

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3LT

Town Clerk: Samantha Heynes FdA (Comm Gov) FSLCC

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To: All Members, East Grinstead Town Council
(Other distribution for information only)

Quorum is 1/3 or 6 members

9th October 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL** to be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **EAST COURT** on **THURSDAY 16th OCTOBER 2025 at 7:00pm**. Where possible please clarify any points or raise questions beforehand.

Members are asked to resolve or advise of any detailed questions to officers prior to the meeting where possible.

Yours faithfully

Samantha Heynes
Town Clerk

ORDER OF MEETING

7:00pm Public Participation

Members of the public may attend the meeting in person or remotely. There is a period of up to 15 minutes for public questions relating to items on the agenda.

Any question must be submitted to the Town Clerk 24 hours in advance of the meeting, referencing the agenda item it is related to. In the event of a large number of speakers, the Chairman has the discretion to increase the number allowed to speak.

Each member of public will be able to speak for a maximum of 2 minutes and will have no right of reply. If a question cannot be answered at the meeting, a written response may be provided at a later date.

The Chairman's interpretation of the Standing Orders is final. Should there be no questions, or the questions complete before the end of 15 minutes the Chairman will move along to the agenda and public participation will end.

To request the meeting link please contact townclerk@eastgrinstead.gov.uk no later than noon on the day of the meeting.

AGENDA

- 35 Apologies for Absence
- 36 To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1st July 2025
- 37 To receive any Declarations of Personal or Pecuniary Interest
- 38 Town Mayor's Announcements – list of Town Mayor engagements attached as Appendix A
- 39 To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may desire to lay before the Council
- 40 To dispose of any business outstanding from the last meeting
- 41 To receive and consider the minutes of Committees:

	Date	Minute No	Page No
(a) Planning	22/07/2025	18-25	5-6
(b) Planning	12/08/2025	26-33	7-8
(c) Environmental & Sustainable Travel	12/08/2025	12-22	4-6
(d) Public Services	26/08/2025	12-21	4-6
(e) Planning	02/09/2025	34-44	9-12
(f) Amenities & Tourism	09/09/2025	13-21	5-8
(g) Planning	23/09/2025	52-60	15-17
(h) Finance & General Purposes	30/09/2025	16-29	4-7

- 42 To receive an update on the Town Centre Improvement Plan
- 43 To consider the committee restructure proposal and day of meetings – Appendix B
- 44 To note amendments to MSDC parking fees and consider Council response – Appendix C
- 45 External audit - to note the result of the external audit for 2024/2025 – Appendix D
- 46 Internal audit – to note the report supplied by the internal auditor for the council's interim audit for 2025/2026 – Appendix E
- 47 To consider audio/visual improvements for the Council Chamber – Appendix F
- 48 To consider MSDC proposal and options for the future responsibility of Moat Pond – Appendix G
- 49 To note the action list – Appendix H
- 50 To receive the feasibility study report on St Margaret's Loop for consideration

The date of the next meeting of the Town Council is **Tuesday 27th January 2026.**

MAYOR'S DIARY EVENTS**01/07/2025 to 16/10/2025**

Cllr John Belsey

July

4	STEM challenge
6	St Mary's Church
6	East Court Live
6	EGCS Summer Concert
8	Lions Zone 2B fun day
16	EG Society – July open forum
19	Awards Presentation at Tennis Club
23	Chelsea Pensions Veterans Outreach
24	Bluebell Railway Opening of Exhibition
27	Felbridge & Sunnyside Cricket Club – Deputy Mayor attending

August

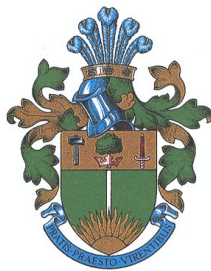
3	Veteran's Breakfast
3	East Court Live
6	Scouts West Sussex International Camp – show around
8	EG Art Society Annual Summer Exhibition 2025
9	East Grinstead Fire Station Open Day – Deputy Mayor attending
12	Heath Botanicals – new shop in Middle Row

September

5	International College of Oriental Medicine
7	Classic Motor Show
7	East Grinstead Rugby Club
11	EG Community Networking
17	Meridian Rotary Meeting
19	Royal Navy Parade – South East Reserve Forces
24	Litter pick with the Caravan and Motorhome Club
27	HerMove Live Event – DM attending

October

2	William Robinson Gravetye Charity
2	Girls Football Match & Adam Dabell Memorial Match
9	Mayor's Reception
12	East Grinstead Lions Charter Lunch
	School's Cross Country



EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Report

Thursday 16th October 2025

Agenda Item 43: To consider the proposed committee restructure & Council/Committee meeting day options

1. Introduction

This report proposes a restructuring of the Council's existing committee system, to be effective from May 2026, in order to strengthen alignment with the Council's draft business plan and budgeting as well as ensuring the structure more accurately reflects both the staffing team and operational priorities.

Furthermore, proposals for improving the value of Council meetings are made to enable all Councillors the opportunity to engage with local community groups and be better informed about the valuable contributions being made by these organisations within the local area.

Consideration is also given to the meeting day for Council and Committee meetings, to assist with maximising attendance at meetings for all councillors, whilst not impacting the hire income at East Court.

These proposals will ensure committee responsibilities are better aligned to the officer roles that support delivery, fostering a more efficient approach to Council business.

Once these matters have been resolved, the 2026-2027 meeting scheduling will be prepared.

2. Recommendations

In summary, this report makes the following recommendations:

- Change the committee structure as follows:
 - Utilise Council meetings for sharing community information relevant to all Councillors.
 - Remove Public Services Committee.
 - Restructure the remaining committees to be aligned with organisation structure, including:
 - Estates & Environment Committee
 - Community & Tourism Committee
 - Planning and F&GP Committees to remain largely the same, taking on some additional responsibilities where identified.
 - Create an HR Committee to enable any personnel matters to be considered and resolved, rather than continuing with a working group which then needs to be ratified by F&GP. This committee would meet

once a year or as needed.

- Realign the business plan items to the proposed new committee structure.
- Review the current meeting day of Tuesday and consider if a Thursday would be a better alternative to assist with attendance.

Supporting details outlining the rationale for these recommendations is included below.

3. Council & Committee Structures

3.1. Council

Council meetings are held in the main to consider and resolve major decisions which would be outside the remit of a committee, and to ratify committee activity that has occurred during the previous meeting cycle. These meetings are typically short in duration, and so there is the capacity to include more on the agenda to be shared with all members of the council.

Specifically, it is recommended that the Public Services Committee be removed, with its functions redistributed across other committees, eliminating the need for repeated reports from the Community & Tourism Manager.

Instead, third-party agencies will be invited to speak and present at Council meetings instead to enhance community engagement and ensure all Councillors are informed and up to date.

