

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

21 December 2023

A meeting of the **EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL** is to be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, EAST COURT** on **MONDAY 8TH JANUARY 2024** at **7.00pm**.

The public are welcome to attend in person at East Court or via Zoom. Windows will be open in the Council Chamber and the public are urged to dress appropriately. Facemasks are personal preference. Please do not attend in person if you have any illness symptoms.

A request for the zoom link should be sent via email to towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk before noon on the day of the meeting.

AGENDA

- 1 To commence not later than 7.30 p.m. - Apologies for absence.
- 2 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 2nd October 2023.
- 3 To receive any Declarations of Personal, or Pecuniary Interest.
- 4 Town Mayor's Announcements
- 5 To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may desire to lay before the Council.
- 6 To Dispose of any business outstanding from the last meeting
- 7 Principal Council Update – Cllr Ian Gibson
- 8 To receive and consider the Minutes of Committees:

	Date	Page Nos	Minute No
(a) Planning	16/10/2023	91-95	167-173
(b) Environmental & Sustainable Travel	19/10/2023	96-98	174-181
(c) Planning	06/11/2023	99-103	182-190
(d) Environmental & Sustainable Travel	23/11/2023	104-107	191-201
(e) Planning	27/11/2023	108-116	202-208
(f) Public Services	30/11/2023	117-123	209-221
(g) Amenities & Tourism	07/12/2023	124-128	210-225
(h) Finance & General Purposes	14/12/2023	129-133	226-245
(i) Planning	18/12/2023	134-138	246-253
(j) Environmental & Sustainable Travel	21/12/2023	TBA	TBA

- 9 To authorise the sealing of the following documents: -

Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial Numbers: 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312 and 2313

10 Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct

The Council annually reviews these and adopts any changes based on best practice, legislative change or view of the Council. The current standing orders are based on the national model.

Cllr Pond has moved the following amendment:

- 1) Standing Order 13a to insert “being the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 (approved by LGA 3.12.2020, as amended)”, following the words “By the Council”

Cllr Pond has moved the following additional standing order:

- 2) 13h : In respect of code of conduct 10.2, all gifts and hospitality accepted, or refused, of any value should be added to the hospitality book with an estimated value (if over £25), and where the amount has exceeded £50 in value that entry should also be made in the declaration of interests within 28 days, which will then be notified to the Monitoring Officer by the Proper Officer of the Council.

Officers have no other recommendations for consideration.

11 To approve the dates of the Council meetings for 2024/25

The Finance and General Purposes Committee approved the dates of the Committee meetings for 2024/25 at their meeting on 14th December. The Appendix A is attached to these papers showing the full list and Councillors are asked to ensure these dates are added to their diaries to ensure maximum attendance at the meetings.

Council are asked to Approve the following as dates in 2024/25 for full Council to meet:

Annual Council Monday 13th May
Special Council 20th June
Council 1st July
Council 7th October
Council 6th January
Special Council 27th January
Council 7th April

12 Financial Risk Register

The Council's approval of the Financial Risk Register is an annual audit requirement.

The impact rating on the following items has been amended

Risk 8 : Impact downgraded from 3 to 2
Risk 9 : Additional wording inserted in bold
Risk 10 : Impact downgraded from 3 to 2
Risk 11 : Impact downgraded from 3 to 2
Risk 15 : Additional wording inserted in bold
Risk 16 : Additional wording inserted in bold & likelihood of risk downgraded from 2 to 1
Risk 17 : Additional wording inserted in bold
Risk 18 : Additional wording inserted in bold

Risk 19 : Impact downgraded from 2 to 1
Risk 21 : Likelihood *upgraded* from 2 to 3

The updated risk register is attached as *Appendix B* for approval.

13 Earmarked reserves

The following earmarked reserves have been identified as not needed for the purpose that they were allocated. Council are requested to allow them to be vired for another use, specifically in this instance the purchase of furnishings for Sunnyside Barn.

