicial interest. The time for public participation shall be outlined on the agenda. Members of the public are encouraged to notify the Clerk prior to the meeting if they wish to speak.

Neither councillors nor staff are under any obligation to respond immediately or at all to comments or questions made during public participation. Members of the public do not have a right to force items onto the Council agenda. Members of the public should not heckle or otherwise disrupt and must respect the rulings of the Chair.

Seating and copies of the agenda will be provided at all Duston Parish Council meetings for the public and press.

7. Correspondence

Official letters or emails on behalf of the council should normally be sent out under the name of the officer, rather than under the name of a councillor. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances for a letter or email to appear over the name of the Chair of Council, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. Letters or emails which, for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the council should never be sent out in the name of a councillor.

The first point of contact for the Parish Council is the Clerk, and it is to the Clerk that all correspondence for the Parish Council should be addressed. Correspondence should be sent to:

Clerk / RFO, Parish Office, Duston Community Centre, Pendle Road, Duston, NN5 6DT
clerk@duston-pc.gov.uk

All communication from Council Officers shall be courteous, timely, professional and appropriate. All Officers are aware that their communication reflects on the reputation of the Council.

Staff will include a 'signature' as part of all email communication so that name, position and contact information is provided.

For both Councillors and Officers DPC email addresses should:

- Only be used for Parish Council business and not personal use.
- Not to be used to register on any shopping or social media site or system that is not Council related.
- Not to be used in connection with running or managing any business for commercial activity.

8. Chairman of the Council

Whilst the word 'Chairman' is the correct legal term (Local Government Act 1972) the Parish Council will endeavour to use gender neutral language. They will be known as "Chair" and "Vice-Chair" respectively.

The Chair of the Council will, in the first instance, be the councillor quoted in official Duston Parish Council media / press releases and interviews.

The Chair of Council will represent Duston Parish Council for all civic and ceremonial functions.

The Vice-Chair will fulfil this role in the absence of the Chair.

9. Councillors

Duston Parish Council has 12 individual councillors. Councillors are also sometimes known as 'members'. There is no provision in law for individual councillor (including Chair and Vice-Chair) to make decisions on behalf of the Council.

It is important not to raise the expectations of residents before a matter has been investigated. Depending on the issue, it may be appropriate for a Councillor to deal with the matter in the following ways:

- Refer the matter to the Clerk who will then deal with it as appropriate
- Request an item on a relevant agenda
- Investigate the matter personally, having sought the guidance of the Clerk.

Councillors will be given a Parish Council email address which they should use for council business.

Council letterheaded paper may be used by the Clerk when preparing communications from any Councillor if requested but only be used to convey information that has been authorised by resolution of Duston Parish Council and must not be used to convey personal views.

10. Third Party Information

Information may be received from third parties which the Council could publicise. These should be directed to the Clerk. Where this information is factual, publicly available, non-confidential and likely to be of interest to local residents the Clerk may publicise it by any convenient means. This must be done in a manner that does not imply support of any particular view.

11. Purdah

In the six week run up to an election (local or general) councils have to be very careful not to do or say anything that could be viewed in any way to support any political party or candidate. This is known as purdah. The Council will continue to publish important service announcements using social media but will monitor and potentially remove responses if they are overtly political.

12. Flag Flying Protocol

Flags are traditionally flown by the Parish Council for a variety of reasons: to show allegiance, support, respect or to celebrate

Duston Parish Council will fly the Union flag as standard at Duston Community Centre, St Luke's Centre and Duston Sports Centre.



However, the Council will also fly these flags as standard on set dates.

- St George Day (23rd April). Raised the working day before 23rd April and is there for no more than 7 calendar days. At the Clerk's discretion, the flag of St George may be flown to celebrate and support sporting events of significance.



- Armed Forces Day (in June but varies each year). Raised the working day before and is there for no more than 7 calendar days.



- Northamptonshire Day (25th October). Raised the working day before and is there for no more than 7 calendar days.



- Rainbow / Pride Flag. Raised the first working day in June and is there for the month of June except for the 7 calendar days for Armed Forces Day.



When flags are to be flown at half mast, they should be two-thirds up between the top and bottom of the flagpole.

The Union Flag will be flown half mast on the following occasions:

- From the announcement of the death until the funeral of the Sovereign, except on Proclamation Day when flags are flown at full-mast following the proclamation.
- From the announcement of the death until the funeral of a member of the Royal Family styled 'Royal Highness', subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- On the day of the announcement of the death and on the day of the funeral of other members of the Royal Family, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- On the day of the announcement of the death and the day of the funeral of prime ministers and ex-prime ministers of the United Kingdom, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- Any other occasions where the Sovereign has given a special command.
- Death of a currently serving parish councillor for 7 calendar days and day of the funeral.
- Death of a currently serving employee of the Council for 7 days and day of the funeral.
- Death of a Duston resident currently serving in HM Armed Forces for 7 days and day of the funeral.

The Council will always be sensitive to the views of all sectors of its community but shall not allow the use of flags for political purposes or for the purposes of advertising.

Requests to fly any flag other than those in agreed list above should be submitted to the Clerk for consideration. The Clerk will consult with Chair of the Council (or Vice-Chair in their absence).

13. Bullying and Harassment Statement

“We treat everyone with courtesy and respect and ask for the same in return. We ask that you treat your councillors and council staff courteously without violence, abuse, or harassment.

Councillors and council staff have the right to carry out their civic duties and work without fear of being attacked or abused. Any behaviour whether that be verbal, physical or in writing, which causes either councillors or council staff to feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, or threatened, is totally unacceptable.

The zero-tolerance policy includes abuse, aggression or threats made in person, over the telephone or in written communication, including on social media.

The council considers threatening behaviour to be:

- Attempted or actual aggressive, or physical actions made towards any councillor or member of staff.
- The use of aggressive, or abusive language, (including raising of the voice, swearing, shouting or in writing) which threatens or intimidates councillors or council staff”.

This policy applies throughout all Council Meetings, but it also applies to any Councillor or Council Staff away from Council Meetings as well.”

14. Miscellaneous

Communications must not breach equalities, bullying and harassment policies. Councillors must also adhere to the Councillor Code of Conduct.

The Councillors and Officers must not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure of information is prohibited by law. This includes disclosure to the public of any matter which has been discussed as a confidential item at a Council meeting, or information that has been provided to a councillor in the course of fulfilling their official responsibilities that should not otherwise be in the public domain.



Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

The disciplinary procedure: How Duston Parish Council deals with employee misconduct or poor performance

The grievance procedure: How employees can raise work related concerns.

Introduction

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all employees of Duston Parish Council to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for employees whilst promoting orderly employment relations.

Formal disciplinary action will not normally be considered as a first step (except in cases of potential Gross Misconduct). Informal discussions will be used to seek to resolve problems in the first instance. However, there will be recourse to the formal procedure for persistent breaches, if there is no improvement in performance within a reasonable period, or if the required improvement fails to be maintained.

This policy indicates the disciplinary procedure that will normally be followed in the event of misconduct. For sickness, refer to the Sickness Absence Policy in the first instance. The following list provides examples of conduct that will normally be regarded as misconduct leading to disciplinary proceedings. This list is not exhaustive.

Examples of misconduct:

- Inappropriate behaviour
- Unauthorised absence
- Bullying and harassment

- Insubordination
- Any other conduct that from time to time is defined by the council as amounting to misconduct.

Examples of unsatisfactory work performance:

- Inadequate application of office procedures
- Inadequate IT skills
- Unsatisfactory management of staff
- Unsatisfactory communication skills

1. Informal Verbal Procedure

Minor problems will be dealt with informally, and the employee will be clearly told by their line manager of the reasons; including factual evidence of the problem; and how their performance/conduct needs to change and the consequences of failing to improve. The purpose of this discussion is to ensure that the employee is:

- aware of the concerns
- knows what is required to meet expected standards
- made aware of the timescale over which an improvement is required
- made aware of the possible consequences of not achieving the required standard.