Regular updates from the local Police Inspector can also be addressed at Full Council.

The recommended revised Committee structure is detailed below, with the original committee responsibility shown in red where appropriate.

3.2. Estates and Environment (EE) Committee

The Committee will comprise five or more members.

The quorum of the Committee shall be one third of committee Members, with a minimum of three Members.

The committee is responsible for the management, maintenance, and improvement of all council-owned properties, cemeteries and public amenities. It oversees environmental initiatives, explores ways to enhance town connectivity, and leads projects that strengthen the Council's assets, promote sustainability, and reduces its carbon footprint.

The Committee shall undertake the following role and functions:

- Responsibility for the provision and maintenance of The Old Court House, East Court Mansion and grounds, Meridian Hall, Sunnyside Barn and the maintenance and management of any other land holdings and/or buildings of

a leisure nature in the ownership of the Council, including East Court play area and Turners Hill Recreation Ground. **A&T**

- To make recommendations on an annual basis to the Finance & General Purpose Committee on all rents and charges, to include hire facilities and cemetery services. **A&T**
- Responsibility for the provision and maintenance of street furniture and Council-owned public facilities including the public clock, war memorials, water fountain, public seats, public toilets, bus shelters, public notice boards, hanging baskets, Christmas Lights, salt & grit bins and trees. **A&T**
- Responsibility for the provision, management and maintenance of cemeteries and allotments. **A&T**
- Responsibility for the provision and maintenance of all street and footpath lighting in the ownership of the Council. **A&T**
- Responsibility for Council-owned CCTV. **A&T**
- Responsibility for management of all banner installations.
- Support environmental projects that seek to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council and improve the environment within the town. **EST**
- Support and lead on relevant projects from the business plan and recommend new projects for inclusion.
- Co-ordination with WSCC and MSDC in working towards improving connectivity around the town, including the LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) to try and reduce congestion, air pollution, carbon emissions and improve safety in the Parish. **EST**
- Oversee assets, estates and environment budget allocations for agreed business as usual and project schemes.

3.3. Planning Committee

The Committee will comprise five or more members.

The quorum of the Committee shall be one third of committee Members, with a minimum of three Members.

The committee is responsible for planning consultations, appeals, licensing, street naming and monitoring the District and Neighbourhood Plans incorporating suggestions for policy updates regarding safe travel.

The Committee shall undertake the following role and functions:

- To make representations to the Local Planning Authority on any application referred to the Town Council and/or on any other planning matter that affects the parish.
- The making of representations in respect of appeals against the refusal of planning permission.
- The making of representations in respect of all Public Entertainment Licensing and Licensing applications generally to MSDC. **merged with PS item**
- The making of recommendations regarding street naming.

- To consider and monitor the Neighbourhood Plan & District Plan and any other development plans, making of all appropriate representations.
- Allow delegated authority to respond to planning applications when an extension of time is not granted, following consultation between the Town Clerk and Chair of the Planning Committee.
- Suggest observations regarding new developments and safe & active travel including policy updates or revisions relating to the neighbourhood plan. **EST**
- All other matters which are the responsibility of third-party agencies and directly affect the town's basic infrastructure. **PS**
- Oversee planning budget allocations for agreed spending.

3.4. Finance and General Purpose (F&GP) Committee

The Committee will comprise five or more members.

The quorum of the Committee shall be one third of committee Members, with a minimum of three Members.

The committee oversees the day-to-day administration of the Council, managing finances, monitoring the budget and reserves, tracking delivery of the Council Business Plan and addressing matters referred by other committees.

The Committee shall undertake the following role and functions:

- To review all matters relating to general day to day administration of the Council including provision of IT.
- Monitor income and expenditure and make any recommendations to the Council.
- Consideration of the annual budget requests of all Standing Committees for recommendation to Council to set the annual budget and precept.
- To review and approve grant applications and donations.
- To incur and authorise expenditure not otherwise delegated to another Committee or employee.
- To consider the annual audit report for referral to the full Council
- To oversee reserves and investments.
- To oversee banking arrangements.
- To implement and track the Council Business Plan with regular monitoring and reviews.
- To receive and make representations to the appropriate authority in respect of highway matters, public transport services and health care/services. **PS**
- To consider and respond to any consultation received at the Council, as agreed. **new**
- Acting as lead committee in respect of any partnership initiative of a corporate nature with the principal local authorities for the area including, as appropriate, the development of Joint Partnership Committees, matters relating to devolution and recommendations on terms of reference and constitutional matters.

- Dealing with matters specifically referred by Council or any other Standing Committee and with all matters not specially referred or delegated to any other Standing Committee.

3.5. Community and Tourism (C&T) Committee

The Committee will comprise five or more members.

The quorum of the Committee shall be one third of committee Members, with a minimum of three Members.

The committee oversees management of events, tourism initiatives and related budgets, ~~events~~ and town publications, addressing community and infrastructure matters and liaison with third-party agencies and supporting the Town Improvement Plan working group and other relevant projects.

The Committee shall undertake the following role and functions:

- Co-ordination and direction of Council's annual and promotional events programme. **EST**
- Publication and updating of the official Town Guide, Town Map and other publications relevant to the work of the Committee. **A&T**
- The facilitation of tourism initiatives and the provision of tourist information facilities for the town in liaison as appropriate with other local authorities. **A&T**
- Oversee the community and tourism budget allocations for agreed business as usual and project schemes. **A&T**
- To receive a report from the Community & Tourism Manager in respect of community matters and events. **PS**
- Responsibility for the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) **PS**
- Provision of Youth Services
- To support the Town Improvement Plan working group. **EST**
- Oversee and support Active Travel initiatives **new/PS**
- The Committee will propose, design and lead on relevant projects from the business plan and recommend new projects for inclusion.

3.6. Human Resources (HR) Committee

The Committee will comprise of four Members.

The quorum of the Committee shall be one third of committee members with a minimum three members.

This committee shall consider all policy aspects of human resources and personnel including policies, appraisals, employment issues and conditions of service, providing oversight and support for the Town Clerk and other staff.

The Committee shall undertake the following role and functions:

- To determine the Council's policy on welfare, remuneration, recruitment, training, qualifications, health and safety and other conditions of service for all employees.
- To issue, vary and terminate employment contracts, where not delegated to the Town Clerk.
- To determine and approve the establishment and grading of employees for the administration of the Council and such establishments or Council facilities where not delegated to the Town Clerk.
- To appoint committees as appropriate to deal with the two stages of any statutory disciplinary action (instigated by the employer) or grievance action brought by employees.
- To consider all aspects of employment law, including associated statutes and regulations.
- To review and if necessary, oversee any negotiations on pay and conditions including local conditions as laid down in the staff handbook annually.
- To implement, review, monitor and revise policies for employees.
- To undertake line management responsibility for the Town Clerk, including review of the job description to ensure it reflects the requirements of the role.
- To oversee any process leading to dismissal of employees (including redundancy), where not delegated to the Town Clerk.
- To be aware of sources of expert advice on employment matters and to ensure that the Council uses such sources when there is any doubt about good employment practice.
- The HR Committee is authorised to make binding decisions on behalf of the Town Council with regards to all aspects of the above functions provided that in all cases the meeting is quorate.
- To consider updates to staff handbook, where not delegated to the Clerk.