Cost Centre 400/4099 defib batteries £1000 (leaving £321 in this reserve)

Cost Centre 999/4182 graffiti removal £2500 (leaving £1,819 in this reserve)

This will create a £3,500 earmarked reserve principally for new tables and chairs at Sunnyside Barn.

Council are recommended to approve the virement from these cost centres to 300/4061 of £3500 as detailed above.

The date of the next meeting of the Town Council is **Monday 29th January 2024** (budget and precept)

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL
Diary of Meetings 2024/2025

Date	Day	Meeting
2024		
13th May	M	Annual Town Council
14th May	Tu	Planning
30th May	Th	Environmental & Sustainable Travel
3rd June	M	Planning
6th June	Th	Public Services
13th June	Th	Amenities & Tourism
20th June	Th	Finance & General Purposes
20th June	Th	Special Council
24th June	M	Planning
1st July	M	Council
15th July	M	Planning
25th July	Th	Environmental & Sustainable Travel
5th Aug	M	Planning
28th Aug	W	Planning
5th Sept	Th	Environmental & Sustainable Travel
12th Sept	Th	Public Services
16th Sept	M	Planning
19th Sept	Th	Amenities & Tourism
26th Sept	Th	Finance & General Purposes
7th Oct	M	Council
9th Oct	W	Planning
28th Oct	M	Planning
18th Nov	M	Planning
28th Nov	Th	Environmental & Sustainable Travel
5th Dec	Th	Public Services
9th Dec	M	Planning
12th Dec	Th	Amenities & Tourism
19th Dec	Th	Finance & General purposes
23rd Dec	M	Planning
2025		
6th Jan	M	Council
9th Jan	Th	Consecutive standing committees for budget
13th Jan	M	Planning
16th Jan	Th	Environmental & Sustainable Travel
27th Jan	M	Council (Budget and Precept)
3rd Feb	M	Planning
24th Feb	M	Planning
6th March	Th	Environmental & Sustainable Travel
13th March	Th	Public Services
17th March	M	Planning
20th March	Th	Amenities & Tourism
26th March	W	Annual Town Meeting
27th March	Th	Finance & General Purposes
7th April	M	Council
9th April	W	Planning
28th April	M	Planning

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL
Diary of Meetings 2024/2025

NOTES:

- 1) All full Committee and Council meetings are held in the Council Chamber at East Court Mansion or virtually and are open to the public. Meetings commence at 7.00pm with exception of the Special Council meeting on 20th June to approve the annual accounts, which will be held immediately following F&GP Committee. The meeting of 9th January will commence at 7.00pm with the Standing Committee meetings following consecutively.
- 2) Council meetings provide a maximum period of 30 minutes for public questions commencing at 7.00pm.
- 3) Committee meetings provide a maximum period of 15 minutes for public questions commencing at 7.00pm.

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL RISK REGISTER 2023/2024

REPORT FOR: EGTC Financial Risk Register
 RFO: Dan Chambers
 REGISTER OBJECTIVE: To assess and review the Financial Systems within EGTC

RISK ASSESSMENT				
Impact	Likelihood			
	LOW (1)	MEDIUM (2)	HIGH (3)	VERY HIGH (4)
(1) MINIMAL Minor disruption to service delivery / no injury / adverse public reaction / low financial cost	GREEN 1	GREEN 2	GREEN 3	GREEN 4
(2) NOTICEABLE Some disruption to service delivery / minor injury / reduced public confidence / unplanned financial cost	GREEN 2	GREEN 4	AMBER 6	AMBER 8
(3) MAJOR Significant disruption to service delivery / serious injury / serious public criticism / large financial cost	GREEN 3	AMBER 6	RED 9	RED 12
(4) DISASTER Significant failure in service delivery / fatality / total loss of public confidence / major financial crisis	GREEN 4	AMBER 8	RED 12	RED 16

KEY (Likelihood x Impact)	
GRADE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR GRADES OF RISK
GREEN (1-4)	To be monitored - no action is required unless grading increases over time.
AMBER (5-8)	Keep under review to assess what (if any) mitigation actions are possible to reduce the likelihood and seriousness of the risk identified. Assessment of costing to be completed for possible action (if funds permit).
RED (9-16)	Priority review needed to reduce the likelihood and implement subsequent appropriate actions / contingency plans as a priority.

No.	Area / Description of Risk (including any identified 'triggers')	Existing Mitigation Actions (Preventative)	Assessment of Likelihood	Assessment of Impact	Grade (combined Likelihood and Impact)	Responsibility for mitigation action(s)	Further Mitigation Actions (Contingency)	Responsibility for further mitigation action(s)	Assessment of Likelihood	Assessment of Seriousness	Grade (combined Likelihood and Seriousness)	Date Of Review
1	<p>Business Continuity</p> <p>Risk of EGTC losing ability to continue its business due to an unexpected circumstance such as;</p> <p>Unplanned IT and telecom outages. Cyber-attack. Data breach. Adverse weather. Interruption to utility supply. Fire. Security incident. Health & Safety incident.</p>	<p>EGTC has an on-site server (APC) which was installed in 2020 (in a locked cabinet) and remains under warranty. The server has an internal storage drive where data contained on the main server & the mail server is backed up every 12 hours.</p> <p>Once the data backup process has been completed the data is copied to Cloud based storage.</p> <p>The maintenance of the mail anti-virus software is managed by Focus IT and uses Office 365 anti-virus protection which is included within the IT contract.</p>	2	2	4	Deputy Clerk / RFO		Deputy Clerk / RFO	2	2	4	Dec 2023

2	Precept Precept not confirmed due to inadequate controls resulting in missed deadlines.	EGTC starts budget planning in October for the next Financial year. Annually each January the Council agrees settings for precept.	1	4	4	Clerk / RFO		Clerk / RFO	1	4	4	Dec 2023
3	Precept Government changes rules on precept settings.	Campaign NALC and SSALC.	1	3	3	Clerk / RFO		NALC	1	3	3	Dec 2023
4	Financial Inadequate records causing financial irregularities.	EGTC's financial regulations set out the operational financial requirements and are reviewed annually by the RFO. These are largely based on the guidelines set out in the NALC financial regulations and are suitable for the Council's requirements. Quarterly Finance & General Purpose (FG&P) meetings take place.	1	3	3	Clerk / RFO	A comprehensive review of the financial regulations shall continue to be undertaken annually by the RFO with any suggested changes being reported to the Finance & General Purpose Committee.	Clerk / RFO / Council	1	3	3	Dec 2023
5	Financial Banking issues caused by inadequate checks	EGTC has financial regulations that set out the requirements for banking, electronic payments,	1	2	2	RFO	No further action required at this time.		1	2	2	Dec 2023

	<p>leading to financial irregularities such as;</p> <p>Banking errors. Losses. Charges.</p>	<p>cheques and the reconciliation of accounts.</p> <p>Any errors in processing cheques or electronic payments are discovered when the RFO reconciles the bank accounts weekly against the statement informing the bank of any issues immediately.</p> <p>Any concerns shall be raised in the quarterly F&GP meetings.</p> <p>Internal procedures which utilise Nat West online banking are now being used to their full potential.</p>										
6	<p>Financial</p> <p>Inadequate funds to meet liabilities.</p>	<p>The RFO reviews the accounts monthly and the F&GP committee review the accounts quarterly.</p> <p>Financial regulations manage the process with the setting of the precept as outlined above.</p>	1	4	4	RFO	Internal audits are carried out every 6 months by an external auditing company & Management Accounts are completed monthly and reported to	Council / Clerk	1	4	4	Dec 2023

							F&GP on a quarterly basis.					
7	Financial Cash loss.	All expenditure is signed by the Chair & Vice Chair of the F & GP committee. The Councils financial regulations are in place and cash received is banked weekly. Internal auditor checks are conducted twice a year.	1	3	3	RFO	The RFO complies and presents a detailed and complete list of expenditure to the quarterly F&GP meetings.	Clerk / RFO / Council	1	3	3	Dec 2023
8	Financial Incorrect payments of salaries or allowances (e.g. incorrect hours claimed for overtime). Incorrect payments of Tax, National Insurance.	All staff appointments, salaries and expenditures are approved by the F&GP committee. Pay is processed by the RFO using the in house payroll system. Payments made to staff are signed off by the Clerk before payment is made Tax, National Insurance and Pension payments made to agencies as calculated after	1	2	2	Clerk/RFO	Personnel files are kept securely locked away only accessible by authorised staff. Payroll information is stored electronically. Desktop payroll procedures implemented by the RFO with the addition of the Support Services assistant now	Clerk / RFO	1	2	2	Dec 2023

		<p>approval by Council meetings.</p> <p>Personnel files are held by EGTC. All overtime hours are recorded and time off or payment is agreed by the Clerk.</p>					providing extra resilience.					
9	<p>Financial</p> <p>Invoices paid incorrectly.</p>	<p>Invoices are only paid when a service or goods have been received and matched against a relevant purchase order</p> <p>All invoice payments are checked by the RFO, budget holder and signed by two signatures; this includes cheques and electronic payments.</p> <p>Financial Regulations in place are reviewed yearly in addition to the internal audits for the processing of invoices.</p>	1	3	3	RFO	Relevant budget holders to complete invoice checks throughout the financial year.	RFO	1	3	3	Dec 2023

10	Financial Grants incorrectly awarded.	Grant procedures are in place and reviewed yearly. All annual grants are discussed and agreed at Council. Ad Hoc Community Grants are approved by F&GP and ratified by Council.	1	2	2	<i>Clerk / Members</i>	No further action at this time.		1	2	2	<i>Dec 2023</i>
11	Financial Grants receivable.	Grants received may come with conditions.	1	2	2	<i>Clerk</i>	No further action at this time.		1	2	2	<i>Dec 2023</i>
12	Financial Annual returns late or incorrect.	Annual returns discussed, approved and signed by Full Council.	1	3	3	<i>Clerk / Members / RFO</i>	Internal audits remain in place – No further action at this time.		1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>
13	Financial Election costs not budgeted.	Precept budgets established for each known election year. Funding comes from the existing budget or reserves when by-elections occur. The Council manages the budget to accommodate costs.	1	3	3	<i>Clerk</i>	Political parties must make certain that the recruitment process allows for only committed individuals to be put forward for election.	<i>Political Parties</i>	1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>
14	Financial VAT dealt with Incorrectly.	Financial regulations and procedures in place are reviewed. The RFO manages the financial system which generates VAT requirements – VAT returns are then	1	3	3	<i>RFO</i>	No further action at this time.		1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>

		completed quarterly in accordance with HMRC timescales.										
15	Financial and management systems. Awarding contracts incorrectly.	Financial regulations are in place as per standing orders. Goods or Services of an estimated value of; Between the value of £5,000 and £20,000 should ideally include a minimum of two invitations for quotations (this changes to three invitations for values estimated between £20,000 to £50,000) Nb: Contracts valued at over £25,000 should be advertised on Contracts Finder website. Above £50,000 should ideally include a minimum of four invitations for tenders.	1	3	3	<i>Appropriate head of Service / Committee Chairman / Town Clerk / RFO</i>	No further action at this time.		1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>
16	Financial & Management Systems Contracts with third	Processes noted above remain in place.	1	3	3	<i>Clerk / RFO / Head of Service</i>	No further action at this time	<i>Clerk / RFO / Head of Service</i>	1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>

	<p>party not completed in line with EGTC Policies and / or statutory requirements</p> <p>Contractors not qualified to carry out work / or in possession of inadequate liability insurance.</p>	<p>All new contracts are monitored by EGTC.</p> <p>The RFO has now established clarification with regards to the awarding of contracts over £25,000</p>										
17	<p>Financial and management systems</p> <p>Inadequate Insurance.</p>	<p>Council to discuss appropriate coverage although EGTC insurances are reviewed with an insurance broker and fidelity checks remain in place.</p>	1	3	3	<i>Clerk / RFO</i>	<p>Fidelity Insurance to be increased to £1,573,000 as per F & GP committee (Dec 2023)</p>		1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>
18	<p>Financial and management systems</p> <p>Data protection legislation not complied with.</p>	<p>Procedures in place for access, retention and disposal of data. Relevant data is backed up and stored securely.</p>	2	3	6	<i>Clerk / Compliance Officer</i>	<p>GDPR training for all Councillors and Staff was originally undertaken in the summer of 2018. Training is currently being scheduled for Councillors in early 2024</p> <p>External Data protection advice is now</p>	<i>Clerk / Compliance Officer</i>	1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>

							provided by Satswana Ltd.					
19	Financial and management systems Freedom of information requests not dealt with in required timescale.	EGTC commits to conform to FOI standards as set by the I.C.O and will respond to requests within set time limits with Policy remaining a part of standing orders.	1	2	2	<i>Clerk / Compliance Officer</i>	Update records and files to ensure EGTC continues to be compliant with the FOI regulations.		1	2	2	<i>Dec 2023</i>
20	Financial and management systems Paper / electronic records not maintained.	Archives held in secure location within EGTC premises. Electronic data is backed up regularly and stored securely. Financial regulations remain in place.	2	2	4	<i>Clerk / RFO</i>	Archiving process continually assessed to ensure records are maintained within the boundaries of GDP Compliance regulations.	<i>Clerk / RFO</i>	1	2	2	<i>Dec 2023</i>
21	Assets Damage and vandalism risk to street furniture, play-parks & open spaces.	Regular checks / inspections of benches made by EGTC's outdoor services team. Regular checks / inspections of play park made by EGTC's outdoor services team.	3	2	6	<i>Estates Manager</i>	Formal Inspections to be carried out annually by ROSPA	<i>Clerk / A&T Committee</i>	3	2	6	<i>Dec 2023</i>

22	Liabilities EGTC buildings not being health and safety compliant causing risk of injury to members of the public, employees and suppliers etc.	Previous health and safety records are maintained on file and continually assessed. Appropriate insurances in place and reviewed annually.	2	4	8	<i>Clerk / Estates Manager</i>	Internal audit of Health and safety training for Councillors / staff to be completed yearly to ensure current working practices are up to date. EGTC Health & Safety Statement agreed at full Council	<i>Clerk / Estates Manager / Council</i>	1	4	4	<i>Dec 2023</i>
23	Non-compliance with employment law.	Personnel service provided by Peninsula with further support available from SSALC. All new employees issued with contract containing relevant employment law policies and procedures.	1	3	3	<i>Clerk / RFO</i>	The Employee handbook has now been updated.	<i>RFO</i>	1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>

24	Governance Lack of succession planning.	Senior staff members are now established in their roles and are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities All roles for staff are recorded with daily tasks agreed and recorded.	1	3	3	<i>Clerk / Chairman</i>	Good progress has been made with establishing contingency arrangements should key staff leave. Training budget reviewed by Clerk and RFO	<i>Clerk / Council</i>	1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>
25	Governance Incorrect or inaccurate minutes of meetings.	Agenda's agreed with the Chairman and issued a minimum of three clear working days before the relevant meeting. Agenda's displayed for members of the public with meetings running in accordance with standing orders.	2	2	4	<i>Clerk</i>	Minutes from Council meetings are now published on the website as 'draft' until such time as the minutes are signed.		2	2	4	<i>Dec 2023</i>
26	Governance Members failing to adhere to the code of conduct.	Relevant procedures are in place as a reminder of the conduct expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when acting in that capacity to register and declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests within 28 days	1	3	3	<i>Clerk / Members</i>	It was agreed at Council in October 2022 that EGTC were to sign up to the Civility & Respect pledge (a joint initiative between NALC & SLCC)	<i>Clerk</i>	1	3	3	<i>Dec 2023</i>

		beginning with the date of disclosure										
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