Appropriate additional action at this stage may include the provision of:

- support and training
- advice and guidance
- coaching / mentoring
- counselling
- monitoring and feedback on a pre-determined schedule

A brief note of the date on which the issue was discussed and what action was agreed will be made in the personnel records of the employee and a copy will be issued to the employee. Subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance, the note will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 6 months and the employee notified accordingly. (There is no legal obligation to dispose of this evidence, which could be helpful to the Council in the future). Where the matter is more serious or where informal discussions and counselling have not succeeded in achieving the required result, the formal disciplinary procedure will be used.

2. Principles of Disciplinary Procedure

The Clerk has overall responsibility for the management and discipline of all council staff. However, where the Clerk is the subject of formal disciplinary action the Full Council is responsible. Disciplinary procedure in relation to the Clerk will only be initiated by resolution of Full Council. Once a resolution has passed, the Council will appoint three members to serve as the "Disciplinary and Grievance Panel" (a sub-committee of Council) and a separate member investigator. Following the resolution of Council, the HR Sub-Committee may act as the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel. However, Council reserves the right to choose a different Disciplinary & Grievance Panel.

In the case of the Clerk, the Council should seek professional external advice at the beginning of the process as to the aims and reasons for commencing the formal disciplinary process and consider any resulting recommendations.

Disciplinary action against other staff will be managed and conducted by the Clerk.

The council acknowledges that there is a distinction between the conduct of an employee and their capability. In the case of a problem resulting from the employee's capability, contributory factors will be carefully considered, such as ill health, serious home-based problems or a lack of skill or knowledge. If the matter is due to a lack of skill or knowledge, the council will ensure that by appropriate training, mentoring and guidance, the employee has the opportunity to improve. The improvement required will be clearly explained to the employee, along with what support will be given and how performance will be monitored and reviewed.

An employee will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed during the disciplinary procedure.

The disciplinary procedure is comprised of three stages. However, after proper consideration, the procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants such action.

No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in the case of Gross Misconduct, when the penalty is usually dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

If the employee has difficulty reading, or if English is not their first language, any written documentation, e.g. invitations to Disciplinary Hearings or written warnings, will also be explained to them orally by their line manager. Additional support that may be required at a Disciplinary Hearing will also be taken into consideration and provided as appropriate.

3. Disciplinary Investigations

No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee until the case has been fully investigated by an unbiased investigator. This will usually be the employee's line manager, or a Member appointed by Council in the case of the Clerk. However, if the manager or Member was in some way involved in the matter, wherever possible another manager or Member will conduct the investigation. Investigatory meetings may be held to establish the facts; in this instance it will be made clear to the employee that these meetings are not Disciplinary Hearings. The employee may be represented at formal investigatory meetings by a Trade Union representative, employee representative or work colleague. The person in charge of the investigation should be advised in advance by the employee if they are to be accompanied.

All relevant facts should be accurately recorded promptly before memory fades, including anything that the employee wishes to say. Notes of what is said by both parties should be taken, read back at the end and signed by both parties. Where there are witnesses to the alleged misconduct, statements should be obtained from them at the earliest opportunity. The investigator's role (whether line manager or member) is to submit a report with recommendations to the hearing which decides whether further action should be taken. The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report with recommendations to the hearing whether or not disciplinary action should be taken.

In any investigations involving allegations of criminal acts, the Clerk will consult in confidence with the Chairman of the Council before a decision is made to put the case in the hands of the police. Where the Clerk is the subject of the investigation, the Chairman of the Council, in consultation with the Vice-Chairman shall decide.

Whilst an investigation is taking place, it may be necessary to suspend the employee on full pay pending the outcome of the investigation. Suspension may only be warranted in certain cases, e.g. where relationships have broken down or there are risks to council property and/or to other persons. However, a suspension will only be imposed after careful consideration and will be reviewed to ensure that it is kept as brief as possible. It will be made clear to the employee that the suspension is not considered a disciplinary action and does not involve any pre-judgement.

If it is decided, following investigation, that there is a case to answer, the below Disciplinary Hearing procedure will then be employed. All investigations will be carried out in accordance with the latest ACAS "Guidance, Conducting Workplace Investigations".

4. Definitions

(i) *Disciplinary Hearing*: A meeting which could result in a formal warning that an employee must improve their conduct or performance, some other sanction as provided for within this procedure, or which may result in dismissal.

(ii) *Notification*: For every stage in the disciplinary procedure, the employee will be given adequate notice (five working days) in writing of the Disciplinary Hearing to be held, including the nature and basis of the complaint against them and provided with copies of any supporting evidence, including any witness statements. The letter will contain enough information for the employee to be able to understand both what it is they are alleged to have done and the reason why this is not acceptable. The notice will give details of the time and venue for the hearing and remind the employee of the right to be accompanied. The letter will state who will be Chairing the meeting. It will also be made clear that the employee has the right to appeal any decision taken at the hearing. All evidence that will be used at the Hearing should be sent to the Employee with the notification.

Where the presenting manager or employee intends to call relevant witnesses, they should give advance notice that they intend to do this to the person conducting the hearing.

(iii) *Timing*: Where possible, the timing and location of the Disciplinary Hearing will be agreed with the employee. The hearing will be held without unreasonable delay, but the employee will be given reasonable time to prepare their case (a minimum of five working days). Hearings will be held in private, where there will be no interruptions. If the employee fails to attend without notification, the council may decide to proceed with the hearing in their absence. If the meeting is genuinely inconvenient for either the employee or his or her companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

(iv) *Representation*: The employee has the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent to accompany a worker, an official employed by a trade union or a work colleague during any Disciplinary or Appeal Hearing. The line manager or Disciplinary and Grievance Panel (in the case of the Clerk) shall be advised in advance by the employee if they are to be accompanied. The employee's representative, or colleague, will be given all the documentation that has been given to the employee. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.

(v) *Conducting the Hearing*: Where practicable, the Disciplinary Hearings will usually be chaired by the Clerk or other nominated officer. In the case of the Clerk, the hearing will be conducted by Disciplinary and Grievance Panel but it must not consist of any member who

has been involved in the case to date. Those conducting Disciplinary Hearings will keep an open mind and not pre-judge the matter.

a) The precise allegations will be read out at the start of any Disciplinary Hearing.

The hearing will proceed as follows:

1. The Chair will introduce those present and explain why they are there.
2. The line manager manager will state their case, including presenting any evidence and calling witnesses.
3. The employee (or their representative) and the Clerk conducting the hearing have the opportunity to ask questions of the line manager and their witnesses.
4. The employee (or their representative) presents their case, including presenting any evidence and calling witnesses.
5. The line manager and the Clerk conducting the hearing have the opportunity to ask questions of the employee, their representative and their witnesses.
6. Both parties have the opportunity to sum up.

b) In case of the Clerk at a Disciplinary and Grievance Panel

The hearing will proceed as follows:

1. The Chair will introduce those present and explain why they are there.
2. The Investigating Member will state their case, including presenting any evidence and calling witnesses.
3. The Employee (or their representative) and the Disciplinary and Grievance Panel will then have the opportunity to ask questions of the Investigating Member and their witnesses.
4. The Employee (or their representative) presents their case, including presenting any evidence and calling witnesses.
5. The Investigating Member and the Disciplinary and Grievance Panel conducting the hearing have the opportunity to ask questions of the Clerk, their representative and their witnesses.
6. Both parties have the opportunity to sum up.

5. Taking Disciplinary Action

(i) Deciding Upon Disciplinary Action: Following the investigation and the Disciplinary Hearing, the line manager or Panel (in case of the Clerk) conducting the hearing will decide if disciplinary action is necessary.