3.7. Working Groups

Detailed below are the current working groups which will remain, with the exception of the Personnel Working Group which has been removed.

Consultation Group – report to F&GP Committee:

Chair and Vice Chair F&GP
Chair of Planning
Chair of the relevant committee
Cllr Mockford
Town Clerk

Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – report to F&GP Committee:

Chair and Vice Chair F&GP
Chair and Vice Chair Planning
Cllr Gibson
Town Clerk

Budget 2025/26 Working Group – report to all Committees:

Chair and Vice Chair of F&GP
Deputy Town Mayor
Cllr Barnett
Town Clerk
Responsible Financial Officer

Town Improvements Working Group – report to C&T Committee (EST):

Chair and Vice Chair of C&T
Cllr Whittaker
Cllr Gibson
Mr Grahame Russell (EGBA)
Mr Charlie Martell (EGBA)
Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk

Devolution Working Group – report to F&GP Committee:

Cllr Barnett
Cllr M Belsey
Cllr Farren
Cllr Mockford
Cllr Peacock
Cllr Reeves
Cllr Visser
Cllr Whittaker
Town Clerk
Deputy Clerk
Responsible Financial Officer

Business Plan Working Group – report to F&GP Committee:

Cllr J Belsey
Cllr Gibbs
Cllr Gibson
Cllr Godwin
Cllr Hughes
Cllr Ody
Cllr Pond
Cllr Scott
Town Clerk
Deputy Clerk
Responsible Financial Officer

4. Meeting Day

It was agreed that the meeting day for 2025-26 would be a Tuesday, as this was the most convenient day of the week to use the Council Chamber as there were no clashes with other hirers.

However, it has become clear that Tuesday evenings present attendance difficulties for at least two councillors. After a review of existing bookings at East Court the only alternative day available is a Thursday. The main hall has regular hirers which prevents access to the Council Chamber, so Thursday is currently the only alternative to Tuesdays, should the Council wish to consider changing the meeting day.

Business Plan Prioritisation 2025-2027

Existing Committee	Proposed Committee	Deliverable	2025	2026	2027	BAU	Comments
Planning	Planning	To continue to scrutinise planning applications and make appropriate recommendations to Mid Sussex District Council with reference to the Neighbourhood Plan				x	
	Planning	To monitor the progress of the draft District Plan as it moves through examination to adoption during 2025	x				Monitoring of this continues.
	Planning	To consider whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires review once the District Plan has been adopted, incorporating changes to the updated NPPF	x	x			Neighbourhood Plan updates on hold pending the future of the District Plan
	Planning	To consider the Licensing applications and where appropriate send comments to the Licencing Authority				x	
	Planning	To press that Mid Sussex District Council along with West Sussex County Council and Surrey County Council work together to resolve the infrastructure issues on the A22/A264 as strategic development comes forward for more housing in that area				x	Consultation issued, to be responded to in September 2025.
	Finance & General Purposes	Overseeing the allocation of S106 and spending of S106 funding				x	S106 application for SML agreed, application for columbarium to be submitted once planning permission received.
Environment and Sustainable Travel	Estates & Environment	To explore urban tree planting and rewilding projects throughout the town		x			
	Community & Tourism	To commission a town improvement plan and future opportunities for changes	x	x			In progress
	Estates & Environment	To encourage and support further conservation and recycling initiatives		x			
	Community & Tourism	To investigate potential enhancement of Turners Hill Recreation Ground as a more usable community space			x		
	Estates & Environment	Explore additional cycle storage and cycle hire facilities within the town	x				Council resolved not to proceed with the project to implement a cycle hire scheme within the town. Implementation of cycle storage facilities at East Court is being explored.
	Estates & Environment	Investigate improvements to the local cycling and walking infrastructure (LCWIP) and promote active travel		x			
Public Services	Planning	To continue to scrutinise the services provided by the Principal Authorities West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council, and Sussex Police, Fire & Rescue, holding them accountable for the services provided to the residents of the town				x	
	Community & Tourism	To identify and support new initiatives (not necessarily delivered by the Council) for community support				x	
	Finance & General Purposes	To respond to consultations as appropriate to influence and ensure that East Grinstead residents receive affordable, accessible services				x	
	Community & Tourism	To work with Sussex Police and the PCC to improve the visibility of Chequer Mead Police Station within the town	x				Work is underway, a meeting has been requested with EGTC and CM to discuss updates to the external of the building.
	Full Council	To ensure Councillor visibility and accessibility throughout the year				x	Councillor surgeries, attendance at major Council events
Amenities & Tourism	Community & Tourism	To continue to provide a first class tourism information service and promote the town to visitors including points of historical interest				x	
	Community & Tourism	To provide annual events including the popular summer concerts and Christmas events, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for all				x	
	Estates & Environment	To continue to provide visual displays throughout the year to make the town look attractive and encourage civic pride				x	
	Full Council	To progress the St Margaret's Loop project to develop a sustainable route into the town	x				Feasibility study underway, this will be prepared in time for discussion by FC in October 2025.
	Estates & Environment	To consider the ongoing management and maintenance of the Queens Road Cemetery, and expansion of capacity at Mount Noddy Cemetery	x				Planning application for installation of olumbarium at Mount Noddy is being finalised. Survey of wall at QRC outstanding, being chased.
	Estates & Environment	To continue to provide excellent community facilities in East Court Mansion, the Old Court House, Meridian Hall and Sunnyside Barn				x	
	Community & Tourism	Continued exploration of the provision of youth services	x				Recruitment for teenage Youth Club underway.
	Estates & Environment	To continue to provide well maintained public toilets within the town				x	

Existing Committee	Proposed Committee	Deliverable	2025	2026	2027	BAU	Comments
	Estates & Environment	To maintain the civic realm to high standards, including cleaning and replacing street name plates, removal of graffiti and fly posting, litter bins, grit bins, street furniture, the water fountain and McIndoe statue and lawn				x	
	Estates & Environment	To investigate and implement parking control at East Court to ensure parking capacity remains available for all users of the facilities.		x			
	Community & Tourism	To explore opportunities for installation of a splash park within the town		x			
	Community & Tourism	To explore enhancements to the facilities at King George's Field, including improvements to the skate park and installation of a pump track		x			Initial conversation held with MDSC
Finance & General Purposes	Finance & General Purposes	To ensure that the Council's finances continue to be well stewarded and receive an unqualified audit				x	
	Finance & General Purposes	To continue to find efficiencies and benefits through the use of technology		x			
	Finance & General Purposes	To continue to support community groups and charities with annual and application grants, for revenue and project costs				x	
	Finance & General Purposes	To review the Council's finances with the aim of bringing reserves back to the CIPFA recommended levels				x	
	Finance & General Purposes	To ensure all policies are reviewed as required, including adoption of updated Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and a Scheme of Delegation				x	
	Finance & General Purposes	Review and update Town Council website		x			
	Finance & General Purposes	Understand and explore the threats and opportunities for the Town Council relating to Devolution.	x	x	x		Awaiting update from County and District Councils regarding proposed future of Unitary in Sussex.

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOTICE OF VARIATION – PARKING CHARGES

Mid Sussex District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2006 (as amended)

The Council hereby gives NOTICE in exercise of its powers under Section 35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Regulation 25 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 of a proposal to vary the current parking tariff for "Pay and Display" off-street parking in the Schedule to the Mid Sussex District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2006 (as amended) as shown below.

TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS	NEW CHARGES						OLD CHARGES					
	0 – 1 Hour	1 – 2 Hours	2 – 3 Hours	3 – 4 Hours	Over 4 Hours	Sundays, and public and Bank Holidays	0 – 1 Hour	1 – 2 Hours	2 – 3 Hours	3 – 4 Hours	Over 4 Hours	Sundays, and public and Bank Holidays
Queensway, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£6.00	£8.50	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£5.90	£8.40	£1.00
King Street, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£6.00	£8.50	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£5.90	£8.40	£1.00
Christopher Road, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£6.00	£8.50	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£5.90	£8.40	£1.00
The Vicarage, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£4.40	£5.70	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£4.30	£5.60	£1.00
Railway Approach, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£4.40	£5.70	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£4.30	£5.60	£1.00
Chequer Mead, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£6.00	£8.50	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£5.90	£8.40	£1.00
Norton House, East Grinstead	£1.40	£2.20	£3.10	£4.40	£5.70	£1.10	£1.30	£2.10	£3.00	£4.30	£5.60	£1.00
Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill – White Bays	£1.20	£1.70	£2.70	£5.30	£7.60	£1.10	£1.10	£1.60	£2.60	£5.20	£7.50	£1.00
Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill – White Bays indicated as "Long Stay" (Mon – Fri)	£1.20	£1.70	£2.70	£3.90	£5.30	£1.10	£1.10	£1.60	£2.60	£3.80	£5.20	£1.00
Queens Crescent, Burgess Hill	£1.20	£1.70	£2.70	£3.90	£5.30	£1.10	£1.10	£1.60	£2.60	£3.80	£5.20	£1.00
Martlets Multi-Storey, Burgess Hill	£1.20	£1.70	£2.70	£5.30	£7.60	£1.10	£1.10	£1.60	£2.60	£5.20	£7.50	£1.00
Station Road, Burgess Hill	£1.20	£1.70	£2.70	£3.90	£5.30	£1.10	£1.10	£1.60	£2.60	£3.80	£5.20	£1.00
Church Road, Burgess Hill	£1.20	£1.70	£2.70	£5.30	£7.60	£1.10	£1.10	£1.60	£2.60	£5.20	£7.50	£1.00
The Orchards, Haywards Heath	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Hazelgrove Road, Haywards Heath	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Franklynn Road, Haywards Heath	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£4.20	£5.50	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£4.10	£5.40	£1.00
Heath Road, Haywards Heath – White Bays	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£4.20	£5.50	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£4.10	£5.40	£1.00
Heath Road, Haywards Heath – Yellow Bays	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Haywards Road West, Haywards Heath	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Haywards Road East, Haywards Heath	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Gower Road, Haywards Heath	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Muster Green, Haywards Heath (Saturday, Sunday, public and bank holidays)	£1.30	£2.00	£2.90	£5.60	£8.10	£1.10	£1.20	£1.90	£2.80	£5.50	£8.00	£1.00
Muster Green, Haywards Heath (Mon – Fri) Season Ticket Only	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Parking Charges do not apply to disabled badge holders.

Restrictions for use and penalties for non-compliance with parking provisions, remain the same as detailed within the Order.

The new charges will apply on 6th October 2025.

In all other respects the provisions of the current Order referred to above will remain in force.

The Order and Appendix with Schedule of locations and charges in more detail is available for inspection at the offices of the (1) Mid Sussex District Council, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, (2) East Grinstead Town Council, East Court, East Grinstead, West Sussex, (3) Haywards Heath Town Council, 40 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, (4) Burgess Hill Town Council, 96 Church Walk, Burgess Hill, East Sussex.

Dated 11.9.2025

Mid Sussex District Council,
Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1SS


Julie Galvin
Solicitor to the Council
25/47

Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of **East Grinstead Town Council**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

There are no other matters affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority.

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

Moore

Date

12/09/2025



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Mr D Chambers
East Grinstead Town Council
East Court
College Lane
East Grinstead
West Sussex
RH19 3LT

7 October 2025

Dear Daniel

Re: East Grinstead Town Council
Internal Audit for Financial Year Ended 31 March 2026 – Interim Audit report

Executive summary

Following completion of our interim internal audit on 7 October 2025 we enclose our report for your kind attention and presentation to the council. The audit was conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines, and testing was risk based. Whilst we have not tested all transactions, our samples have where appropriate covered the entire year to date.

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

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

It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.

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

Regulation

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

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

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

Independence and competence

Your audit was conducted by Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd, who has over 35 years’ experience in the financial sector with the last 15 years specialising in local government.

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

Engagement Letter and inherent risk assessment

An engagement letter was previously issued to the council covering the 2025/26 internal audit assignment, which includes the scope and plan of works and fee structure. Copies of this document are available on request from anna@mulberrylas.co.uk

In summary, our work will address each of the internal control objectives as stated on the Annual Internal Audit Report of the AGAR.

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

Table of contents

		PAGE
A	BOOKS OF ACCOUNT	4
B	FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS	4
C	RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE	7
D	BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES	8
E	INCOME	9
F	PETTY CASH	10
G	PAYROLL	10
H	ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS	11
I	BANK AND CASH	12
J	YEAR END ACCOUNTS	13
K	LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW	13
L	PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION	13
M	EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS – INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS	14
N	PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS	14
O	TRUSTEESHIP	15
	ACHIEVEMENT OF CONTROL ASSERTIONS	16
	AUDIT POINTS CARRIED FORWARD	17

A. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

Internal audit requirement

Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly during the year.

Audit findings

The audit was conducted on site with the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). The RFO had prepared the information advised in advance of the visit, and overall, I have the impression that accounting records are neatly maintained and easily accessible. Other information was reviewed through discussion with the RFO and a review of the council website www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk

The council uses the Rialtas Business Solutions (RBS) accounting package for recording the council's finances. This is an industry specific accounting package. The accounting package is updated regularly and used to produce management information reports for review at council meetings.