Before taking disciplinary action, the following factors must be considered: the employee's disciplinary and general record, length of service, any current warnings, actions taken in any previous similar case, the explanations given by the employee, including any mitigating circumstances, and whether the disciplinary action is reasonable under the circumstances.

(ii) Notification: If it is decided that disciplinary action is not justified, the employee will be notified of this decision in writing within five working days.

If disciplinary action is to be taken following a Disciplinary Hearing, the employee will be told in writing within five working days of the disciplinary action to be imposed, the time period of the warning, why and how their conduct or performance needs to change, the timescale for the required improvement, a review date (where appropriate), any support the council will offer to improve performance (where appropriate), the consequences of failing to improve conduct or performance within the required time period and their right to appeal against the decision if they are not satisfied with it. A copy of this letter will also be sent to the employee's representative but this can only be done with the Employee's written consent, as these are 3rd parties. A copy will be held on the employee's personnel file for disciplinary purposes for the relevant period according to the level of warning. The employee will be notified within the letter for how long the warning will remain current. The records will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes once the time limit on the warning has expired. (As stated previously, there is no obligation to disregard this special category data which the Council may need in future).

Informal verbal warning and first and second level warnings will normally be issued by the employee's line manager. Meetings to discuss the disciplinary procedure will normally be by the employee's line manager.

6. Documentation

During the disciplinary process, written records will be kept. These will include: the complaint against the employee, the employee's defence, findings made and actions taken, the reasons for action taken and if an appeal was lodged and the outcome of the appeal.

Records will be treated as confidential. Records will be discarded for current disciplinary purposes after set periods, depending upon the stage of the procedure that they relate to. Copies of meeting records will be provided to the employee, although in certain circumstances some information may be withheld by the council, e.g. to protect a witness.

7. The Formal Disciplinary Procedure

Stage One—First Level Warning

The employee will be invited in writing to a Disciplinary Hearing in accordance with the procedures set out earlier in this policy. If the employee doesn't give a satisfactory explanation, a formal First Level Warning may be given. They will be advised in writing of the reason for the warning and that it is the first stage of the formal disciplinary procedure. The warning letter will also give details of the improvement required, the timescale for improvement and a review date. The letter will also inform the employee of the right to appeal and that action under Stage Two will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement within the specified time period.

A copy of this warning will be kept in the employee's personnel file and used as the basis for monitoring and reviewing conduct/performance. The warning will be discarded for disciplinary purposes after 6 months, subject to satisfactory conduct or performance.

Stage Two—Final Warning or Disciplinary Suspension

If there is a failure to improve following Stage One, and conduct or performance of the same nature is still unsatisfactory, or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning, but insufficiently serious to justify dismissal (in effect both the first and final written warning), a Disciplinary Hearing will be held to which the employee will receive a written invitation. If the employee is unable to give a satisfactory explanation, a final written warning will normally be given to the employee. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and timescale involved and will warn that further disciplinary action, including potential dismissal, will result if there is no satisfactory improvement and will advise of the right of appeal. A copy of this final written warning will be kept on the employee's personnel file and used as the basis for monitoring and reviewing conduct/performance, but will normally be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months, subject to satisfactory conduct or performance. However, a longer final warning may be issued where there is a pattern of misconduct where the employee is repeatedly able to maintain good standards for the period of the warning, but commits misconduct again shortly after the expiry of the warning period.

Alternatively, consideration will be given to imposing the penalty of suspension without pay for up to a maximum of five days. A record of this suspension will be kept on the employee's personnel file and used as the basis for monitoring and reviewing conduct/performance, but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months, subject to satisfactory conduct or performance.

Stage Three—Dismissal

Following Stage Two, if the particular conduct or performance is still unsatisfactory and the employee still fails to reach the prescribed standards, the employee will receive a written invitation to a Disciplinary Hearing. If the employee is unable to give a satisfactory explanation, dismissal will normally result. The decision to dismiss is taken by the Clerk. Where the Clerk is the subject of the disciplinary action, the decision to dismiss will be taken by the Disciplinary and Grievance Panel. Other Councillors will not be involved in the decision to dismiss the Clerk to enable an unprejudiced Appeals Panel to operate in the event of an appeal. In the case of an appeal by the Clerk three new different members will form the Appeals Panel. The employee will be provided with written reasons for dismissal within five working days, the date on which employment will terminate, the appropriate period of notice or payment in lieu of notice and their right of appeal.

8. Appeals

If an employee wishes to appeal against disciplinary action which has been taken against them following procedure will apply:

(i) The employee will give Notice of Appeal to the Clerk or Chairman of the Council (where the Clerk is the appellant) within five working days of the date on which they received the decision notice of the disciplinary action to be taken against them, setting out their grounds for appeal. The Clerk or Chairman of the Council will arrange for the matter to be considered by an Appeals Panel meeting at an agreed time and place wherever possible.

(ii) The employee, in consultation if they wish with their trade union or staff representative, should provide the Clerk or Chairman of the Council with a full written statement of their case, no later than five working days prior to the appeal hearing. The presentation of the written statement above shall not preclude elaboration or additions by either party at the Appeal Hearing. However, management should not introduce new evidence at the appeal stage to justify an earlier disciplinary decision.

(iii) The Appeal will be heard as soon as possible and normally this will be within three weeks of receipt of Notice of Appeal. However, the Appeal Hearing need not take place before the disciplinary action takes effect. The employee will be issued with a letter, inviting them to attend the Appeal Hearing and notifying them of the time and venue for the hearing, their right to call witnesses and to be accompanied. The employee should notify the council of who their representative is to be and whether they will be calling any witnesses. The employee may present their case in person or be represented by their trade union representative or workplace colleague and may call witnesses and produce documents relevant to their case.

All appeal hearings will be heard by an Appeals Panel.

The Appeal Hearing will be conducted as follows:

1. The Chair will introduce those present and explain why they are there.
2. The line manager will state their case, including presenting any evidence and calling witnesses.
3. The employee (or their representative) and the Panel conducting the hearing have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenting manager and their witnesses.
4. The employee (or their representative) present their case, including presenting any evidence and calling witnesses.
5. The line manager and the Panel conducting the hearing have the opportunity to ask questions of the employee, their representative and their witnesses.
6. Both parties have the opportunity to sum up.
7. At the conclusion of the hearing the Appeals Panel shall adjourn to consider their decision. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the original penalty, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.

The Panel may announce their conclusion verbally after they have adjourned to consider their decision but, in any event, will confirm their findings in writing to the employee concerned within five working days of the Appeal Hearing. There will be no further right of appeal.

9. Overlapping Grievance and Disciplinary Cases

If an employee raises a grievance during the disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. However, where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

10. Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is regarded as misconduct serious enough to destroy the trust within the employment contract, thus making any further working relationship impossible. The outcome can be dismissal without notice.

The following list provides examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- theft, fraud, deliberate falsification of records;
- physical violence, assault on another person;
- deliberate and serious damage to council property;
- serious misuse of the council's property or name;
- serious incapability through alcohol or being under the influence of illegal drugs;
- serious breach of health and safety regulations;
- serious negligence which causes unacceptable loss, damage or injury;
- serious act of insubordination;
- unlawful discrimination or repeated harassment;
- bringing the council into serious disrepute;
- criminal offence, whether committed on or off duty, which is of such a nature that it fundamentally breaches the trust which is the basis of the contractual relationship.

The standard Disciplinary Procedure does not apply in cases of Gross Misconduct.

If an employee is accused of an act of Gross Misconduct, he/she may be suspended from work on full pay while the alleged offence is investigated. Suspension may only be warranted in certain cases, e.g. where relationships have broken down or there are risks to council property and/or to other persons. However, a suspension will only be imposed after careful consideration and will be reviewed to ensure that it is kept as brief as possible. It will be made clear to the employee that the suspension is not considered a disciplinary action and does not involve any pre-judgement. The investigation will be conducted by the Clerk or nominated officer or Disciplinary and Grievance Panel in case of the Clerk.