B. FINANCE REGULATIONS, GOVERNANCE AND PAYMENTS

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

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

The External Auditor's Report was not qualified and has been published on the council website along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and is due to be reported to the council meeting scheduled for October 2025.

There is evidence in the minutes of meetings of council receiving and reviewing previous internal audit reports.

Confirm by sample testing that councillors sign statutory office forms

I confirmed by sample testing that councillors sign "Acceptance of Office" forms together with a formal acceptance to receive information by electronic means in the form "As per Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, I consent to the receipt of all council meeting papers by electronic methods. I understand I may withdraw this consent at any time"

The council website includes a councillor page where the individual Register of Members' Interests forms are published.

Confirm that the council is compliant with GDPR

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

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Practitioner's Guide (March 2025) contains updated guidance on the matter as below, including details of the new Governance Assertion to be included in the 2025/26 AGAR:

Assertion 10 - Digital and data compliance

To warrant a positive response to this assertion, the authority needs to have taken the following actions:

1.47 Email management - Every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain, for example clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk or clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk rather than abcparishclerk@gmail.com or abcparishclerk@outlook.com for example.

1.48 All smaller authorities (excluding parish meetings) must meet legal requirements for all existing websites regardless of what domain is being used.

1.49 All websites must meet the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA](#) and the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#) (where applicable).

1.50 All websites must include published documentation as specified in the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) and the [Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities](#) (where applicable).

1.51 All smaller authorities, including parish meetings, must follow both the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) 2016](#) and the [Data Protection Act \(DPA\) 2018](#).

1.52 All smaller authorities, including parish meetings, must process personal data with care and in line with the principles of data protection.

1.53 The [DPA 2018](#) supplements the [GDPR](#) and classifies an authority as both a Data Controller and a Data Processor.

1.54 All smaller authorities (excluding parish meetings) must also have an IT policy. This explains how everyone - clerks, members and other staff - should conduct authority business in a secure and legal way when using IT equipment and software. This relates to the use of authority-owned and personal equipment.

The council has a Privacy Notice, Website Accessibility Statement and FOI Publication Scheme on the website. The council has a draft IT Policy which is due for adoption at the council meeting scheduled for January 2026.

Confirm that the council is compliant with the relevant transparency code

As the council's income and expenditure exceeds £25,000, it is not a statutory requirement to follow the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code, although it is recommended best practice to do so.

Confirm that the council meets regularly throughout the year

In addition to full council, the council has a committee structure in place.

Terms of reference for each committee are published on the council website, along with details of the main responsibilities of each of the working groups.

A diary of future meeting dates is also published on the council website, along with historic agendas and minutes for council and committee meetings.

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

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

I note the council also published the non-confidential supporting papers with the agendas as required by the Information Commissioner's Office.

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

Draft minutes are uploaded to the council website and clearly annotated as draft.

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

The Standing Orders are based on the current NALC model and were most recently reviewed and adopted by council in January 2025 (minute ref 65).

Confirm that the Parish Council has adopted and recently reviewed Financial Regulations

Financial Regulations are based on the current NALC model and were last reviewed and adopted by council in January 2025 (minute ref 65) with a further amendment approved in April 2025. The regulations contain provisions for the approval of spending, setting of budgets, reconciliation of the bank and reporting to council. I note the council also has an adopted Scheme of Delegation to support the Financial Regulations, which was adopted at the meeting held in January 2025 (minute ref 65).

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

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

- FR 5.12 Expenditure attributable to an established cost centre may be incurred up to the amounts agreed in the approved budget.*
- FR 5.13 Expenditure may not be incurred which cannot be met from the amount provided within the net revenue cost centre budget unless there is an earmarked reserve established to allow for such an overspend.*
- FR 5.14 In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £15,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Finance & General Purposes committee as soon as practicable thereafter.*

Based on the level of financial activity of the council, and through discussion with the RFO, these authorisation thresholds appear appropriate.

- FR 6.2 Wherever possible, all payments made shall be made via electronic banking. Every electronic payment of less than £10,000 will require authorisation by either the RFO, the Town Clerk, or the Deputy Town Clerk. Electronic payments of £10,000 or greater will require dual authorisation*
- FR 6.3 All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO.*

FR 6.9 The RFO shall present a detailed list of all payments that have been made in a calendar month to the Finance & General Purposes committee on a quarterly basis and a minute will be taken to evidence this.

I tested a sample of invoices and was able to confirm that amounts have been properly authorised in accordance with the adopted Financial Regulations, and payment lists are reported to meetings and recorded in the minutes of meetings.

The council has in place a system to segregate duties in terms of the setting up and subsequent release of payments made via online banking in accordance with the council's adopted Financial Regulations, and has sufficient individuals authorised to complete these steps, minimising the risk of being unable to make payments in a timely fashion.

Confirm the council has adopted the General Power of Competence (GPC) and met the eligibility criteria at the time of adoption, or if GPC not adopted, confirm all section 137 expenditure meets the guidelines and does not exceed the annual per elector limit of £11.10 per elector

The council confirmed its eligibility and adopted the General Power of Competence (GPC) and the section 137 threshold does not apply.

Check receipt of VAT refund matches last submitted VAT return

The council submits its VAT return on a quarterly basis. I reviewed the submission for the period ending 30 June 2025 which showed a refund amount due of £9,465.27 and was fully supported by the required details. I was able to confirm receipt of this amount to the council's bank account on 29 July 2025. The council is up to date with its VAT submissions.

Confirm that checks of the accounts are made by a councillor

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

C. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council's adopted Financial Regulations include a section covering Risk Management and state:

- FR 2.1 The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.*
- FR 2.2 The Clerk & RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council annually.*
- FR 2.3 When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.*
- FR 2.4 At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.*

The council has a Risk Management Process in place, which was last reviewed and approved by council in January 2025. I reviewed the risk assessment record, which includes a risk matrix to assess the overall risk based on likelihood and consequences of an event occurring and then assesses the risks within each sector of the council's business operations.

Each potential risk is identified, assessed using the risk matrix, prior to any mitigation measures, existing internal controls are listed and any further mitigation action which may be needed, and then a further assessment of the risk is included after the mitigation measures have been put in place. The assessment also includes details of who is responsible for any actions and when these are to be completed by.

This is a comprehensive approach and includes analysis of all risks typically associated with a council of this size with its range of services and facilities.

I confirmed that the council has a valid insurance policy in place with Aviva Insurance which covers the year under review. The policy includes Public Liability cover of £10 million, Employers Liability cover of £10 million and an Internal Crime (Fidelity Guarantee) level of £1,573,000 which is sufficient for a council of this size, although the council is advised to keep this figure under review to ensure it covers the maximum balance held.

D. BUDGET, PRECEPT AND RESERVES

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council set a precept of £1,305,042 for 2025/26. With a tax base of 12,057.4, this equates to a band D equivalent of £108.24 (compared to the average in England of £92.92).

The RFO confirmed that the 2026/27 budget is underway, with planned meetings taking place in the next few weeks with the Heads of Service to go over budget requirements. The RFO will produce the first draft budget after these meetings, which will then be shared with the committees, with any comments fed back to the RFO. The final budget and precept are scheduled to be agreed at the January 2026 council meeting.

There is evidence within the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings that councillors regularly receive budget reports for review, providing them with sufficient financial information to make informed decisions. I note the RFO includes a written summary of the financial position, which provides explanations for any significant variances within each cost centre.

The council currently holds circa £370,000 in earmarked reserves, spread across a range of clearly identifiable projects. I checked the purpose of these earmarked reserves with the RFO and am satisfied they are all for legitimate future planned projects of the council.

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Practitioner's guide provides updated guidance on the appropriate level of general reserves that councils should retain as below:

5.33 The general reserve of an authority comprises its cash flow and contingency funds to cover unexpected inflation, unforeseen events and unusual circumstances.

5.34 *The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure.*

5.35 *The reason for the wide range is to cater for the large variation in activity level between individual authorities. The smaller the authority, the closer the figure may be to 12 months expenditure, the larger the authority, the nearer to 3 months. In practice, any authority with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should plan towards 3 months equivalent general reserve.*

5.36 *In all of this it is important that each authority adopt, as a general reserve policy, the level appropriate to their size, situation, risks and plan their budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained. Consideration of the minimum level of reserves requires not only consideration of level of income and expenditure but also the risks to that income.*

5.37 *Authorities with significant self-generated income (other than the precept or levy) should take into account situations that may lead to a loss in revenue as well as increased costs and adapt their general reserve accordingly.*

A review of the general reserve balance will be conducted at the final internal audit.

E. INCOME

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

Apart from the precept, the council receives income from a range of sources, with tariffs published on the council website.

From a review of the accounting records, income appears to be recorded with sufficient narrative detail to identify the source and allocated to the most appropriate nominal code. I tested a sample of invoices issued for each aspect of the council's operations and was able to confirm rates charged were consistent with the council's published charging schedule.

I reviewed the outstanding balances on the sales ledger which show only two entries overdue by more than 60 days. In each instance, the RFO knew the background and appropriate measures have been taken to recover the outstanding amounts.

FR 11.2 states *'The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.'*

Fees are reviewed as part of the budget setting process.

F. PETTY CASH

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council maintains a petty cash float of £300 used for incidental expenditure, with £200 kept at the office and £100 at the library. The petty cash is locked in a safe under the control of the RFO and petty cash vouchers are completed for each transaction. The petty cash is checked and balanced by the RFO on a monthly/quarterly basis.

The council's adopted Financial Regulations contain procedures for the use of Petty Cash and state:

- FR 8.1 RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £300 and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.*
- FR 8.2 Vouchers for payments made from petty cash along with receipts to substantiate every payment shall be kept until at least such time as the year end accounts have been signed off by Full Council.*
- FR 8.3 No petty cash claim can be made for any amount exceeding £25.*

A review of the vouchers shows that all petty cash items are genuine and other arrangements for payment would not have been appropriate. I am satisfied that the council has in place appropriate measures for the safe management of petty cash.

G. PAYROLL

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council has 23 employees on the payroll. All staff members have a signed contract of employment, based on the NALC template, and the council is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Performance reviews for staff members are completed annually by the Heads of Service.

Payroll is processed in house by the RFO using the SAGE Payroll software. I reviewed the payroll summaries and payslips, and the payroll deductions appear correct. I was able to confirm HMRC, and pensions payments are up to date and that the council is correctly not claiming the employment allowance for national insurance contributions.

There is a councillor allowance scheme with payments to eligible (elected) members made every four months via payroll.

H. ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Practitioner's guide provides updated guidance on assets and asset registers as below:

5.58 The asset register should contain in its most simple form the date of acquisition, cost of acquisition, useful life estimate and location along with value held for investments; however, it is desirable for the register to contain other such supplementary information to enable the user to better understand the nature and scope of the use of the fixed asset. It is therefore recommended to show insurance value, replacement value, custodian, date last physically vouched.

5.59 Each authority may choose an appropriate minimum value for deciding between fixed assets and general consumables. The limit chosen will relate to expected useful life, whether the item would be included on an insurance claim and whether it is included in the risk assessment of the authority in any way. This minimum level is to be minuted and reviewed at least annually. The rationale and methodology should be recorded in the minutes.

5.60 One item or group of similar items shall be regarded for inclusion in the fixed asset register.

5.61 Assets should be first recorded in the asset register at their actual purchase cost.

5.62 Assets that are either under construction or have not been brought into use should be included on the asset register only once complete and they benefit the community.

5.63 Obsolete assets that are no longer in use or are awaiting disposal should be clearly recorded as such.

5.64 Where an authority receives an asset as a gift at zero cost, for example by community asset transfer, it should be included with a nominal one-pound (£1) value as a proxy for the zero cost.

5.65 Assets that do not have a functional purpose or any intrinsic resale value (for example, a village pond or war memorial) are often referred to as 'community assets'. Authorities should record community assets in the asset register in the same way as gifted assets.

5.66 The particular method of asset valuation is not specified in proper practices so authorities may use any reasonable approach to be applied consistently from year to year. The method of asset valuation adopted should be set out in a policy approved by the authority and recorded in the authority's minutes and in the asset register.

5.67 For authorities covered by this guide, the most appropriate and commonly used method of fixed asset valuation for first registration on the asset register is at acquisition cost. This means that the recorded value of the asset will not change from year to year, unless it is materially enhanced.

5.68 Commercial concepts of depreciation, impairment adjustments, and revaluation are not required nor appropriate for this method of asset valuation.

5.69 The total value of an authority's assets recorded on the asset register as at 31 March each year is reported at Line 9 on the authority's AGAR. Authorities should be able to track and explain fully any changes in the asset register from year to year.

The council has a fixed asset register in place, maintained in an Excel format, which includes details of asset location, date of acquisition, original purchase price, replacement value and insurance value. Assets are correctly listed at cost/proxy cost, or where gifted/donated, given a nominal £1 value for the purpose of the asset register.