If, on completion of the investigation, it is decided that there is a case to answer, the employee will receive a letter informing them of the allegations and inviting them to attend a Disciplinary Hearing, where they will have the opportunity to put their case. The conditions of the Disciplinary Hearing in the case of Gross Misconduct are the same as for hearings held as part of the standard disciplinary procedure.

If, on completion of the investigation and the Disciplinary Hearing, the Clerk conducting the hearing is satisfied that Gross Misconduct occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice. The decision to dismiss is taken by the Clerk.

Where the Clerk is the subject of the disciplinary action, the decision to dismiss will be taken by members of the Disciplinary and Grievance Panel. Within five working days, the employee will be provided with a letter specifying the misconduct which has led to the

dismissal and their right of appeal, following the Appeals Procedure outlined earlier in this document.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

This procedure applies to all employees of Duston Parish Council.

The objectives of the procedure are:

- To foster good relationships between the council and its employees by discouraging the harbouring of grievances;
- To settle grievances as near as possible to their point of origin;
- To ensure the council treats grievances seriously and resolves them as quickly as possible;
- To ensure that employees are treated fairly and resolves them as quickly as possible;

2. Definition of Grievance

For the purpose of this policy, grievances are defined as concerns, problems or complaints over work-related matters that a group of employees raises with the council. Examples of grievances include concerns over employment terms and conditions, contractual or statutory rights, health and safety, work relations, the working environment, new working practices, bullying and harassment, organisational change and discrimination.

For instances of bullying and harassment, employees are also advised to refer to the council's Bullying and Harassment Policy.

3. Informal Procedure

Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with his or her line manager with a view to resolving the matter informally if appropriate. If the grievance involves the line manager or the employee feels unable to raise it directly with the line manager for another reason then they may approach the Clerk. If the employee feels that this is not appropriate or he or she wishes to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below. In case of the Clerk, they will discuss with the Chairman of the Council (or if absent Vice-Chairman) any informal Grievance.

4. Formal Procedure

The employee must set out his or her grievance in writing ("Statement of Grievance") and provide a copy to his or her line manager.

Upon receipt of a grievance it may be necessary (optional) to conduct an investigation. If appropriate, an investigatory meeting will be held to gather all relevant facts and evidence. The employee will be invited to this investigatory meeting as soon as possible, in writing. It will be made clear that the purpose of the meeting is to establish the facts and that the employee may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative. Due consideration will be given to whether any reasonable adjustments are necessary for a person who is disabled; this includes colleagues or trade union representatives accompanying the person with a grievance. The investigatory meeting will usually be conducted by the employee's Line Manager. However, if the Line Manager is the subject of the grievance, the meeting will be conducted by the Clerk or nominated officer.

The investigation will be conducted as soon as possible and will normally be completed within five working days of receiving the grievance. However, if the matter is particularly complex, this can be extended to 15 working days. If it is not possible to complete the investigation within this timeframe, the employee will receive a written explanation of the delay and when the investigation is expected to be completed.

As soon as reasonably practicable after the conclusion of the investigation (usually five working days), the employee will be notified in writing that the investigation has been completed.

Once there has been reasonable opportunity to consider the response to the information provided in the Statement of Grievance the employee will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss the matter. The letter will say who will Chair the meeting and state their right to be accompanied to a grievance meeting by a fellow employee or by a Trade Union representative or Trade Union official.

- The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.
- Grievance meetings will normally be convened within 14 days of the Line Manager or Clerk receiving the Statement of Grievance.
- The meeting will usually be the employee, their chosen representative, the line manager and the Clerk.
- If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or his or her companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be further investigated, or to afford the line manager time to consider the decision. The meeting will be reconvened as early as possible.

At the grievance meeting:

1. The Chair will introduce those present and explain findings of any investigation.
2. The employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
3. The Chair will ask the employee what action does he/she want the Council to take.
4. Any member of the hearing may question any witness
5. The employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
6. A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be further investigated, or to afford the line manager time to consider the decision. The meeting will be reconvened as early as possible.

The Chair of the meeting will provide the employee with the hearings decision, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take to resolve the grievance and of the employee's right of appeal. Where the grievance is not upheld, the reasons for this will be explained.

5. Appeal

If the employee feels that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can appeal in writing to the employer, specifying the grounds for their appeal, within five working days of receiving notification of the decision.

An Appeal Hearing will be held, wherever possible, within five working days of receiving notification of the appeal from the employee. The employee will be notified in writing of the date and location of the hearing in advance. They will also be informed that they have the right to be accompanied at the hearing.

Once the employee notifies the council that they wish to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting before the Council's Appeals Panel. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or his or her companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

At the appeal meeting, the Chairman of the meeting will:

1. introduce the panel members to the employee;
2. explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision; and
3. explain the action that the appeal panel may take.

After the grievance appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the council's final decision within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The council's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

6. The Clerk

In case of the Clerk, they will submit their Statement of Grievance to the Chairman of the Council (or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman) and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the full Council. The Council could establish a Disciplinary and Grievance Panel to conduct a formal grievance procedure as stated above. In case of an appeal new 3 different members will form an Appeals Panel.

7. Managing Staff Complaints Concerning Councillor Conduct

The Government body ACAS produces guidelines for Employers on a range of topics. While not legally binding, they can be used by Employment Tribunals as a benchmark of how reasonably an Employer, including Councils, have acted. ACAS Guidance on managing Grievance issues is that they should be addressed promptly and without unreasonable delay. They should also be addressed consistently, and in accordance with the Council's procedures so that, if possible, the problem can be resolved.

However for Town and Parish Councils there is an additional set of procedures to follow. If the Employee's complaint concerns the conduct of a Councillor. The Council would also need to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 s28 (7) which states that the matter has to be referred to the District Council's Monitoring Officer. The Council cannot deal with it.

This was confirmed in *Harvey v Ledbury Town Council [2018] EWMC 1151* (The Ledbury ruling). The Supreme Court decided that if a Town or Parish Council conducts a grievance procedure in tandem with, or as an alternative to, the Code of Conduct Process detailed in the 2011 Act, they would be acting contrary to the intention of Parliament (para 103). The Judge did not state what level of formality the Grievance should be, so it can be concluded that it concerns both formal and informal grievance processes.

Duston Parish Council cannot run a Grievance if the complaint concerns an Elected Member. It must be referred to the Monitoring Officer.

Upon receipt of any grievance, the Clerk or (or HR Sub-Committee in case of the Clerk / RFO) should conduct an informal investigatory meeting to establish if there are any issues that can be addressed by the Council, or is it solely concerned with the Code of Conduct. This should be arranged within seven calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

Notes:

- i) A Disciplinary and Grievance Panel and the separate Appeals Panel must be made up of three members.

This is because:

- one councillor cannot make a decision on behalf of the council
- a two-member sub-committee would always allow the Chairman to secure his/her desired outcome by exercising the casting vote in the event of a tie
- more than three members will probably be unwieldy. It may also make it more difficult to find committee members with no direct involvement and it will reduce the pool of potential appeal panel members.

Disciplinary and Grievance Panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator will not sit on the Committee. Councillors with direct involvement in a disciplinary or grievance matter should not be appointed to a hearing panel or grievance. All appeals will be heard by a separate Appeals Panel.

If Council considers that there is an insufficient number of councillors who are independent (for example, because many have direct involvement in the allegations), it will appoint from outside the Council. However, external consultants can only advise, the decision will rest with the full Council.

- ii) Meetings should be arranged as soon as possible but the employee should be given reasonable time to prepare. Proceedings should be minuted. If possible the minute taker should be an employee.
- iii) Information about disciplinary or grievance matters should be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. Any disciplinary action or grievance outcome should remain confidential. The employee's disciplinary and grievance records should be held by a council in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- iv) Mediation may be appropriate at any stage of the disciplinary or grievance procedure (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying and harassment). Mediation is a confidential dispute resolution process that requires a council's and the employee's consent. The mediator is an independent person who helps individuals or groups try to find a solution. Mediators do not make judgments or determine outcomes - they ask questions that help to uncover underlying problems, assist the parties to understand the issues and clarify the options for resolving their difference or dispute.
- v) Working days are Monday - Friday



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS & SCHEME OF DELEGATION

These Standing Orders provide procedures and controls for the management of Council business. Basic arrangements are contained in Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972. The procedural requirements in Schedule 12, together with other requirements appropriate for the Council, are incorporated.

Standing Orders should be seen as an aid to proper and effective governance. Over regulation can be an impediment.

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1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed three minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●
- Sub-committee meetings ●

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or**

mourning.

- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda or on an issue that directly relates to the civil parish of Duston.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as**

the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.

- m A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.
- n The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
- o Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).
- p The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- q Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.
- r The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- s Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- t Immediately after a vote is taken but before the next business is commenced, a Councillor may request that the minutes of the meeting record the way in which the Councillor has voted or that the Councillor abstained from voting. The minutes shall note whether the Councillor voted for or against the question put or whether the Councillor abstained.

- u The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.
- v **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- w **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.
- x **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- y A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 2 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. may, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the

meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;

- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
- e. Order of business of standing committees will usually be conducted in the following order:
- 1) To receive apologies
 - 2) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Councillor presiding shall sign the approved minutes
 - 3) To receive disclosures of interest by Councillors on items on the agenda
 - 4) Public Participation Session
 - 5) Business deferred from previous meeting
 - 6) To receive and consider reports from officers of the Council;
 - 7) Any other business specified on the agenda.

5. FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides. In a year where there is no election the Annual Meeting of the Council will be the third Thursday of May.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is**

- one) of the Council.
- f. **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
 - g. **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
 - h. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
 - i. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
 - j. **Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:**
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. **Council Order of Business**
 - Annual Council Meeting*
 - 1) Election of Chairman
 - 2) To receive the Chairman's acceptance of office
 - 3) Election of Vice-Chairman
 - 4) To receive apologies for absence

- 5) To receive disclosures of interest by Councillors under Duston Parish Council's code of conduct.
- 6) Public Participation Session
- 7) Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council. Signed by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Councillor presiding;
- 8) In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- 9) Review and adopt Standing Orders & Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct
- 10) Appointment of Standing Committees as per scheme of delegation
- 11) Appointment and report back of outside bodies
- 12) Review of Council / staff subscriptions to other bodies
- 13) Council meeting cycle
- 14) Any other Council business

Ordinary Council Meeting

- 1) To receive apologies for absence
- 2) Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council. Signed by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Councillor presiding
- 3) To receive disclosures of interest by Councillors under Duston Parish Council's code of conduct.
- 4) Public Participation Session
- 5) To deal with business expressly required by statute
- 6) To receive and consider reports and recommendations from Standing Committees.

Recommendations must be included in full on the agenda for the Council meeting.

All Committee recommendations may not be discussed until they have been moved and seconded. This will normally be done by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

- 7) To receive and consider recommendations from working parties
- 8) To receive and consider reports from Officers of the Council
- 9) To approve any changes to Standing Orders, the delegation arrangements or other governing documents;
- 10) To receive business motions from Councillors
- 11) Any other business specified on the agenda

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any two members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least five councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been

disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. **VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

9. **MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 10 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least seven clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - viii. to require a written report;
 - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
 - xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xvii. to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. DRAFT MINUTES

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●
- Sub-committee meetings ●

- a **If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.**
- b **There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).**

- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

"The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

- e **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made [by the Proper Officer] OR [by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required] and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered [by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Upon notification by West Northamptonshire Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject

to standing order 11, report this to the Council.

- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).
- c The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by West Northamptonshire Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. PROPER OFFICER

- a The Proper Officer shall be the clerk or other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
 - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear

days for a meeting of a committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least five days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(see also standing order 23);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the

Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Planning Committee the Council within three working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning Committee.

- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect. (*see also standing order 23*).

See also Scheme of Delegation.

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Clerk has the role of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for

fitness of purpose.

- c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the “light touch” arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council**

must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council or Committee or Sub-committee is subject to standing order 11.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chairman of the Council or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman (if there is one) of the absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.
- c Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the Chairman or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Council in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the full Council. Resolution of Council could be to convene the 3 member Disciplinary and Grievance Panel.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by [the member of staff's job title] relates to the Chairman, this shall be reported to the Vice-Chairman which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of full Council.
- e Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- f In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(e).

20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**

- b. *[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000]* **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

OR

[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000] **The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

21. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

- a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

22. **RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media. *See Communications Policy.*

23. **EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **[Subject to standing order 23(a), the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.]**

The above is applicable to a Council with a common seal.

OR

[Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.]

The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.

24. **COMMUNICATING WITH WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCILLORS**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of West Northamptonshire Council representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to West Northamptonshire Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

25. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least four councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Under the Local Government Act 1972 s 101 (a) the Parish Council has the power to arrange for the discharge of its functions by a committee, sub-committee or officer of the authority.

The Parish Council does not have the power to delegate a decision to an individual Councillor. Therefore an individual councillor cannot issue an instruction to the Clerk or a contractor.

However, certain functions cannot be delegated and are therefore reserved to the full Council, although an appropriate committee may make recommendations thereon for the Council's consideration.

All delegated powers and duties shall be exercised and performed on behalf of and in the name of Duston Parish Council.

Matters Reserved for Full Council

Membership: All 12 Councillors

Quorum: 4 Councillors

The following are reserved matters for the Council (not exhaustive).

GOVERNANCE

Appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Duston Parish Council.

Approve or amend Standing Orders (including scheme of delegation), Financial Regulations, Member Code of Conduct and other written corporate policies.

Filling of Council vacancies through co-option if a by-election has not been called.

Approve membership of Standing Committees and Sub-Committees. Filling of vacancies occurring on any Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council during the municipal year.

Confirmation (by resolution) that the Council has satisfied the statutory criteria to exercise the General Power of Competence.

Appointing representatives to outside bodies.

Making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting by-laws.

Appointment of the Clerk and RFO.

Full Council retains the right to determine (and to reserve to itself) any issue which is within its powers and duties as a parish council, including those which are (within these terms of reference and from time to time) delegated to its committees and officers, by simple resolution.

Any other matters not delegated to a standing committee or referred to Full Council by standing committees.

Approving and amending the Council's Strategic Plan and Priorities

Matters of principle or policy. This could arise by:

- a. on matters of major importance which have not previously been before the Council; or
- b. matters which have arisen in other Committees or Sub-committees but which cannot be resolved by them in the absence of settled Council policy; or
- c. in cases of doubt where a major policy is involved, the Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of any other Committee or Sub-committee, or in their absence the appropriate Vice-Chairman may, before a decision is taken by the committee or sub-committee, state that a matter is referred to Council.

Cessation of any Council service.

Annual Council Meetings Cycle.

FINANCE

Approval of annual council budget and precept including fees and charges.

Authorising borrowing & capital projects.

Agreeing the Parish Council's Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement.

Appointment of the Internal Auditor.

Receiving both the Internal and External Auditor Reports.

Appointment of Internal Controls Councillor and receiving their reports.

Oversight of Payments and Bank Reconciliations.

Banking Arrangements.

The incurring of expenditure for which no provision or insufficient provision has been made.

ASSETS

Approve on annual basis the Asset Register.

Approval of purchase, acquisition by other means, lease, sale or disposal of real property (interests in land).

STAFFING

To approve the staffing structure & salary bands.

To approve staff terms and conditions of employment and any alterations.

OTHERS

Approval of Grant Applications (and consider a recommendation from Community Services Committee).

Authorising any proposed alterations to the Duston Neighbourhood Plan.

Standing Committees

All Committees operate within budgetary and policy framework set by Council.

Planning Committee

Membership: A maximum of 5 councillors. Councillors are elected and removed by Council. Chair of Council will be a member with voting rights.

Quorum: No less than 3 councillors.

Chair & Vice-Chair: To be elected at the first meeting of the Committee for the municipal year. The Chair or Vice-Chair will report back to Council.

Voting: Decisions taken by a majority vote. In the case of an equal vote the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Meetings:

- a) Determined by Council.
- b) As considered necessary by the Chair and/or Clerk.

Delegated the following responsibilities:

1. To make observations / comments to West Northamptonshire Council on the following Planning issues
 - a) Planning applications in Duston and on the fringe of the Parish.
 - b) Planning policies and detailed local plans appropriate to the civil parish of Duston.
 - c) On planning appeals and matters relating thereto.
 - d) Street Naming.
 - e) Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
 - f) Listed building consents
 - g) Duston Conservation Area
2. To review and monitor Local Planning Documents (e.g. Duston Neighbourhood Plan & West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan) and make any observations / comments as appropriate.
3. Make recommendations to Council regarding any changes to the Duston Neighbourhood Plan.
4. To make observations / comments to West Northamptonshire Council Highways on the following:
 - a) The creation, diversion and closure of public rights of way (including Bridleways).
 - b) Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).
 - c) Traffic management matters.
5. To make observations / comments on all matters in relation to public transport to West Northamptonshire Council and the Highways Agency.
7. To make observations / comments on licencing applications within the parish to West Northamptonshire Council.
8. The power to establish working parties within its terms of reference. Does not have the power to set up a Sub-Committee.
9. Any issue referred to it by Council.

Community Services Committee

Membership: A maximum of 5 councillors. Councillors are elected and removed by Council. Chair of Council will be a member with voting rights.

Quorum: No less than 3 councillors.

Chair & Vice-Chair: To be elected at the first meeting of the Committee for the municipal year. The Chair or Vice-Chair will report back to Council.

Voting: Decisions taken by a majority vote. In the case of an equal vote the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Meetings:

- a) Determined by Council.
- b) As considered necessary by the Chair and/or Clerk.

The Committee has the following responsibilities:

1. The Community Services Committee will review, monitor and make recommendations to Full Council on the following:
 - a) DPC community engagement, public consultations, publicity and communications.
 - b) DPC community events programme.
 - c) Supporting local community projects not directly run and overseen by DPC.
 - d) Delivering improved health, social and other wellbeing outcomes for the residents of Duston which includes working in partnership with other organisations.
 - e) Any community service provided by DPC (e.g. for youth & older people).
 - f) Developing and promoting economic wellbeing of Duston (e.g. helping and supporting local businesses, shops and employment where possible).
 - g) Promoting Duston based services and local the voluntary / community sector.
 - h) The Grow Together Allotment project.
 - i) Oversee the management of both Berrywood Road & Bants Lane Allotments.
 - j) Duston Parish Council website
 - k) Duston Parish Council noticeboards.
 - l) Communications Policy and Grant Awarding Policy.
 - m) Grant Applications

Specific Delegated Responsibilities:

2. This Committee has an annual spending cap of £6000.
3. To directly liaise with Duston based organisations and businesses regarding the development of community services and amenities in the parish.

4. Oversee the Annual Parish Meeting.
5. Oversee the management of the five community defibrillators (Chiltern Avenue, Weggs Farm Road, Harlestone Road, St Luke's Centre, Errington Park).
6. The power to establish working parties within its terms of reference. Must seek permission of Council to set up a Sub-Committee.
7. Any issue referred to it by Council.

Environment Committee

Membership: A maximum of 5 councillors. Councillors are elected and removed by Council. Chair of Council will be a member with voting rights.

Quorum: No less than 3 councillors.

Chair & Vice-Chair: To be elected at the first meeting of the Committee for the municipal year. The Chair or Vice-Chair will report back to Council.

Voting: Decisions taken by a majority vote. In the case of an equal vote the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Meetings:

- a) Determined by Council.
- b) As considered necessary by the Chair and/or Clerk.

The Committee has the following responsibilities:

1. The Environmental Committee will review, monitor and make recommendations to Full Council on the following:
 - a) The overall management of DPC owned trees, green spaces, playgrounds, streetlights and parks.
 - b) Matters relating to non-DPC owned trees, green spaces, playgrounds and parks within the Parish including St Lukes Churchyard and Duston cemetery.
 - c) Street furniture such as seating, litter bins & bus shelters. This includes the purchase of additional or replacement street furniture.
 - d) Maintenance and upkeep of the war Memorial.
 - e) Maintenance and upkeep of Timken Artwork.
 - f) Maintenance and upkeep of Timken Gates and Rosevilla Hut and adjoining wall.
 - g) Maintenance of Alfred Knight / Main Road / Timken South footpath and the 3 streetlights
 - h) Reducing litter and fly-tipping in Duston.

- i) Actions and initiatives to help reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.
- j) How DPC and the wider Parish can help play its part in confronting climate change. Also advising Council and other Committees on Climate Change issues.
- k) Improving and maintaining biodiversity in Duston.

Specific Delegated Responsibilities:

2. This Committee has annual spending cap of £6000 per year.
3. Minor improvements to DPC owned Parks and Open Spaces.
4. Liaising directly with other local stakeholders in respect of reducing crime, anti-social behaviour, littering, flytipping and climate change.
5. Oversee the usage and operation of the Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) within Duston.
6. Oversee general signage use relating to the Environment (such as anti-littering, dog fouling, pollution, crime and speeding).
7. The power to establish working parties within its terms of reference. Must seek permission of Council to set up a Sub-Committee.
8. Any issue referred to it by Council.

Resources & General Purposes Committee

Membership: A maximum of 5 councillors. Councillors are elected and removed by Council. Chair of Council will be a member with voting rights.

Quorum: No less than 3 councillors.

Chair & Vice-Chair: To be elected at the first meeting of the Committee for the municipal year. The Chair or Vice-Chair will report back to Council.

Voting: Decisions taken by a majority vote. In the case of an equal vote the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Meetings: Usually Quarterly

- a) Determined by Council.
- b) As considered necessary by the Chair and/or Clerk.

The Committee has the following responsibilities:

1. The Committee will review, monitor and make recommendations to Full Council on the following:

CORPORATE.

- a) The general administration of Duston Parish Council.
- b) Officer and Member training and development.
- c) Contracts and Tendering. In the case of
 - Environment contracts (e.g. grass cutting and horticultural works). Consult with the Environment Committee prior to making any recommendations to Council.
 - Community Services contracts (e.g. Youth Services & Duston Sports Centre). Consult with the Community Services Committee prior to making any recommendations to Council.
- d) Potential delegation of services to the Parish Council from West Northamptonshire Council.
- e) Disposal or acquisition of any property and land.

BUILDING FACILITIES.

- f) The operational running and maintenance of Duston Community Centre and St Luke's Centre.
- g) Fees, terms & conditions of hire at St Luke's Centre & Duston Community Centre.
- h) Maintenance of the Rosé villa Access Road

STAFFING.

- i) The staffing structure including salary remuneration (pay banding).
- j) Matters relating to employees of the Council in their conditions of service, welfare and safety.
- k) Proposing and amending HR policies.
- l) That staffing levels are appropriate to the work of the council

FINANCE.

- m) Financial Regulations.
- n) Maintaining adequate general reserves, in line with audit regulations, and allocation of earmarked reserves for specific purposes.
- o) In year virements between approved budget headings.

Specific Delegated Responsibilities:

2. This Committee has an annual spending cap of £6000 per year.
3. To monitor the council's income and expenditure against actual budget.
4. To prepare the council's annual budget and make a recommendation to the council of the precept required for the next financial year.
5. To receive any proposals from Committees, in respect of expenditure for the following financial year, as part of the Council's budget setting process.
6. In year reviewing of internal & external audit reports and oversee the implementation of their recommendations.
7. In year monitoring of the Corporate Risk Register.

8. To ensure the Council is adequately insured (e.g. buildings & other property).
9. To authorize attendance at conferences and other powers contained in Section 175 of the Local Government Act 1972.
10. The power to establish working parties within its terms of reference. Must seek permission of Council to set up a Sub-Committee.
11. Any issue referred to it by Council.

HR Sub-Committee

Membership: 3 Councillors. The Chair of Council, Vice-Chair of Council and one other councillor nominated by Council. The Chair of the Council is the Chair of this Sub-Committee.

Meetings: At least once a year.

Specific Delegated Responsibilities:

- a) Oversee the process of the recruitment of the Clerk / RFO.
- b) Recommend to Council the appointment of the Clerk / RFO.
- c) Once initiated by resolution by Council it can carry out disciplinary procedures according to the agreed policies and procedures of the Clerk / RFO. This could include lead to dismissal of the Clerk / RFO.
- d) To receive written or verbal reports from the Clerk / RFO as to their workload including progress on Council / Committee resolutions.
- e) To conduct the Clerk Annual Appraisal and make recommendations to Council if necessary.
- f) To act as the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel if required.

Other Committees

Disciplinary & Grievance Panel

To deal with matters arising from the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures. It will consist of 3 members appointed by Council. This is a sub-committee of Council. The HR Sub-Committee may act as the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel. However, Council reserves the right to choose a different Disciplinary & Grievance Panel.

Appeals Panel

To deal with Appeals arising from the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures. It will consist of 3 members appointed by Council and they decide amongst themselves by voting who will be Chair. This is a sub-

committee of Council. The members involved cannot be involved in the original hearings or investigation.

Working Parties

A Working Party must follow the course for which it was convened and there is to be no transfer of delegated powers from the Committee from which it was formed otherwise the Council acts unlawfully.

The Working Party shall not issue instructions to any officer if, in the opinion of the officer, it is likely to incur expenses or use excessive time without prior authority of the Committee

Membership of the Working Party is to be decided at creation of the group when the need is identified for such an action.

Membership need not be confined to Members of the Council, nor to the parent committee, members may be drawn from volunteers or specialist areas.

The Working Party shall advise and make recommendations to the Council or Committee from which it was formed.

The Working Party may meet without the need to give public notice.

Delegation To Parish Clerk / RFO

LEGAL

The Parish Clerk is designated and authorised to act as the Proper Officer for the purposes of all relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other statute requiring the designation of a proper officer.

The Proper Officer shall be responsible for signing all the Council's Official Notices and for sealing Council documents as set out in the Standing Orders

To retain a copy of every Councillors' Register of Interests

To deal with dispensation requests from Members of the Council

Power to take appropriate steps to ensure the Council does not exceed its legal powers

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

Carry out "Section 151" functions

Responsible for all financial records of the Council

The careful administration of its finances and accounting procedures in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time and with the policies and procedures set by the Council and within the law.

Ensure the approved precept is issued to West Northamptonshire Council.

Power to release any financial related report or document to the Council or its committees in discharge of the RFO duties.

MANAGEMENT

The Clerk may authorise another officer or officers of the Council to exercise the powers of the Clerk in his/her absence, without removing the overall responsibility of the Clerk for any such decisions.

Manage and recruitment of all employees of the Council and have the authority to take disciplinary action under agreed procedures.

Arrange and call meetings of the Council, its Committees and sub-Committees in consultation with the relevant Chair and Vice-Chair.

Manage the implementation all Council, Committee or sub-Committee resolutions.

Deal with day to day matters in relation to all the Council's functions, assets, events and leases, in accordance with policies and decisions of the Council or relevant Committee.

Authorise operational spending within agreed budgets approved by Council (as per Financial Regulations).

To act as the Council's designated officer for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Make adequate and effective arrangements to pay salaries and wages to all employees of the Council;

Maintain adequate and effective personnel records.

Negotiating the terms of any lease, licence conveyance or transfer of land or property.

To act as first point of contact for media enquiries to Duston Parish Council as a corporate body.

The granting or refusal of the Council's consent under the terms of any lease Take, discontinue and/or appear in any legal action authorised by the Council.

The Parish Clerk / RFO will exercise these powers in accordance with:

Approved budgets set by the Council

The Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Council's adopted policy framework and procedures

All statutory common law and contractual requirements.

The Parish Clerk may:

Take urgent decisions on behalf of the Council in consultation with the Chair of the Council (or Vice-Chair in their absence) as per Standing Orders & Financial Regulations.



Sickness Absence Policy

What to do if you are unwell

If you are away because of sickness you must:

- Telephone your line manager before your contractual (or normal start time for work) on the first day of absence providing details and how long you expect to be off. If you are unable to call personally, someone else may call for you. It is your responsibility to ensure the Council is notified. You must telephone again each day (unless otherwise agreed with the line manager).
- If you are the Clerk, you must inform the Chair of the Council (or Vice-Chair in their absence).
- If you are away for seven days or less (including weekends and other non-working days), you must complete a self-certification form and provide it to the council when you are back at work.
- If you are away for more than seven days (including weekends and non-working days) you must send in a "fit to work" statement from your doctor and continue to do so as each new certificate is issued to you. This certificate gives details as to whether you are too ill to work or whether you are well enough to work with suitable support from the Council. This gives you and the Council the opportunity

to discuss suitable arrangements which will support your return to work. The form also gives more space for the doctor to provide information about your condition and helpful tick boxes to suggest common ways to help you return to work.

- All sickness or injury absence will be entered on your employment record and will be monitored from time-to-time.

Return-to-meetings

On the first day back at work after a period of sickness absence your manager may want to meet informally. If this is not possible on your first day back, the meeting may take place later. The return-to-work meeting should take place in a private place, and all discussions should be private and confidential. The meeting would normally include

- A welcome back to work
- Outline the purpose of the return-to-work meeting; which is to manage and monitor absence and attendance to identify any problem areas and offer support where appropriate
- A discussion about the reasons for absence, in a supportive way and to understand whether the council can take any steps to help the employee's attendance
- Explain that the absence will be recorded
- Establish if medical advice has been sought (if appropriate)
- Ensure the self-certification form has been completed or a fit note from the doctor has been provided
- A discussion on absence over the last 52 weeks, the impact on pay and any next steps;
- A handover of work where appropriate

Medical appointments

The council recognises that employees will, from time to time, need to attend medical appointments. Please try to arrange medical appointments in your own time or, if not possible, at times that will cause the minimum amount of absence from work or inconvenience to the council. The council will allow reasonable time off work for such appointments, and expects the time to be made up as soon as possible.

Statutory sick pay

If you are ill and unable to attend work, you may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). SSP is currently paid after 4 qualifying Days absence from work. The Qualifying Days are your normal working days that are in your contract. Tax and National Insurance will be deducted from SPP and if you earn below the lower earnings limit, you will not qualify for SSP.

Council's Sick Pay

It is the Council's policy to pay you your normal basic rate of pay exclusive of overtime/allowances during periods of sickness absence as stated in your contract (see note 1). This occupational sick pay will be for absences due to sickness calculated over the previous 52 weeks and will include your entitlement to SSP.

Payment is, however, conditional upon complying with the council's procedure for notifying your manager of the absence, attending an interview with your manager on request to discuss the absence, and completing a self-certification form on return to work or providing a fit-note when requested. We may also ask you to attend an interview/examination with a nominated doctor at the request of the Council.

We may not pay you occupational sick pay where:

- You have failed to comply the Council's sickness absence notification and evidence requirements
- You unreasonably refuse to attend a sickness absence meeting with the Council on request
- You are unable to work because you hurt yourself in dangerous sports / activities or any other occupation you have
- You have misled the council about your fitness to work
- You have resigned
- Where disciplinary proceedings are pending against you
- You refuse to give consent to attending an OH assessment or approaching your GP for a report.

Medical advice

The Council may want to obtain advice on your fitness for work from occupational health advisers or medical practitioners. Examples of when the Council might refer to occupational health or a medical practitioner include the following:

- To seek a medical report on your illness or injury
- To establish when you might be able to return to work
- To understand when you are likely to be fully fit to resume your normal duties
- To understand what alternative duties you might be fit to undertake if you are unfit to resume your normal duties
- To understand when you are likely to be fit to undertake any alternative duties
- To ask for guidance on your condition, for example if there is a possibility that you are disabled or ambiguity as to the exact nature of the condition
- To ask what reasonable adjustments could be made to working conditions or premises to facilitate a return to work
- To understand the likely recurrence of the illness or injury once you have returned to work
- To discuss any adjustments that could be made to accommodate your disability, if you are disabled.

The Council will pay the cost of the report and you will have the right to see it. The Council will also be provided with a copy of the report and once we have seen it, we will want to meet you to discuss the findings and consider options available to you.

If you choose not to consent to an Occupational Health referral, any decisions in relation to your employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports.

You maybe be asked to contact Access to Work (<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>)

Persistent short-term absence

Persistent short-term absence is where an employee is frequently absent from work for relatively short periods due to sickness. We understand most employees will have some short-term sickness absence from time to time. However, if you are frequently and persistently absent from work, this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on your colleagues and councillors.

Therefore, it is essential that frequent absence is dealt with promptly and consistently and in some circumstances, the Council may begin a capability or disciplinary procedure as part of the absence management process. If we do so, we will meet with you to set attendance targets. Following a review meeting we may issue a formal warning if those targets are not met. You will be given written notice in advance of any formal meeting and you can be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. You may appeal against a formal warning. If your absence remains

unacceptable after a second formal warning, the council may bring your employment to an end following consultation with you.

If frequent absence is due to an underlying long-term health condition then we will also request, with consent, a medical report either from an Occupational Health Physician or your G.P or consultant to establish further information about your health and how the Council can support your attendance.

When considering the reasons for absence, and deciding on whether a formal meeting is appropriate, the council will not consider any pregnancy related absence. The council will also make adjustments where absences are related to a disability by allowing a higher level of absence before considering whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

The council will consider any alternative employment options before making any decision about ending employment. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at formal meetings and a right of appeal against a formal warning or dismissal sanction. The monitoring of absence operates on a rolling 52 week period.

Where it appears that there is no acceptable reason for an absence or if you have not followed the correct absence procedure, the matter should be treated as a conduct issue and dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Long-term absence

As a guide, long-term absence is any absence which lasts or is expected to last over 4 weeks. In all cases of long-term absence, it is essential for the Council to maintain contact with you. In cases where the return date is less certain this will take the form of consultation and will include:

- Discussions at the start of the absence and periodically throughout
- Obtaining better information on your health and likely prognosis, ideally through an Occupational Health Physician
- Where appropriate alerting you to the fact that your absence is becoming a problem, and
- Allowing you the opportunity to state your opinion of your condition and giving consideration to that opinion.

Where ill-health means that you are unlikely to return to work for a long period of time, the Council may need to consider bringing your employment to an end. In these circumstances, the council will:

- Review your absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal.
- Consult with you
- Obtain up-to-date medical advice
- Advise you in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility
- Discuss whether you may be able to access benefits from the Local Government Pension Scheme (where appropriate)
- Meet with you to discuss the options and consider your views on continuing employment before any decisions are made, allowing you to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative
- Review if there any alternative jobs that you could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss
- Allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss you on grounds of long-term ill health
- Following this meeting, inform you of the final decision

Absence as a result of disability

Where you experience sickness absence as a result of a disability it will be treated in line with provisions contained within the Equality Act 2010 (formerly as part of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). This will include considering whether any reasonable adjustments can be made.

Data protection

The Council will treat personal data collected during the absence management process in accordance with its data protection policy on processing special categories of personal data. Information about how your data is used and the basis for processing your data will be provided in our employee privacy notice. When relying on legitimate interests as the legal ground for processing your data, you can object to the processing.

This is a non-contractual procedure which gets reviewed from time to time.

Notes

1. Green Book terms

Sick Pay is awarded in accordance with National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service as set out in the Green Book. Duston Parish Council adopts National Green Book terms and conditions of employment, employees are entitled to receive sick pay for the following periods: -

During 1st year of service

1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service)

2 months half pay

During 2nd year of service

2 months full pay and

2 months half pay

During 3rd year of service

4 months full pay and

4 months half pay

During 4th and 5th year of service

5 months full pay and

5 months half pay

After 5 years' service

6 months full pay and 6 months half pay

The period during which sick pay shall be paid, and the rate of sick pay, in respect of any period of absence shall be calculated by deducting from the employee's entitlement on the first day the aggregate of periods of paid absence during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of absence.

Periods of full pay will include SSP. In periods of half pay, employees receive half pay in addition to SSP provided the total does not exceed normal pay.

If an employee abuses the sickness scheme or is absent on account of sickness due or attributable to deliberate conduct prejudicial to recovery or the employee's own

misconduct or neglect or active participation in professional sport or injury while working in the employee's own time on their own account for private gain or for another employer sick pay may be suspended.

2. Council's Sick Pay

The legal requirement is to pay Statutory Sick Pay (subject to eligibility) and anything additional is for the council to decide. Any additional sick pay is known as 'occupational sick pay' (OSP). The council will need to commit to paying any OSP it decides to offer and take into account the cost of National Insurance and the cost of any temporary staff required to cover the absence. It would be unusual to bring an employment contract to an end before the occupational sick pay expires.

If a member of staff already has a paid sick leave entitlement, you cannot unilaterally change their entitlement. Councils can change the policy for all new staff joining after a defined date provided this is consistently applied.

The Council can ultimately terminate an Employment Contract on Capability Grounds if a return is unlikely, regardless of how much sick pay has been paid.

Dismissal on Capability Grounds could result in a medical retirement using the Councils pension scheme.

3. Return-to-work meetings

Return to work meetings should ideally take place following every absence, with notes taken, agreed and stored on file. They are especially important if the absence has been caused by, or related to incidents at work. Having a written record of a return to work meeting may help the council defend later claims or allegations.

Sometimes it is not practical to have return to work interviews after every absence so councils may decide to do so only after 2 absences in a 2-month period, or where the absence is work-related.

4. Medical appointments

There is no legal requirement to pay time off for medical appointments, except antenatal appointments. Please see the Maternity and Parental leave policies for details. The Council has decided that staff should make up time as soon as possible.

5. Medical advice

Health information is considered to be personal sensitive information under Data Protection legislation and particular care must be taken when processing medical

information. The Information Commissioner website (<https://ico.org.uk>) contains guidance.

An Occupational Health report can comment on an individual's health in relation to the employee's role. It will be important to provide the OH physician or nurse a referral form with full details of the employee's job, the concerns you have about their health in relation to their work and be specific about the questions you need answering. Any report should then be discussed with the employee before the council decides on any follow up actions. If the report makes recommendations, these must be carefully considered and discussed with the employee.

6. Health and wellbeing

All employers have duty to provide a safe place of work which includes the physical environment as well as mental health. There are a range of initiatives that can promote health and wellbeing (see Fit for Work: <https://fitforwork.org>). Also, the Health and Safety Executive has useful information on their website including a stress risk assessment (www.hse.gov.uk/stress/risk-assessment.htm).

7. Access to Medical Information

Only the relevant line manager and the Clerk / RFO will have access to Medical Records and Information. The HR-Subcommittee, Disciplinary & Grievance Panel and Appeals Panel will have access to medical records to fulfill their delegated roles.