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) Practitioner's guide provides updated guidance on investments, and defines a long-term investment as below:

2.23 Short-term investments, which mainly include deposit and savings accounts typically provided by banks, are those that display the following characteristics:

- a. are denominated in pounds Sterling;*
- b. be realisable at full value on demand or have a maturity end date of not more than 12 months;*
- c. the whole of the original sum invested can, from the time that the investment is made, be accessed for use by the authority without any reduction; and*
- d. the authority has assessed the counterparty and is satisfied that the original sum invested is not subject to unreasonable risk.*

2.26 A long-term investment arises where the authority invests money in anything other than a short-term investment.

1.11 Arrangements need to be in place to ensure that the authority's funds are managed properly and that any amounts surplus to requirements is invested appropriately, in accordance with an approved strategy which needs to have regard to the government's [Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments](#). If total investments are to exceed the threshold specified in the statutory guidance at any time during a financial year, the authority needs to produce and approve an annual Investment Strategy in accordance with the guidance.

The council is in the process of adopting an Investment Strategy.

The council has borrowing through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and confirmation of the figures for in year payments (box 5) and year-end balance (box 10) will be completed at the final internal audit against the PWLB statement and remittance advices.

I. BANK AND CASH

Internal audit requirement

Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.

Audit findings

Financial Regulation 2.6 states 'At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, two members shall be appointed to verify the bank reconciliations that are produced by the RFO. The members shall sign and date the reconciliations and the bank statements as evidence of this.'

Bank reconciliations are completed monthly. I reviewed the August 2025 bank reconciliation for all accounts and was able to confirm the balances to the bank statements and found no errors.

I was able to confirm that the bank reconciliations have been verified in accordance with Financial Regulations.

As the council's annual budget exceeds the €500,000 (£430,950 as of 3 July comparative date) threshold, it is not protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

The council holds two accounts with Nat West and savings accounts with Nationwide, National Counties Building Society to mitigate the risk. The council also holds a long term investment in the CCLA Property Fund, and this is correctly included on the asset register.

J. YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

To be tested at the final internal audit.

K. LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW

Internal audit requirement

IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in the previous year, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.

Audit findings

The council did not certify itself exempt in 2024/25 due to exceeding the income and expenditure limits and this test does not apply.

L: PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

Internal audit requirement

The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage, up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with relevant legislation

Audit findings

The council is reminded that the following requirements apply.

For councils with a turnover over £25,000, it is recommended best practice to follow the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, but not a statutory requirement and therefore not subject to verification during the internal audit.

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

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

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

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

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

Testing for publication to meet this requirement will be completed at the final internal audit.

M: EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS - INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS

Internal audit requirement

The authority, during the previous year, correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Audit findings

Inspection – key dates	2024/25 Actual
Date AGAR signed by council	24 June 2025
Date inspection notice issued	25 June 2025
Inspection period begins	26 June 2025
Inspection period ends	6 August 2025
Correct length (30 working days)	Yes
Common period included (first 10 working days of July)	Yes

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

N: PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Internal audit requirement

The authority complied with the publication requirements for the prior year AGAR.

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website / webpage.

Before 1 July 2025 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, approved and signed, page 4
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities must publish:

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

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

Audit findings

I was able to confirm that the Notice of the Period of Public Rights and Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) and Section 2 (Accounting Statement) were published on the council's website before 1 July 2025.

I was able to confirm that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and External Auditor Report and Certificate were published on the council's website before 30 September 2025.

The council has therefore met the publication requirements for 2024/25 have been met.

O. TRUSTEESHIP

Internal audit requirement

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

Audit findings

The council has no trusts, and testing for this internal control objective is not applicable.

Achievement of control assertions at final internal audit date

Based on the tests conducted during the interim audit, our conclusions on the achievement of the internal control objectives to date are summarised in the table below.

	INTERNAL CONTROL OBJECTIVE	YES	NO	NOT COVERED
A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year	✓		
B	This authority complied with its Finance Regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for	✓		
C	This authority assesses the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these	✓		
D	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for	✓		
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for	✓		
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and, where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	To be tested at final internal audit		
K	If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in the previous year, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.			✓
L	The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	To be tested at final internal audit		
M	The authority, during the previous year correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		
N	The authority complied with the publication requirements for prior year AGAR.	✓		
O	Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

Should you have any queries please contact me directly on andy@mulberrylas.co.uk or 07428 647069

Yours sincerely

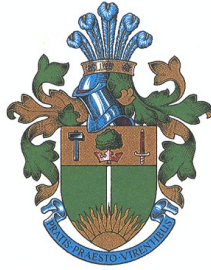


Andy Beams

Director, Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd

Interim Internal Audit - Points Carried Forward

Audit Point	Interim Audit Findings	Council comments
None		



EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Report

Thursday 16 October 2025

Agenda Item 46 - Audio Visual Proposal for Council Chamber

This report considers the replacement of the current 'Owl' audio-visual equipment installed in the Council Chamber. The system, which has been in use for approximately five years, is increasingly becoming unreliable. Issues include poor recording quality, which directly impacts the usability of recordings uploaded to the Council's YouTube channel for public viewing and the repeated failure of the device during meetings. As a result, the quality and accessibility of Council meeting broadcasts are being adversely affected, highlighting the need to consider a more reliable and higher-quality replacement solution.

If the Council wishes to replace with an 'Owl' system this would cost between £2,247 and £4,047, as it is recommended two 'Owls' should be used in a room this size, with the addition of an expansion mic. In this instance the projector/screen would still be used and set up would be required at each meeting.

The second option would be to upgrade to a higher quality system which would be set up as a Teams meeting room using a wall mounted TV, camera and sound bar with microphones. This would have the following benefits, including the potential for additional room hire bookings, as the booking team are asked frequently if we offer this type of facility.

- Improved sound and image quality for council and committee meetings.
- More professional recordings on the Council's You Tube channel.
- Create additional booking opportunities as the room will have up-to-date meeting facilities.
- In view of the potential changes in legislation for hybrid council meetings it would be beneficial to have an up-to-date efficient system in place.
- Time saving with set up of the room as most of the equipment will remain in situ, apart from the microphones.
- Staff meeting benefits when external meetings with multiple attendees are required.

Equipment details	Costs (excluding VAT)
Quote A Option 1 2 x Meeting Owl 3, plus additional microphone – base level unit as we currently have. Option 2 2 x Meeting Owl 4+, plus additional microphone – more powerful, higher-resolution with upgraded hardware with more connection and power options.	£2,247 £4,047
Quote B Yealink MSCS50 Microsoft teams rooms with wireless micpod, sharing pod, Windows PC and 75" TV (2-year warranty) Plus, monthly IT support/anti-virus Potential additional data cable connection	£6,503.60 equipment supply and installation Additional costs if required £1,545 annual support charge fee (phone/reactive onsite maintenance) £1,295 on site training £24 a month £200-£400
Quote C Yealink MB86Pro-A02 – 86", wireless sharing pod, touch panel, pro camera. (2-year warranty) Plus, monthly IT support/anti-virus Potential additional data cable connection	£10,410 equipment supply and installation £24 a month £200-£400

The Council's IT support provider has provided advice in respect of the quotes obtained to assist with a recommendation. It is important the equipment is suitable for the room layout, works efficiently and the required IT support can be provided as this is a substantial capital investment. We have been advised the equipment should operate from the existing WiFi, however it might be that a dedicated cable needs to be installed if the WiFi connection is not adequate, this would cost between £200 and £400. In addition, IT support/anti-virus for the additional Windows PC that powers the meeting room would be £24 a month.

Budget

Having reviewed the funding requirements there is potential to find some funding through individual budgets, such as IT hardware/software but should the Council look to upgrade to a higher quality system, the costs might not be able to be met through this option.

It is therefore recommended that the Council look to utilise earmarked reserves for this expenditure. It is noted the sustainability and enhancements budget has £65,511, including earmarked reserves, with a predicted spend for the remaining year of £5,000 to £10,000, therefore, this budget is an option.

Recommendation

The Council is invited to consider whether to upgrade to a more modern system, which may enhance the room's appeal for business hire or to replace the current 'Owl' system, assessing the associated cost implication as outlined in this report.

Moat Pond - Brief summary of the salient points

Email from Rob Anderton 17/09/2025

Title

The MSDC Legal team have investigated the title deeds which reveal:

- There are no registered restrictions on title.
- There are some restrictive covenants contained in the deeds, largely relating to the maintenance of the pond- but nothing onerous.
- There is quite a lot on the title in terms of easements- but again, nothing particularly onerous (primarily around access to the pond and the laying of pipes/ mains across the site)

Byelaws

In terms of district byelaws (link here [Mid Sussex Byelaws](#)) the prohibition against fishing is to be found in the 'Byelaws as to recreation Grounds (1982)'; paragraph 3 (g), which applies to a number of named sites, including King George V Fields in East Grinstead (which, as discussed, includes Moat Pond). This states that:

"A person shall not in the pleasure ground... without lawful excuse or authority kill, molest or wilfully disturb any animal, bird or fish, or engage in hunting, shooting or fishing, or the setting of traps or nets or the laying of snares..."

Our understanding at this stage is that a transfer of ownership/ management responsibility would not extinguish these, or any other applicable byelaws.

Freehold transfer vs. lease vs. licence

The first option is a transfer of the freehold, effected by a transfer of whole or of part of the title. MSDC could impose rights, reservations, easements and covenants on the land as part of the transfer deed (subject to agreement). It would create a new title number at the Land Registry and EGTC would become the freehold registered proprietors. Any such disposal would trigger the requirements of s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (link here [Local Government Act 1972](#)). Of particular note here is the need to secure best value, to secure consent from the Secretary of State, and to demonstrate that any disposal is in the public interest. This requires us to follow strict procedures around valuation and the publication of notices. It would also be the most onerous in terms of internal governance (see below)

As an alternative we could enter into a lease. Under this scenario, MSDC would retain the underlying freehold title, and at the end of the lease term the demise would revert to us. Leases of a term of 7 years and upwards are compulsorily registrable at the Land Registry. These would create a new leasehold title number at the Land Registry, which would 'sit above' the underlying freehold title. Leases grant a better security of tenure than licences, giving leaseholders statutory protections the right to apply for relief from determination.

Finally- and most straightforward, would be a licence. Licences are generally not registrable at the Land Registry, and are usually personal to the parties. Licences can be for an indeterminate period and allow non-exclusive use to the licensor. They obviously offer less

security of tenure than leases and are easier to terminate, and generally have offer fewer protections than leases. A management licence, where MSDC retain the asset and the town council manage it, would be the most straightforward and quickest approach here. The management agreement could detail what MSDC would expect from EGTC, and what you could expect from us in return.

Governance

The internal governance required around this would be entirely dependent upon the way in which any transfer took place. Of course, a freehold transfer would require formal agreement from MSDC's Council or Cabinet (depending on value), and any recommendation to dispose would need to be supported by a s123 application and a demonstration the best value has been achieved; whereas a licence to manage or maintain would likely be a delegated Officer decision.

KGV Field

Following our meeting I asked my Legal colleagues to liaise with Fields In Trust to establish the extent of the KGV designation of the site (to understand whether it covers the playing fields only, or incorporates Moat Pond); and also to understand what, if any, implications that might have for any transfer of ownership or responsibility for the pond. They have not yet completed this work, but I will get back to you with further information on this as soon as I have it.

This same question is also relevant of course if we wanted to explore any freehold transfer or lease (in part or whole) of the playing fields themselves. Once I have clarity on this point, I will be able to provide you with my further thoughts about the option to transfer ownership and/or responsibility to EGTC for the skatepark.

APPENDIX H

Meeting	Min No	Details	Date	Action by	Comments	Status
Council	34	Instruct full feasibility study of SML ensuring an indication of the likelihood of a successful planning application being achieved was included in the scope, as well as clarification that the outputs included within the tenders would provide the same level of detail.	01/07/2025	Clerk	Feasibility study instructed, report due at October Council meeting.	Complete



EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Report

Thursday 16th October 2025

Agenda Item 50: St Margaret's Loop Feasibility Study

Feasibility Study Overview

The feasibility study report has been circulated to all Councillors in advance of the meeting. It is important to note that the report is a high level, desk top study, which was completed so the project could be discussed by Council at the October meeting. The original scope and timelines of this study were reviewed to enable a decision regarding the future of this scheme to be made in advance of the deadline imposed by Railway Paths to complete the land transfer. Railway Paths are planning dispose of their portion of the railway cutting at auction in early 2026 if the land transfer is not confirmed by the time of their next board meeting in December 2025.

The costs of the feasibility study will be paid from S106 funding, held by MSDC and allocated to the St Margaret's Loop project.

The main highlights of the report are:

- Section 4.2.7: Biodiversity Net Gain
- Section 4.14: Key environment issues
- Section 5.4: Planning application considerations
- Section 6: High level cost estimate
- Section 7: Summary – responding to key questions and noting the significant issues relating to the delivery of the scheme.

Recommendations

The Council is invited to consider the findings of the high-level report and determine how to proceed:

- To instruct a further feasibility study with more detailed site reports which would provide detailed costings and further information on the BNG gain issues raised in the preliminary report, noting the current position of Railway Paths.
- To revert to the offer to allow a 3rd party to deliver an infill scheme at their cost, however it is likely that any BNG costs would be met by the Town Council.

- To proceed with design of a scheme maintaining existing levels which would be less disruptive to the area, more likely to achieve planning and have reduced BNG impacts, however all costs would be met by the Town Council.
- To resolve to discontinue with this project, determining what the best use of the site would be, including consideration of disposal to reduce the liability and ongoing maintenance.

A copy of the feasibility study can be obtained by telephoning 01342 323636 or emailing towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk