



Village Hall  
York Road  
Earls Colne  
CO6 2RN

10<sup>th</sup> June 2026

**To: Members of Earls Colne Parish Council**

**You are hereby summoned to attend**

**THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
TO BE HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL (LARGE HALL)  
ON TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026 AT 7.00 PM**

**for the purpose of transacting the following business**

*S Gaeta*

Clerk to the Council

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## **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting** held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026 to be taken as read and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.
- 3. Co-option**  
To consider the co-option of Carol Lewis.
- 4. Declarations of Interest (existence and nature)** with regards to items on the Agenda. Councillors are reminded that the code of conduct provides that should they have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter under discussion, they should speak only in the public session, then withdraw from the room and not seek to influence a decision about the matter.
- 5. Essex County Councillor Update**  
To receive an update from Councillor Rocha.
- 6. Braintree District Councillor Update**  
To receive an update from Councillors Spray and Courtauld.
- 7. Public Participation session** with respect to items on the Agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.
- 8. Chairman's Update**  
To receive an update from the Chairman.
- 9. Clerk's Update**  
To receive an update from the Clerk.

**10. Finance and Internal Control**

- (a) To receive a budget update.
- (b) To receive the Internal Audit Report for 2025/26.
- (c) To approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2025/26.
- (d) To approve and sign the Accounting Statements (Section 2) of the AGAR for 2025/26.
- (e) To note the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights.
- (f) To adopt the following policies:
  - (i) Lone Worker
  - (ii) Co-option
- (g) To amend the Terms of Reference for the Planting Committee.
- (h) To approve the transfer of funds from Unity Trust Bank to Lloyds Bank to ensure the Council's deposits remain within the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) protection limit of £120,000 per bank.

**11. Planning**

To consider the following planning applications, and any others submitted between the date of this agenda and the meeting:

**TPO**

- (a) **26/01087/TPO** – Tree works on G3 and G4 Lime Trees at Oxford Place.

**TPOCON**

- (b) **26/01214/TPOCON** – Tree works to fell Portuguese Laurel at 20 Upper Holt Street.
- (c) **26/01272/TPOCON** – Tree works to fell Birch, Bay, Apple, Plum, Confider, Cherry and Holly at Birchwood House, 9 Hayhouse Road.
- (d) **26/01112/TPOCON** – Tree works to remove T1 Cherry tree at 17 Reuben Walk.

**HH**

- (e) **26/00991/HH**– Proposed 4m wide vehicular access with inward opening automated gates, including provision of on-site turning area at 9 Kemsley Road.

**12. Highways**

To receive an update on outstanding Highways matters.

**13. Village Environment**

To receive an update from the Open Spaces team.

**14. Section 106**

- (a) To consider and agree proposals for improvements to the multiuse games area (MUGA) at the Recreation Club, using agreement reference P.0646 as follows: Outdoor Sport contributions for improvements to the MUGA and Open Space contributions for the tractor package.
- (b) Following approval of (a), to appoint ETC Sports Surfaces Limited for these works/supplies at a total cost of £7,145.00 + VAT.

*Subject to approval of the project by Braintree District Council prior to the formal order.*

**15. Health and Safety**

To receive an update on health and safety matters.

**16. Village Hall**

- (a) To receive an update from the Village Hall team.
- (b) To agree to redecorate the Rear Access Lobby area and Small Hall at a maximum cost of £2,100, with the appointment of the contractor to be delegated to the Clerk in conjunction with the Village Hall team.
- (c) To agree the quote from BPS to supply and install new cistern and button in one of the hall toilets at a cost of £520.00 + VAT.

(d) To agree the purchase of a floor cleaning machine for use at the village hall and appoint a supplier from quotes received.

**17. Youth Support**

To agree to form a Parish Council Committee to look into the provision of youth leisure items.

**18. Good Citizen Award**

To consider formally recognising a resident in appreciation of their ad hoc community service and contributions to the village.

**19. Accounts for Payment**

To approve the accounts for payment.

**20. General Information**

To receive any brief notices or reminders from Councillors or the Clerk. No decisions will be made under this item.



## REQUEST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

**Sections shaded Blue to be completed by the requesting member**  
**Sections unshaded to be completed by the Proper Officer or their delegate**

<b>Item topic</b>	Good citizen Award
<b>Advisory Group/Committee recommendation?</b>	No
<b>Proposed by</b>	Ian Sparks
<b>Seconded by (if known)</b>	
<b>Proposed outcome – i.e. discussion, decision *</b>	The item to be discussed and decision to be voted on For debate and decision at June meeting
<b>If motion, please indicate required wording *</b>	To Honour a Parishioner with regards to ad hoc community work in the Parish
<b>Background (provided by the proposer)</b>	The Award, name to be determined, is to recognise a Parishioner who goes out of their way to help the community by ad hoc deeds. My thought is not for people who run organisations, clubs etc as that is a formatted option. The Parishioner who picks up litter when they see it, the one who keeps an eye on people in their street, road. Those type of people, the unsung heroes. The name of the award would need debating.
<b>Background (provided by the Proper Officer)</b>	As above .
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the proposer)</b>	Cost of Award, whether a one off item or a continuous item over time.
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the Proper Officer)</b>	As above .
<b>Legal implications</b>	None



## REQUEST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

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the requesting member**

**Sections unshaded to be completed by  
the Proper Officer or their delegate**

<b>Item topic</b>	Planting Committee Terms Of Reference
<b>Advisory Group/Committee recommendation?</b>	No
<b>Proposed by</b>	Bob Cook
<b>Seconded by (if known)</b>	
<b>Proposed outcome – i.e. discussion, decision *</b>	Discussion and decision
<b>If motion, please indicate required wording *</b>	That ECPC adopt the attached Terms of Reference of the Planting Committee
<b>Background (provided by the proposer)</b>	This proposal corrects the anomaly of expenditure decisions being made by as few as 50% of the quorum of a Full Council meeting, which fails overall tests of transparency and accountability, by bringing the final spending decisions of this Committee back to Full Council. This proposal also makes clear that the Committee should largely aim to be an enabler of planting schemes by encouraging use of volunteer resources.
<b>Background (provided by the Proper Officer)</b>	Revision to the Terms of Reference requested to make the committee an advisory one, rather than one with delegated spending powers.
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the proposer)</b>	Better financial oversight
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the Proper Officer)</b>	None
<b>Legal implications</b>	None



<b>Proposer's signature</b>	
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### **Explanatory Notes:**

- \* 1. If discussion is required before a decision and the proposer is not clear on what the outcome of discussions may be, please indicate 'to discuss and decide' - a motion will then be formulated at the meeting;
- \* 2. If discussion or consideration is required *without* a decision, please indicate 'to discuss', 'to consider' etc;
- \* 3. If a decision is sought and a motion required (for example, a recommendation by a committee), please indicate this.

Standing Orders 9 and 10 apply to notices of motion:

### **9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer**

A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least five clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.

The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with Standing Order 9(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least three clear days before the meeting.

If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.

Subject to Standing Order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.

Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.



## 10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

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



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<b>Item topic</b>	Redecorate the Rear Access Lobby and Small Hall of the Village Hall
<b>Advisory Group/Committee recommendation?</b>	Yes
<b>Proposed by</b>	Bob Cook
<b>Seconded by (if known)</b>	
<b>Proposed outcome – i.e. discussion, decision *</b>	Discussion and Approval
<b>If motion, please indicate required wording *</b>	That the VH team be delegated to choose one of 3 suppliers to redecorate the Rear Access Lobby area and Small Hall at a maximum cost of £2,100.00 and set the work in motion. Final decision to be made subject to the Clerk’s agreement and on available finance.
<b>Background (provided by the proposer)</b>	<p>The Rear Lobby is scruffy and uninviting for potential hirers. This entrance is regularly used by the less able hirers, mainly of the small hall. In our long term plans we suggest that we should use the rear entrance more, for security and safeguarding reasons. We need the hall to be more appealing so that income can hopefully be maximised. This will be one stage of a complete redecoration of the Village Hall. Agreement to decorate another area is in place but the VH team now think that this scheme should take priority because the Small Hall is the one most used. The other scheme is to be postponed. Quote reference K seems a little low but the quote is detailed. We need to check this out and we also need to add a contingency for inflation since the January quote date. Our requested expenditure is based on adding 10% to the middle quote to be safe.</p> <p>We might utilise our seasonal worker to rectify the damaged paint areas, just to certain that, as far as possible, there will be no trace. Provision of proper notice boards has already been agreed and cautions about sticking anything to the walls will be added to Hirers’ conditions.</p>



	The windows are excluded. They have received attention and should be openable if we can find a way to do this now that the secondary glazing is in place.
<b>Background (provided by the Proper Officer)</b>	As above.
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the proposer)</b>	Quote ref J:- £2,600.00 (2860) Quote ref K:- £1,370.00 (1507) Quote ref M:- £1,900.00 (2090) All January 2026. Possibly safe to assume plus 10%.
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the Proper Officer)</b>	Currently within VH Maintenance budget
<b>Legal implications</b>	The VH team cannot be delegated the decision. The decision can be delegated to the Clerk.
<b>Proposer's signature</b>	Bob Cook

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  - xvii. to close a meeting.



ECPCHALLsurveys26

Both Fire and H&S surveys were carried out in May 2026.  
These are the action points resulting from them.  
This report will be updated periodically as progress is made.

The Assistant Clerk has an Action Plan for this and will administer and record progress.

These are in addition to the main VH report.  
We believe this should be read and understood by all Councillors as we are all responsible for the Hall even though we have a delegated team.

We will attempt to put a value on most remedial actions. In some cases, because the scale of the problem is as yet unknown, they are best guess.

**The accuracy of the guess is unimportant, but the fact that there is a cost, isn't.**

### FIRE INSPECTION ACTION POINTS

Responses shown in Black

Stage Electrics:- All Actioned

#### Immediate Priority Items:-

Stairlift Testing

More action on Smoking on the premises

More signs in proper frames

Staff to be reminded

Gas Boiler Inspection

Is up to date. Serviced in November 2025

Cooker Inspection

Extractor Systems

Cooker Hood filters need cleaning

Kitchen extractor probably doesn't meet current regs

Flammable materials storage in COSSH cupboard

Lockable container required

Main Hall double door Fire Door draught excluder:-

Very old and dated closers. Might be adjustable. Potentially need

2x door closers and Fire rated retainers. Say £600.00

Stage Curtain fireproofing

Clarification of Fire assembly Point

Staff Training

Fire Marshall training

Fire Drills

Guidance for hirers to be checked. A trial evacuation to be arranged shortly with a willing hirer.

Fire Alarm testing guidance for Hall Staff

Emergency escape lighting training and testing for Hall Staff

#### Short Time Items (within 3 months)

Permit to work system

Fire enclosure for Main Fuse Board

## HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION ACTION POINTS

Stair Gates

Stair safety markings

Floor Joint safety markings

Lock SSP step ladder

Safety inserts for electrical sockets

Fire escape latches on kitchen doors

9<sup>th</sup> June 2026 edition

ECPCALLsurveys26.odt

File :- ECPCHALLongterm2026.

Future Action Points, items of concern and current activities. This is a continuing progression of the original document prepared to support budget requests.

We have had Fire inspection and H&S surveys both of which add to this report. They are the subject of a separate Action Plan, the main points of which are listed at the foot of this report.

We believe this should be read and understood by all Councillors as we are all responsible for the Hall even though we have a delegated team.

The hall has suffered from many years of underspend on maintenance and care. Many areas and fittings are tired and dated. There are also some areas of major concern.

We believe that the Council as a whole needs to understand this and view the budget in the round. Would "your" budget be better spent elsewhere?

The team also strongly believe that the hall is under-used. We feel that it's a bit of a financial nightmare and that we should be making better use of it's earning potential by making it more attractive to hirers.

We have attempted to put a value on most remedial actions. In some cases, because the scale of the problem is as yet unknown, they are best guess.

**The accuracy of the guess is unimportant, but the fact that there is a financial risk isn't.**

The classification of importance is also unimportant. All of these items need attention.

Effectively, this is also the Hall Management's task check list.

## **URGENT Level 1**

### **Heating System**

During the heating season the hall is heated when the hirers are present. The length of the warm up period ahead of the hire is longer in the colder months and shorter when the weather warms up. There are late evening and early morning short runs just to keep the chill off. In view of the price of gas, it is a cost efficient exercise to do this. The task of programming the heating times, from creating the timetable spreadsheet to inputting that to the 4 controllers takes about 45 minutes. The advice from our Heating contractor is to do exactly what we are doing. His opinion is that the current price of gas has superseded the "old" advice about keeping buildings warm. He looked at our hirer's timetable and advised us to carry on with the plan. He also advised that, as a default for energy saving reasons, all outer doors should be self closing.

In summer, we expect the place to be overly warm at times. The fixed glazing that we we inherited will add to the problem and will probably be a constant reminder that we need to replace the windows and make it a nicer, more welcoming, place.

We will be looking to facilitate window opening in the Small Hall. If successful, it comes with some risks of hirers failing to resecure windows. This may involve asking CVW to return to temporarily remove the glazing. It's important to note that the windows have been fixed or, as in the Large Hall, painted in place for some time. The double glazing makes no difference to that. They are still fixed.

In early 2026 the system appeared to be losing water. It was professionally checked and a small leak was rectified. The apparent loss after the check was because **it has become apparent that** the system takes a considerable time to settle down after disturbance. We now know that the system needs bleeding at least 5 times over the course of a fortnight to be clear of trapped air. **Self bleeding valves have been fitted to three radiators in the highest part of the building and a fourth will be fitted when the system is serviced in November.**

For the future:- Our regular heating engineer can fix all leaks but a specialist would be needed to trace it (or them) if they were not obvious.

If underfloor work is ever needed it is probably best left, if possible, until the summer, which is less upheaval for hirers. There is some spare flooring under the stage that might be needed if floor work is involved in the main hall. That is basically carpentry work. We have made contact with a local contractor with the requisite skills for the work. May 2026:- Estimated cost for repairing 1 leak under the main hall floor is at least £1k plus £1k for floor work.

If a leak is detected under a solid floor, excavation will be needed with expensive reinstatement. If we cut holes in the small hall floor do we then patch it up or consider replacement of the entire floor covering? Estimated cost of a leak repair is £1k and groundworks £1k.

Our regular heating engineer also has access to specialist contractors for floor work.

Old under-floor pipes are bad news. Solid floor leaks also raise the possibility that we might need to re route substantial sections of pipework.

**In early June '26 the system was flushed and inhibited (corrosion protected). Inhibiting a heating system is not luxury optional extra.**

**An inhibitor dosing point was added when the flushing was done.** The automatic top up system ensures that, in the event of a leak, the correct water levels are maintained, thus ensuring that the heating remains on. The downside is that it also dilutes the inhibitor chemicals which reopens the likelihood of corrosion. The dosing unit gives ECPC the facility to maintain the correct level of inhibitor.

If we ever have a leak under the main hall (suspended) floor, remedial work will present an opportunity to test the substrate for dampness. We will be able to monitor the humidity under the floor. Specialist assistance on the dampness, budget £2k

### **External Works**

We now believe that we have a handle on what the contractor wants us to pay for and have discussed it with them. Not all of the work they quoted for has been done and not all that was quoted has been invoiced. We have made further proposals on how to clear up outstanding works.

The project to replace the front windows will be the next task.

## **Main Hall Floor**

A small section of floor in front of the stage had suffered damage from rising damp and was replaced in about 2020/21. The exercise was neither trouble free nor entirely successful and the underlying dampness was addressed by an extractor on the opposite wall.

We feel that the improved ventilation was essential but that it wasn't correctly targeted. The area in front of the stage probably has very little airflow and that is contributing to the rapidly increasing amount of new blackening in front of the replacement section. We can be certain that the damp problem is still with us.

For the sake of clarity, experience tells us that black on the top goes all the way through so it cannot be sanded off.

The floor to the south side (nearer the entrance lobby) is now showing signs of bowing. That is, the floor is no longer flat (as sanded) and each plank has some curvature. We think that is because the damp is affecting that section and causing swelling.

At the time, the floor was sanded and re sealed (2019 ish), the contractors said that we could not consider another sanding as the floor wasn't thick enough.

We believe that, as a minimum, we need to be budgeting an annual reserve so that we can do the job when the need arises. In around 2019, the quoted replacement cost was £12,000.00 ish. The 2026/7 budget includes an £8k p.a. reserve with an optimistic 3 year target. The job will probably not be as simple as a new floor, because we will need to address the underlying issues of dampness. As a minimum, we probably need to consider adding a membrane to the substrate and possibly re-instating the ventilation that was largely stopped up when the kitchen extension and lobby were added. That might mean getting the underfloor area air piped to outside. (Digging up the floor or the use of a boring machine to create space for new pipes.)

The underfloor ventilation needs to be improved.

We believe that reserving £8k per year with a 3 year target for the estimated "simple" replacement is imprudent and insufficient.

There is a sump under the stage that is set into the water table and collects surplus water which is periodically pumped away. When storing anything under the stage, free access to the sump must be maintained. In heavy rain, the Con Club driveway drains to beside the Chamber notice board. That can't be helping. We need to look at directing Con Club water away to the road and not to under our floor. We possibly need to consider lowering the level of the ground beside the hall.

If any section of the floor failed, the project to resolve the issues would involve paying for professional advice and project management.

The potential size of repair bills raises the possibility of making serious inroads into our reserves or taking out loans.

Known (Current budget to Reserve) £8k

Potential £30k plus

## **Lobby Roof.**

From the beginning of 2026 the roof leaked in three places in heavy rain.

Usually not all at once, and presumably dependent on quantity of rain and prevailing wind.

All mastic joints were remade in early June 2026. Despite recent heavy rains, there have been no leaks.

## **Hall Hirer Access.**

It's unwise to expect our long run of lack of issues with hall security to continue. The lack of a person who can be called out for hall problems is a concern that needs to be urgently addressed.

We have an agreed plan to replace the existing hirer key safes with electronic versions to improve the situation, but it currently needs more thought on how to make it work properly. The original proposal failed to consider who would be on the end of the emergency contact phone, whose phone that might be or who might be expected to turn out in an emergency.

A villager who lives locally has stepped forward to express interest in being the emergency contact. White Colne have such a person and they get paid for call outs and attendance.

An alternative access scheme, using cards, was investigated but discarded for cost reasons. Two types of electronic key safes systems are currently being evaluated.

**We will eventually need to provide a similar lock at the rear entrance. The keys have been found and more copies procured.**

Questions about the, as yet unenacted, Martyn's Law have been reviewed after the assistant Clerk and one Councillor attended an on line course. Our Halls are largely unaffected. Nevertheless, we do have safeguarding issues which arise because the halls cannot currently be securely segregated. The question of an emergency contact phone applies to all current suggestions.

Until the new key safes are in place we need to ask the Clerk to periodically change the access code.

The fitting cost of the electronic locks was not included in the original motion. Known minimum of £500. \* (Electronic Locks plus fitting)

## **High Priority Level 2**

### **1. Main Electrical Supply Board.**

We have been advised that we should consider an update to the main supply board to MCB/RCD, a more up-to-date, and safer, unit that should see us safe from major changes for at least 10 years.

Currently, we just meet regulations but after the anticipated updating of the regs, we won't. **At best, we probably have to do this within two years so we need to be either putting money away or just doing it. We feel that electrical safety items should be done sooner than later.**

**The H&S survey revealed that the board needs to be 1. more secure and 2. have a 30 minute fire protection enclosure.**

**Known Cost £3,700.00. Electrical safety and H&S issues mean that normal procurement rules (if below £5,000.00) do not apply. We will meet our main electrical contractor in mid June 2026 and hope to get this work done with minimal delay.**

**The fire protection measure will add to the cost.**

### **2. Clerk Security**

We need to look at the safety and security of the Clerks. We need a better camera entry system. The cameras purchased by the previous admin are record only. They may have their uses but entry security isn't one of them. The office door needs beefing up, the glass needs to be replaced **or security**

filmed, the lock should be controllable by the clerk from the desk and we should probably look at installing a panic alarm.

The carpenter will be contacted asap.

We have improved the safety of the Assistant Clerk by moving her workstation into the Clerk's office.

The H&S survey also raised this issue.

Known Estimated Cost £ 3k

### 3. Chamber Street Door

The closing and latching of the door needs to be addressed from a security point of view. The door doesn't consistently self latch which leaves the Clerks vulnerable.

This may be a simple matter of either adjusting or replacing the closer so a Carpenter will be consulted asap..

We may need to make access from the stairs into the Chamber a coded lock option that the Clerks can control via the intercom system.

Known Estimated Cost £300.00\* Expenditure Agreed by Full Council

### 4. Floor Washer machine

The existing floor washer is incomplete, unserviceable and never used. It will be scrapped.

We need to replace that with a decent machine that washes, picks up and dries. We should be regularly (weekly at least) washing the hall floors but they are a minimum of 3 hours of hard labour by mop and bucket, and the caretaker doesn't always have time. We believe that we should obtain a professional machine that washes and recovers the water and dirt for around £2500.00 ex vat. That machine would also be ideal for the toilet and lobby areas and speed the jobs up. In a crisis we could accept help from volunteers or take on casual staff to do the job or reallocate a CW. We believe that supplying a decent machine will demonstrate that we value the caretaker and should help to keep them motivated. Our hirers also deserve better.

A Numatic cordless machine has been demonstrated in the hall and is considered to be the machine we need.

A smaller Numatic wet and dry vacuum cleaner for confined spaces will also be recommended. Total cost of both machines is approx 2.5k

There is a health and safety issue here. We have users who lay on the floor. We need to take account of that.

For the sake of our workers we need to make efficient cleaning of floors a less onerous task.

### 5. Notice Boards.

The damaged paintwork shows us that we need notice Boards in order to satisfy the need for posters and notices whilst avoiding damage.

This project would need to precede painting.

We suggest that we use the simple "click" type with round corners.

A4 are £4.99 and A3 are £6.50. There might be a case for A2 too. Each site will need an individual approach. Estimated cost includes paying for fitting.

May 2026 agenda item for 4 x A3 boards (already purchased) was approved along with further expenditure to a total of £300.00.

We also need to tidy up existing statutory notices. This plan will include providing frames for them all. H&S have also requested more No Smoking signs.

The prohibition of sticking anything to the walls will be added to the Hall Hirers conditions of Hire.

## 6. Bar Glass Washer.

The glass washer has been serviced and is now working.

For future reference:-

Approximate cost of Parts:-

Element £130.00 \*

Main Thermostat £60.00 \*

High Level Stat £47.00

PCB (Controller) £380.00

Fitting of any or all replacement parts on a return visit is £55.00 \*

We need to consider an annual maintenance visit.

2026 = £95.00

## 7. Bar Bottle Cooler and Bar area improvements.

Bar bottle cooler now in place.

Correct glasses purchased.

The procurement of a few more wine glasses is in hand.

Users report that we can now consider it to be a workable bar but we need to make it clear that there are no draught beer facilities at present even though some of the required equipment is present.

In the long term, the bar needs the facility of a freezer if only to store bags of ice. The donated fridge freezer does the job but is not ideal. In the long term we should procure either an undercounter freezer or an ice maker. Current hire rates do not justify either at present.

## 8. Martyn's Law

ECPC Village Hall is unaffected.

Safeguarding of vulnerable users, Hall door locking and use of the hall partition are considered elsewhere in this report.

## 9. Split the Kitchen

In conjunction with splitting the halls, access to the kitchen should be just that, and not a through passage. If necessary, we can overcome the difficulty of the hirers having access to drinking water by providing bottled water. Locking the kitchen also means that hirers don't have access to the hall that they are not hiring. This measure also helps with efforts to make the caretaker efficient.

It needs to be done, for security purposes and to prevent access to a kitchen via "the back door".

One plan would involve having 4 x key safes (one inside and one outside, at each end of the kitchen) plus Fitting Costs and the cost of extra keys.

H&S advice is that we also need to restrict access by children. This could be achieved with combination operated latches.

The H&S report also added the complication that although the unused kitchen door needs to be locked, it also needs to be quickly openable as a means of fire escape.

Budget cost now £500.00 for locks and a quick exit system.

## 10. Split the Halls

We should probably start to use the divider in the lobby. If we can be sure that the toilets for each hall are only used by the respective hirers and that the others are not, the caretaker can apply their efforts proportionately and we can make better use of the available hours. We would have better control over their activities and the hours worked would be more efficient.

We may need to consider locking the lobby partition. Each hall already has it's own doorbell.

This plan means that we would need to ask Small Hall users to enter via the back door and then temporarily disable the panic bars on the double doors to the lobby. This raises a security issue. The hirers will need educating.

Budget cost £400.00 for carpentry, keys and another electronic lock.

### **Medium Priority Level 3**

#### **1. Toilet Flushes**

The flushing mechanisms are showing their age. The ease of flushing and the speed of response to operating the levers in two toilets is poor. We need to consider replacing the cisterns/flushes. One toilet seat needs replacing.

We await a report from our regular small works plumber. The cost of the first phase of works has been agreed by full council. **Due for completion by end of June '26.**

Known budget costs £400.00\*

#### **2. Inner Fire Doors**

The recent Fire Inspection noted that some of the obligatory door seals are defective. We await a visit from a carpenter. To some extent, this work will need to be coordinated with painting.

Known Budget Cost £500.00\*

#### **3. Door Blinds**

One window blind between the hall and lobby needs to be replaced. We should also consider fitting blackout roller blinds to the other doors to enhance hall users' privacy.

Known Budget Cost of 3 blinds is £60.00\*

#### **4. Return the single lobby door to standard Spec.**

As standard, doors are normally set to lock on closing with provision to disable the automatic locking for the period of hire. That means that it's just a door that people can use just the same as at home but without needing a key. (Pull the handle and the door opens). Hirers would be given the option to disable the self locking whilst the hall is in use. The door would then self close (as it should do) but still be openable. The idea is that the heat in the lobby is retained and a buffer of warm air is in place between the outside world and the halls. **Contractor to be approached to re-enable manual disabling of the bar operation.**

Can saving energy and money ever be a bad idea?

The safeguarding of vulnerable users applies to this item.

Budget cost £250.00\*

#### **5. Rectify the faulty locking on the left hand door (from the inside) of the double lobby doors.**

Both doors can be set to non self locking (fuel saving mode) and the key to do this is already on the hirers' key set. The left hand door drags and the locking off mechanism is faulty. We need a contractor to remedy both faults.

It would also improve the hirers' experience. The default on both doors should be to self close. The right hand one would need attention to stop it self latching open, **purely for energy saving reasons.**

Budget cost £400.00\*

#### **6. Rectify the Rear Hall Door locking system.**

The lower bolt drags on the ground and it is difficult to close correctly. This causes a security issue because the user of the hall may not be strong enough to correctly close the door. We have had several recent incidents of the Caretaker/Councillor finding the door partly unlatched. We propose asking a contractor to shorten the lower bolt. Lubrication of the bolts has improved the situation but the dragging bolt needs urgent attention. We think that the door also needs a closer for energy saving reasons. We might need to replace the entire mechanism. Budget cost £1,000.00 or £250.00\* for remedial action.

### 7. Painting and Decorating

Currently, the decoration of the entrance lobby and small hall are incomplete but passable. We also have a lot of damage from posters being stuck to walls with bluTack.

“Don’t stick stuff onto the walls” will become part of the hirers’ conditions with financial penalties for infringements. Parties and Christmas seem to be when the damage occurs.

Although it has been done in the past, we think that Caretaking does not leave any time for painting.

We have concluded that we should get the work done by professionals. We need to make it clear that we need a contractor who is prepared to work round the hirers as there are some fairly long periods of non use of the halls. We think that this approach would give us some visible progress and a decent finish.

Some painting has been approved by Full Council.

Three painters have been approached and have quoted. There is a wide gap between their prices so the suggested approach is to use the cheapest in (say) the kitchen or bar to assess their work. Then review the situation.

**We have Full Council approval to decorate the Bar, Bar Store and Bar Seating Areas for £650.00 but now feel that, as it is the most heavily used, we should postpone that and get the Small Hall and rear entrance lobby painted.**

Mr T. (one of the quoting painters) didn’t like the stark white in the lobby. We agree. We discussed “National Trust” green and blue for there but not everywhere. Definite pastel shades. VH team to decide if and when and put it to Council. We have specified Dulux trade or close alternative paints.

We should also be creating specific reserves for the jobs.

We could consider replacing some or all of the toilet mirrors that are showing signs of ageing.

Whilst we should be looking for grants, we should also take a prudent view and make financial provisions. Or just save up by creating reserves.

### 8. Rear Lobby Entrance Grit Trap Mat

There is currently no way that visitors who use the rear door can clean their shoes. We need a mat well or grit trap so that the Small Hall floor can be kept cleaner. **Poor weather and the winter add to this problem so it needs to be resolved by about October.**

## **Low Priority Level 4**

### 1. Downpipe on outer wall of bar seating area

Appears to be blocked. Lower end not visible so where the water eventually goes is unknown. The high level of the Con Club drive is probably not helping the underfloor dampness.

## 2. External Window Sill - Clerk's Office

Whilst assessing the S&S work we noticed that the window sill to the south window of the Clerk's office appears to need a repair, at best. It's oak, so won't be cheap if a replacement is needed. Say £1,000.00. note that there are Heritage/Conservation issues on repair work.

This could be part of the window project if that is progressed reasonably soon but the H&S survey suggested that it needs urgent inspection to determine if it might fail, fall and cause injury. Not considered dangerous but is unsightly and should be attended to before the end of August.

Estimated Repair Cost £1k\*

## 3. Main Hall front doors

These are not as easy to close as they should be. We have had recent episodes of doors being left open/unlatched. They need attention from an expert. Fitting a pull handle and giving clearer advice might help.

Minimum budget £400.00\*

## 4. Roof/Ceiling Insulation

Whilst the heating upgrades were in progress we were able to inspect the insulation above the Small Hall. It's thin and well below the current suggested thickness. We need to plan for improvements and look for "ECO" grants. We need a plan in place ready for when the grants appear. The insulation above the Main Hall has not been inspected.

## 5. Curtains/Blinds

All curtains and runners are showing their age. We feel that, as a minimum, the runners should be replaced. The practicality of doing that but not replacing the curtains at the same time needs to be considered.

## 6. Remote Thermostats

There is a case for setting the temperatures and times remotely. Possibly a task for the Assistant Clerk. The cost of a remote system has not been explored. No action currently planned as VH team prepare the weekly spreadsheets and they and the caretaker adjust the timers, so is cost free.

## 7. Add a Commercial Dishwasher to the kitchen.

Should we make the kitchen more attractive to hirers by providing a commercial dishwasher.? This is a long term project that would need more research and costings. Franke Kingfisher, counter top model.

£1116.00 plus fitting £150.00

Estimated Cost £1266.00 \*

## 8. Add a Commercial microwave to the kitchen

Nisbetts, Samsung £580.00 \*

We feel that it would make the hall more attractive to hirers.

## 9. Fridge/Freezers

The white fridge appears to not be working properly. Say £400.00 for a domestic type replacement. It would be a larger type fridge (no freezer

compartment) and the actual unit should be a spot decision on the day. No urgency until we have hirers, but do we even need two fridges?.

#### 10.. Small Hall Projector Screen.

The projection system in the Small Hall projects onto a plain wall. In an ideal situation, we'd have a proper screen. There is very little demand for this so we consider the wall to be sufficient. We need to make clear that access, other than to play BluRay films, to this system requires a computer, some expertise, and practice. It is not Plug and Go. Work needed on a written operating procedure.

### **Capital Projects and Long Term Improvements**

#### 1. Front Section Wooden Windows (Replacement)

These were part of the "grand plan". They are old, single glazed, insecure and failing. We need to progress this. Note that there are "heritage" issues here too.

Budget Cost £60k but grants are involved.

Estimated cost to us £30k\*

#### 2. Small White "sash" windows on South face (Toilets)

All are rotten and need to be replaced. They are possibly part of the inherited "big" plan, We suggest that we start replacing in fours or reserving or looking at grants.

£4,000.00 pa annual reserve as a minimum, and hope for the best.

Any grant income would be a windfall, but it would be imprudent if we made grant income part of our plans.

We need to have priced plans on file so that we can quickly respond to grant availability.

Old papers suggested aluminium units to match in with the entrance doors.

There appears to be no merit in not using PVC, if only on price grounds.

Known suggested annual reserve £4k\*

#### 3. Large Sash Windows in Small Hall

We have very old, but recently repaired and painted, sash windows that cannot easily be opened. Opening is currently impossible now that the secondary glazing has been fitted. We have already had complaints about lack of ventilation **so will be investigating ways round the problem. Making the windows openable creates a potential security issue.**

We need modern, properly insulated, windows with a remote opening system. When we get to this we will need to robustly oppose the "Conservation" view that they need to be made of wood.

Priced plans are needed for the file.

Known Estimate £10k\*

#### 4. Large Sash Windows in Large Hall

The Small Hall comments also apply to these windows. They have only had cursory attention in the last two years. They are not double glazed are in poor condition. **There is probably no easy answer to this. The windows appear to be painted shut.**

Priced plans needed for file.

Known Estimate £10k\*

#### 5. Paper Towels

All toilets have a single rolled paper towel dispenser. The system comes under pressure when we have weekend hirers. We currently have no weekend caretaking so we need more capacity. We need alternative/back up folded towel dispensers, a second dispenser or electric dryers.  
Say 5 off folded paper dispensers at £40.00 each = £200.00\*

#### 6. Prepare Long Term Toilet Refurbishment Plan

We probably need to have ready made renovation projects planned and priced. Should grant funds become available, we would then be in a good position to get the claim in early. For a start, the toilets, whilst functional, are very dated so we need modular design schemes ready to go. Outside assistance needed.  
Estimated £50k\*

9th June 2026 edition

ECPCHALLongterm2026.odt

### ALL NEW ITEMS FOR JUNE 2026 MEETING

#### ACTION PLAN ITEMS - H&S

1. Clerk office window filming.
2. PAT Testing completeness check
3. Stair Lift Servicing
4. Redundant dance mats (not ours)
5. Safety Tape on Stage Stairs and Bar Seating area margin.
6. Check that the Stage lighting documentation is complete.
7. Steps to stage need gates.
8. Bar fridge freezer move to glass washer area.
9. Remove glass wash area door.
10. Non slip mats for bar top.
11. Foyer "box office" glass filming.
12. Small Hall stairs to stage need gates.
13. Electronic lock project to be progressed.
14. Replace childproof inserts in electrical sockets.

#### ACTION PLAN ITEMS - FIRE

1. Front RH fire door operation
2. Gas Meter cupboard needs a Fire Key, not a keysafe lock.
3. Cooker gas and electrical tests
4. Cooker hood filters
5. Extract system Services:- 1 x kitchen, 1 x Glass wash area, 1 x Main Hall
6. Move Fire Assembly Point sign.
7. All fire door brush seals
8. Main Hall PA PAT testing?
9. Remove bump stop on Main Hall entrance from Foyer
10. Investigate and remedy if needed, Stage Curtain retardant status.

#### ACTION PLAN ITEMS - FOOD HYGIENE

1. Current Food Hygiene Certifications
2. Draught Beer lines.

#### ACTION PLAN ITEMS - OTHER

1. Procure a floor washer
2. Procure a small area spot cleaner
3. Rectify/replace Bar area water heater
4. Progress the poor performing toilet flush and other minor issues
5. Painting Small Hall

## □ Planting Committee – Terms of Reference

*(Parish Council Committee)*

### 1. Purpose

To work with voluntary groups to plan, oversee and promote planting within the parish, supporting biodiversity, sustainability and climate change mitigation measures.

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### 2. Functions

The Committee will:

- Identify areas suitable for planting (e.g. verges, open spaces, amenity land)
  - Research and recommend appropriate planting schemes, prioritising drought resistant and wildlife-friendly species
  - Develop successional plantings
  - Actively encourage involvement with volunteers, and community groups
  - Identify and pursue grant funding and partnership opportunities
  - Ensure compliance with relevant policies (e.g. environmental, health & safety)
- 

### 3. Membership

- Membership shall be no less than 3 Councillors appointed annually by the Council
  - The Committee may appoint non-councillor members (without voting rights unless formally resolved under s.102(3) of the Local Government Act 1972)
  - The **Chair** shall be elected annually by the Committee or appointed by the Council
- 

### 4. Meetings

- Meetings will be held as required.
  - A quorum shall be three members
  - Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Council's standing orders and the Local Government Act 1972
  - Agendas will be published at least 3 clear days before the meeting
- 

### 5. Decision-Making

- Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of those present and voting
  - In the event of a tie, the Chair has a casting vote
  - All decisions must comply with the Council's adopted policies and budget
-

## **6. Finance**

- The Committee will operate within an annual budget set by the Council
  - It will recommend expenditure for approval by Full Council
  - Any income or grants must be reported to the Council and properly accounted for
- 

## **8. Reporting**

- Minutes of all meetings will be submitted to the next meeting of the Full Council
  - The Committee will make formal recommendations where decisions are required
  - An annual report may be presented (optional but good practice)
- 

## **9. Review**

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by the Parish Council.



## REQUEST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

**Sections shaded Blue to be completed by  
the requesting member**  
**Sections unshaded to be completed by  
the Proper Officer or their delegate**

<b>Item topic</b>	Parish Council Youth Committee
<b>Advisory Group/Committee recommendation?</b>	To be set up
<b>Proposed by</b>	Ian Sparks
<b>Seconded by (if known)</b>	
<b>Proposed outcome – i.e. discussion, decision *</b>	Preliminarily to discuss the agreement to form a committee and find willing Councillors to sit on it.
<b>If motion, please indicate required wording *</b>	To formulate a Parish Council Committee to look into Youth leisure items
<b>Background (provided by the proposer)</b>	The Committee would need to formulate the actions required to attempt to find outlets for youth leisure. Once formed, the Committee would then invite recognised youth helpers, ie Essex CC Youth Service, Rec Club, Churches, Youth organisations to discuss problems and answers to those.
<b>Background (provided by the Proper Officer)</b>	As above.
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the proposer)</b>	Unknown at present but not believed to be above £200 if any
<b>Financial implication (anticipated by the Proper Officer)</b>	As above.
<b>Legal implications</b>	If direct involvement with young people, a Safeguarding Policy will be required and potentially DBS checks.
<b>Proposer's signature</b>	Ian Sparks



### **Explanatory Notes:**

- \* 1. If discussion is required before a decision and the proposer is not clear on what the outcome of discussions may be, please indicate 'to discuss and decide' - a motion will then be formulated at the meeting;
- \* 2. If discussion or consideration is required *without* a decision, please indicate 'to discuss', 'to consider' etc;
- \* 3. If a decision is sought and a motion required (for example, a recommendation by a committee), please indicate this.

Standing Orders 9 and 10 apply to notices of motion:

### **9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer**

A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least five clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.

The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with Standing Order 9(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least three clear days before the meeting.

If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.

Subject to Standing Order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.

Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.

### **10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice**



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

## ECPC Parish Clerk

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**From:** Earls Colne Village Hall  
**Sent:** 10 June 2026 15:19  
**To:** ECPC Parish Clerk  
**Subject:** USE THIS ONE- Floor Cleaning Machine – Quotations for Consideration  
**Attachments:** OSCS- Quote - 130526\_1038 Q1.pdf; Shopping basket \_ BiGDUG Q3.pdf; Your Shopping Cart – Avern Cleaning Supplies (Internet) Ltd.pdf

Hi Sarah,

Following a proposal from the Village Hall Team, quotations have been obtained for the purchase of a floor cleaning machine for use at the Village Hall.

The need for a floor cleaning machine has been identified following comments I have received from regular hall users regarding the condition of the floor. It is hoped that the machine will provide a higher standard of cleanliness within the Village Hall, whilst also making the cleaning process easier and less physically demanding for the Caretaker. The machine is also expected to improve efficiency and reduce the time required to clean the hall floor.

Following recent research undertaken by myself, the Numatic TTB1840NX-R has been identified as a suitable option for maintaining the hall floors and supporting the ongoing upkeep of the facility. With the support of the Village Hall Team, a demonstration of the machine was arranged to provide clarity and ask questions. The machine received positive feedback from both the Village Hall Team and Terry, the VH Caretaker.

To ensure value for money and allow Members to compare available options, quotations were obtained from three suppliers for the same machine. The quotations received are detailed below:

Supplier	Quotation (excluding VAT)
One Stop Cleaning Shop	£2,070.00
Avent Cleaning	£1795.00
Big Dug	£2,226.09

Whilst the quotations from One Stop Cleaning Shop and Avent Cleaning are identical in price, Members should note that the quotation from One Stop Cleaning Shop includes a complimentary package of cleaning products as part of their proposal, providing additional value at no extra cost to the Council worth around £70. Please note, there is also an additional item which had been quoted for from One Stop Cleaning Shop- @Bob is to advise.

Members are invited to consider the quotations and determine whether they wish to proceed with the purchase and, if so, appoint a supplier.

Kind regards,

*Sophie*

Sophie Blair-Wolker BScHons CiLCA

**Assistant Clerk**

*Earls Colne Parish Council*

*Parish Council Office, Council Chamber, Village Hall, York Road, Earls Colne, CO6 2RN*

*Working days- Mon/Tue/Wed*

e: [village.hall@earlscolne-pc.gov.uk](mailto:village.hall@earlscolne-pc.gov.uk)

w: [www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk](http://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk)



## Avon Services Ltd T/A One Stop Cleaning Shop

Units 1 & 3 Bedminster Trade Park  
Sheene Way  
Bedminster  
Bristol  
BS3 4TA  
0117 305 1980  
www.OneStopCleaningShop.co.uk  
sales@onestopcleaningshop.co.uk



### Customer Name & Address

Earls Colne Parish Council  
Village Hall, Council Chamber  
York Road  
Earls Colne  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO6 2RN  
United Kingdom

### Delivery Address

Earls Colne Parish Council  
Village Hall, Council Chamber  
York Road  
Earls Colne  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO6 2RN  
United Kingdom

### QUOTE

**FAO:** Bob Cook  
**Order Date:** 13/05/2026  
**Acc No:** 86883  
**Order No:** TTB1840NX  
**Taken By:** Sophie.Vaux  
**Our Order No:** **282623**

**This is Order Revision No 2 and Supersedes all Previous Issues**

Qty	Code	Description	Price Each	Line Total	Line VAT
1.00	919978	TTB1840NX-R Scrubber Dryer with 1 Battery Expected Delivery Date: 14/05/202	2,070.00	2,070.00	414.00
1.00	606400	360mm (14") PADLOC Drive Board - Fits TT1840 / TT1840NX / TBL8572 / TRL720 / CRL8072 Expected Delivery Date: 14/05/202	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.00	5X14BR	Box of 5 x 14" Red Floor Pads Expected Delivery Date: 14/05/202	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.00	FOC-DC5	5L Deep Clean Heavy Duty Cleaner/Degreaser (Food Safe) FREE WITH SCRUBBER DRYER PURCHASE Expected Delivery Date: 14/05/202	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.00	918816	CTB370NX Carpet & Hard Floor Cleaner + X-tract Wand - No battery, No Charger Expected Delivery Date: 14/05/202	509.74	509.74	101.95

### Thank you so much for your inquiry

As part of our mission to help create a Greener, Cleaner World we are, whenever possible, providing environmental information on the items you have expressed an interest in.

**Valid for 28 days only.**

<b>Goods Net:</b>	2,579.74
<b>Delivery:</b>	0.00
<b>Order Net:</b>	2,579.74
<b>VAT:</b>	515.95
<b>Total:</b>	3,095.69
Pound sterling	

Have a question? Call us on 0800 9788 499

 Free Shipping on orders over £80 ex VAT!

[Request Machine Demo](#)

[Warranty](#)

[Contact Us](#)



 [Sign in/ Register](#)



Excl. VAT



Incl. VAT

What are you looking for?



### Numatic TTB1840NX-R Compact Battery Powered Scrubber Dryer



Machine Only (Next Working Day Delivery)

Delivery Estimation: Order within for FREE Next Working Day Delivery



 [Verified](#)

#### Fast delivery

Fast delivery, helpful information helped me work out if parts...

Lewis Winstone, 17 hours ago



 [Verified](#)

#### Efficient service and deliv...

Efficient service and delivery, good price

Steve, 1 day ago



#### Correct part

Correct part i... as quoted

gary ward, 2 d

Rated **4.6** / 5 • [1,163 reviews](#)

Showing our 4 & 5 star reviews



You are eligible for free shipping.

#### Order note



£1,795.00 Our Team Is Online

**£1,795.00**

(Excl. VAT)

Taxes and Shipping calculated at checkout

Check Out

rayrol



### Customer Service

Mon-Thu, 9am-5pm

Fri, 9am-4pm



### Get in Touch

0800 9788 499

Sales@averncleaningsupplies.com



### Delivery

Fast, reliable delivery options via DPD, Evri or Pallet Delivery Service.

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## Our Services

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Machine Demonstartion

Warranty Claim

Service Form

Return Form

Finance Over £500

Numatic Service Packages

## Information

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Contact

Delivery Information

Refund & Returns

Credit Accounts

Reviews

## Products

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Brands

Cleaning Overview

About Us

## Policies

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Refund Policy

Terms Of Service

Privacy Policy

Terms & Conditions

Trademark Notice

## About

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 Avern Cleaning Supplies (Internet) Ltd Unit E6/7 Blackpole Trading Estate East, Blackpole Road, Worcester, Worcestershire WR3 8SG Vat No: GB260370724

 sales@averncleaningsupplies.com

 0800 9788 499

 8:00am - 5:00pm, Mon to Thu; 8:00am - 4:00pm, Fri

## Follow Us On Socials

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Item 1 Code: NUTTB18401B



1



Price (Incl. VAT)  
**£2,671.31**

Total (Incl. VAT)  
**£2,671.31**

## Order summary

Delivery costs	Calculated at checkout
Invoice total (Excl. VAT)	£2,226.09
VAT 20%:	£445.22
<b>Invoice total (Incl. VAT)</b>	<b>£2,671.31</b>

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BiGDUG Ltd Registered office BiGDUG Limited, Riga  
Wharf, Bristol Road, Gloucester, GL2 5DH  
Company Registration Number 5019218 VAT no.  
826913218

Monthly breakdown of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2026 and 31/03/2027)

	Budget	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Variance
<b>PAYMENTS</b>															
<b>Car Park &amp; Convenien</b>															
CP Rates	2,536.03	290.40												290.40	2,245.63
CP Water	1,000.00		131.27											131.27	868.73
CP Electricity	1,300.00	145.94	196.78											342.72	957.28
Cleaning/Janitorial Supp	300.00		24.48											24.48	275.52
CP Maintenance	1,500.00	67.43		26.66										94.09	1,405.91
Security Alarm	150.00														150.00
<b>General Administratio</b>															
Stationery Misc	400.00	4.50	47.03											51.53	348.47
Insurance	5,500.00		5,315.62											5,315.62	184.38
Equipment	500.00														500.00
Postage	10.00														10.00
Audit Fee	1,600.00														1,600.00
Memberships	2,000.00	2,906.13												2,906.13	-906.13
Tea/Coffee/Milk	250.00	2.71	58.93	9.40										71.04	178.96
Training	2,000.00	585.00	60.00	27.00										672.00	1,328.00
Grants to local orgs	2,000.00														2,000.00
Community Special	1,600.00														1,600.00
Grants		500.00												500.00	-500.00
Website	650.00	62.17	132.00	62.17										256.34	393.66
Poo Bags	500.00		59.90											59.90	440.10
Communications	650.00	66.64	66.64											133.28	516.72
Computing Software	2,200.00	337.50												337.50	1,862.50
Photocopier	2,500.00		154.62											154.62	2,345.38
Legals	15,000.00														15,000.00
Inspections	100.00														100.00
Bank charges		15.75	19.50											35.25	-35.25
<b>Museum</b>															
Museum Grant	1,200.00														1,200.00

Monthly breakdown of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2026 and 31/03/2027)

	Budget	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Variance
<b>Projects</b>															
Enovert		-333.33	1,348.33											1,015.00	-1,015.00
<b>Staff remuneration</b>															
Employer NI	8,724.00	1,580.35	613.02											2,193.37	6,530.63
Pension Contributions	13,653.00	1,347.01	1,375.18											2,722.19	10,930.81
Staff Salaries	88,000.00	7,194.16	6,294.63											13,488.79	74,511.21
<b>Village Environment</b>															
Highways/CCTV	1,000.00														1,000.00
Repairs & Maintenance	500.00	268.00		30.00										298.00	202.00
Community Worker Equ	1,500.00	16,546.13	32.83	50.56										16,629.52	-15,129.52
Fuel	300.00	35.17	61.88	116.60										213.65	86.35
Vehicle Insurance	675.00	260.71												260.71	414.29
Playground Equipment	1,000.00														1,000.00
Litter Bins	2,000.00														2,000.00
Dog bins	305.00														305.00
Telephone Kiosk	500.00														500.00
Water Pump	200.00														200.00
Church Clock	500.00														500.00
Amenity Electric Vehicle	500.00			83.81										83.81	416.19
Defibrillator	500.00														500.00
Street Lighting Maintena	3,000.00	197.00												197.00	2,803.00
Street lighting Energy	3,250.00														3,250.00
Special Events	1,000.00														1,000.00
Christmas Tree/Carol St	500.00														500.00
Planting	500.00														500.00
Trees	2,000.00	295.00	370.00											665.00	1,335.00
Street Cleaning		290.64												290.64	-290.64
Sundries		26.96												26.96	-26.96
Memorial	100.00														100.00
<b>Village Hall</b>															
VH Rates	1,875.00	386.84												386.84	1,488.16

Monthly breakdown of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2026 and 31/03/2027)

	Budget	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Variance
VH Maintenance	7,500.00		1,247.50											1,247.50	6,252.50
VH Electricity	2,700.00	501.91	184.62											686.53	2,013.47
Gas	5,775.00	437.75	235.12											672.87	5,102.13
VH Water	250.00		203.94											203.94	46.06
Fire Exits/Alarms/Emerg	1,300.00		690.00											690.00	610.00
Cleaning/Cloakroom Su	360.00	143.08	94.30											237.38	122.62
Waste Collection	420.00	80.59	1,373.94											1,454.53	-1,034.53
License Fees	150.00														150.00
Stairlift	300.00														300.00
Sundries	250.00	95.00												95.00	155.00
Defibrillator Consumabl	200.00	67.99												67.99	132.01
Window Cleaning	600.00														600.00
Community Hub	1,000.00	83.68												83.68	916.32
Floors and Windows	8,000.00														8,000.00
Equipment	850.00		643.01											643.01	206.99
	<b>207,183.03</b>	<b>34,488.81</b>	<b>21,035.07</b>	<b>406.20</b>											
														<b>Total:</b>	<b>55,930.08</b>
														<b>Variance:</b>	<b>151,252.95</b>

Monthly breakdown of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2026 and 31/03/2027)

	Budget	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Variance
<b>RECEIPTS</b>															
<b>General Administratio</b>															
Bank Interest	1,200.00														-1,200.00
Grants		630.44												630.44	630.44
Precept	182,650.00	91,325.00												91,325.00	-91,325.00
Poo Bags			17.27											17.27	17.27
<b>Museum</b>															
Museum Grant		211.64												211.64	211.64
<b>Projects</b>															
Enovert				15,170.00										15,170.00	15,170.00
<b>Village Environment</b>															
Grass Cutting	94.50														-94.50
Allotment Fees	10.00														-10.00
Street Cleaning	3,200.00			3,390.33										3,390.33	190.33
<b>Village Hall</b>															
Hall Hire	13,175.00	1,351.00												1,351.00	-11,824.00
Hall Hire Deposit			100.00											100.00	100.00
	<b>200,329.50</b>	<b>93,518.08</b>	<b>117.27</b>	<b>18,560.33</b>											
														<b>Total:</b>	<b>112,195.68</b>
														<b>Variance:</b>	<b>-88,133.82</b>

# Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities\*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £15 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
  - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
  - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
  - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2026**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2026** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2026
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

## Publication Requirements

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

Before 1 July 2026 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 2025/26** approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2025/26** approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2026 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.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

\*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

# Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide\** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments **must** be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2026
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) **must** be approved before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references, even where approved on the same day.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) **must** certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority **must** in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection ( this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor **must** be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide\**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- Additional costs may be incurred if additional audit work is required.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2025) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2026).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2026**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including <b>the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights</b> , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at <b>31 March 2026</b> been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? <b>NB:</b> do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

**\*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

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 financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
C. This authority assessed 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. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this 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), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.			
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .			
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.			
<b>P. (For local councils only)</b> Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YYYY

DD/MM/YYYY

DD/MM/YYYY

ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.			<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures <b>must</b> agree to underlying financial records.</i>
<b>1.</b> Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value <b>must</b> agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
<b>2.</b> (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
<b>3.</b> (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
<b>4.</b> (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
<b>5.</b> (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
<b>6.</b> (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
<b>7.</b> (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. <b>must</b> equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
<b>8.</b> Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b></i>
<b>9.</b> Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
<b>10.</b> Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
<b>11</b> Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?			<i>For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.**

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

## Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2025/26

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

### 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 2026 and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2025/26

(Except for the matters reported below)\* 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 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. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2025/26

We certify/do not 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 2026

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

## Bank reconciliation – pro forma

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It **must** agree to headed "Year ending 31 March 2026" in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are prepared on a basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that unpresented cheques should be entered as negative figures.

Name of smaller authority: **Earls Colne Parish Council**

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Essex**

### Financial year ending 31 March 2026

Prepared by (Name and Role): **Sarah Gaeta, RFO**

Date: **31/03/2026**

	£	£
<b>Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/2026:</b>		
Co-op Community Direct Plus	-	
Co-op savings	-	
Cambridge and Counties	-	
Lloyds Bank	8,736.69	
[add more accounts if necessary] Unity Trust (savings)	81,067.11	
Unity Trust Current Account	60,939.21	
		150,743.01
Petty cash float (if applicable)		9.19
Less: any unpresented cheques as at 31/3/2026 <b>(enter these as negative numbers)</b>	(4,685.10)	
		(4,685.10)
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/2026	56.00	
		56.00
<b>Net balances as at 31/3/2026 (Box 8)</b>		<b>146,123.10</b>

## Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: [REDACTED]

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): [REDACTED]

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue** highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;
- **New from 2025/26 onwards:** variances of £500,000 or more in Box 3 require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year for smaller authorities with income and/or expenditure exceeding £6,500,000

	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input, <b>DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES</b>	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	106,612	128,137				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	160,000	177,332	17,332	10.83%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	83,207	132,097	48,890	58.76%	YES		<b>Increases in income:</b> VAT £16,290.88; Section 106 £16,363.45; play equipment (funding) £49,434.63; sale of equipment £5,500.00. <b>Offset by decreases in income:</b> Hall hire £6,264.63; allotments £416.56; waste collection £1,206.92; grants £13,055.00; events £169.00; distr councillor grant £874.14; hall hire deposits £1,440.00; remaining c. £272.71 on general items.
4 Staff Costs	94,973	82,437	-12,536	13.20%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	126,709	209,006	82,297	64.95%	YES		<b>Increases in expenditure:</b> Play equipment £67,084.76; computer software £1,126.40; photocopier £1,537.77; toilet rates and utilities £2,065.58; legal fees £2517.77; insurance £200.90; memberships £4,175.33; grants £5,963.01; training £231.17. <b>Offset by decreases in expenditure:</b> stationery £1,065.09; NDP £275.00; audit £515.00; equipment £641.07; website £147.17
7 Balances Carried Forward	128,137	146,123				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	128,137	146,123				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	1,513,248	1,495,280	-17,968	1.19%	NO		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

# HEELIS & LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

## **Internal Audit Report for Earls Colne Parish Council – 2025/2026**

The following Internal Audit was carried out on the adequacy of systems of control in accordance with the requirements of the Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015 and the guidance and instruction in the Practitioners Guide 2025. The following recommendations/comments have been made:

Income: £309,429.75      Expenditure: £291,443.78      Reserves: £146,123.10

### 2026 AGAR Completion:

Section One: [Not yet completed](#)

Section Two: [Yes \(draft figures\) – to be approved by council](#)

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/2026: [Yes](#)

Certificate of Exemption: [No](#)

*It is noted that Box 11, Section 2 of the AGAR should be ticked 'Yes' as the figures in Section 2 do exclude trust funds. It is currently ticked 'No'.*

**Proper book-keeping**      Cash Book, regular reconciliation of books and bank statements. Supporting vouchers, invoices and receipts

*All were found to be in order. VAT payments are tracked and identified within the year end accounts. The Council hold the General Power of Competence and LGAs137 does not apply.*

*The cashbook is referenced providing a clear audit trail. Supporting paperwork is in place and well referenced.*

**Financial regulations**      Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Tenders

Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes

Identifying VAT payments and reclamation

Cheque books, paying in books and other relevant documents

Standing Orders in place:      [Yes](#)

Reviewed: [21/5/2025 \(Ref: 25/11.a\)](#), [18/9/2025 \(Ref: 25/40.b\)](#), [17/7/2025 \(Ref: 25/22\)](#) and [21/10/2025 \(Ref: 25/62.d\)](#)

Financial Regulations in place:      [Yes](#)

Reviewed: [21/5/2025 \(Ref: 25/11.a\)](#), [18/9/2025 \(Ref: 25/40.b and 21/10/2025 \(Ref: 25/62.d\)\)](#)

Contact details : 1 Hembling Terrace, Mill Lane, Suffolk, IP13 0PP

Tel: 07732 681125

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Heather Heelis Dip HE Local Policy FILCM

Lynne Lodge Dip HE Local Policy

VAT reclaimed during the year: [Yes](#)  
Registered: [Yes](#)

Submission Period:	Amount:
<a href="#">01/04/2025-30/06/2025</a>	<a href="#">£19,934.43</a>
<a href="#">01/07/2025-30/09/2025</a>	<a href="#">£873.47</a>
<a href="#">01/10/2025-31/12/2025</a>	<a href="#">£2,155.25</a>
<a href="#">01/01/2026-31/03/2026</a>	<a href="#">£4,557.19</a>

General Power of Competence: [Yes](#)      Adopted: [18/9/2025](#)  
Minute Ref: [25/40.a](#)

*There were no tenders during the year that exceeded the £30,000 Public Contract Regulations threshold.*

*The Council reviewed the following documents during the year of audit:*

[21/5/2025](#)

- [Code of Conduct – Ref: 11.i](#)

[30/9/2025](#)

- [Communications Policy – Ref: 25/53](#)

[17/3/2026](#)

- [Planting Committee Terms of Reference – Ref: 25/148.c](#)

## **Risk Assessment**

Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council  
Compliance with Data Protection regulations

Risk Assessment document in place: [Yes](#)  
Data Protection registration: [Yes](#)      Ref: [2813377](#)

### ***Data Protection***

*The General Data Protection Regulations came into force on 25 May 2018. It is likely that this will affect the way in which the Council handles its data. Due to the financial risk associated with the General Data Protection Regulations, the Council have included this in their Risk Assessment.*

*Insurance was in place for the year of audit (valid 1/6/2025 – 31/5/2026). The Risk Assessment was due to be reviewed at a full Council meeting held on 21/5/2025 (Ref: 25/10.c), however, the minute states that the action for a councillor to review the Risk Assessment prior to the meeting was outstanding and therefore a further action to review the document by the Clerk and a councillor was agreed. There is no evidence in the minutes that the Risk Assessment was formally reviewed and approved by the full Council prior to the 31/3/2026.*

Statement of Internal Controls in place: [To be adopted in 2026-2027](#)

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**Recommendation:** *To undertake and minute a review of the Risk Assessment and Internal Controls during the year of audit.*

*The Council have internal financial controls in place. It is noted that these are in the process of being reviewed and improved. The Clerk provides financial reports to council meetings. Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.*

*Bank signatories were reviewed on 7/8/2025 (Ref: 25/29.d) and on 21/10/2025 (Ref: 25/62).*

Fidelity Cover: £250,000

*The level of Fidelity cover is within the recommended guidelines of year end balances plus 50% of the precept.*

## Transparency

Compliance with **Assertion 10:**

Website link: <https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk>

Privacy Policy published: Yes

Link: [https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/Earls\\_Colne\\_Privacy\\_Notice\\_2026.pdf](https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/Earls_Colne_Privacy_Notice_2026.pdf)

IT Policy in place: Partially met

IT Policy published: Partially met

*It is noted that the Council have adopted an Information and Data Protection Policy and a Communications Policy. Whilst these documents cover essential parts in the Council's operations, they do not fully cover the requirements of the Information Technology Policy in Assertion 10.*

*To fully comply with the new requirements it is recommended that the Council consider adopting the model IT policy from NALC (link below). It is noted that whilst there is no requirement to publish the policy on the Council's website, it is good practice to do so.*

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/nalc-publishes-new-it-policy-template-to-support-parish-and-town-councils-in-meeting-governance-standards.html>

**Recommendation:** *To adopt the NALC model IT Policy.*

Data Protection Policy in place: Yes

Data Protection Policy published: Yes

Link: [https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/information\\_and\\_data\\_protection\\_policy\\_-\\_2020-21.pdf](https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/information_and_data_protection_policy_-_2020-21.pdf)

Accessibility Statement in place: [Yes](#)  
Accessibility Statement published: [Yes](#)  
Link: <https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/accessibility>

Generic Council email addresses for officials in place: [Yes](#)

Under **The Accounts & Audit Regulations** councils must publish on their website:

Audited AGAR:

[2025 Annual Return, Section One Published – Yes](#)  
[2025 Annual Return, Section Two Published – Yes](#)  
[2025 Annual Return, Section Three Published – Yes](#)

Notice of period for the exercise of public rights (2025)

[Published – Yes \(minute ref: 7/8/2025 – 25/29.c\)](#)  
[https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/16-Making-provision-for-the-exercise-of-public-rights-2024-25%20\(1\)%20no%20date%20due%20to%20cancelled%20meeting.pdf](https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/16-Making-provision-for-the-exercise-of-public-rights-2024-25%20(1)%20no%20date%20due%20to%20cancelled%20meeting.pdf)

Notice of Conclusion of Audit (2025)

[Published – Yes](#)  
<https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/Notice%20of%20conclusion%20of%20audit1.pdf>

Period of Exercise of Public Rights

Publication Date: [8/8/2025](#) Start Date: [11/8/2025](#) End Date: [19/9/2025](#)

*It is noted that the period for the exercise of public rights did not include the first 10 days of July 2025. As the External Auditor has pointed out, the Council has not met the publication requirements.*

***Recommendation:*** *To ensure that the Notice period includes the first 10 days of July 2026 for the 2025 – 2026 audit.*

Under the requirements of the **Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 13(2b)** council are required to display AGARs for the five years 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-2025 on their website.

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3 (Audited)
2020 - 2021	<a href="#">No</a>	<a href="#">No</a>	<a href="#">No</a>
2021 - 2022	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>
2022 - 2023	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>
2023 - 2024	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>
2024 - 2025	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>

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*The Council have met the publication requirements with the exception of the publication of the AGAR for the financial year 2020-2021. It is noted that for the 2026-2027 audit, the 2020-2021 AGAR is not required to be published.*

Under the **Transparency code for smaller authorities**, smaller councils with income/expenditure over £200,000 should publish on their website from 1 April 2015:

Expenditure items over £500 (quarterly) published: **Yes – in the minutes**

Procurement data published (contracts exceeding £5,000): **Not published**

Grants awarded to voluntary, community or external bodies published: **Yes – contained within the minutes.**

Senior salaries (over £50,000) published: **N/A**

Land and car parks published: **Not published – contained within the asset register**

Publication Scheme published: **Yes**

Link: [https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/Earls\\_Colne\\_Publication\\_Scheme.pdf](https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/uploads/Earls_Colne_Publication_Scheme.pdf)

*The Council is not subject to the requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller councils with income/expenditure exceeding £200,000. Whilst it is good practice to follow the Code, it is not mandatory.*

### **Budgetary controls** supporting documents

Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and

Precept: £177,000 (2025-2026)

Date: 18/12/2024 (Ref: 3.a)

Precept: £182,650 (2026-2027)

Date: 28/1/2026 (Ref: 25/120.b)

*Satisfactory budgetary procedures are in place. The precept was agreed in full council and the precept decision and amount has been clearly minuted. The Clerk ensures the council are aware of responsibilities, commitments, forward planning and the need for adequate reserves. Budget papers are prepared to ensure councillors have sufficient information to make informed decisions. Budgets are monitored during the year.*

### **Income controls**

Precept and other income, including credit control mechanisms

*All were found to be in order. Income controls were checked and a sample of income received and banked cross referenced with the Cash Book and bank statements.*

**Cash**

Associated books and established system in place

*There have been no cash payments made during the year of audit.*

**Payroll controls**

PAYE and NIC in place where necessary.  
Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures  
Records relating to contracts of employment and pensions

PAYE System in place: **Yes**  
Employer's Reference: **245/SE34111**  
P60s issued: **Yes**

*The Council continue to operate RTI in accordance with HMRC regulations. Supporting paperwork is in place and P60s have been produced as part of the year end process.*

*Eligible employees have joined the nominated pension scheme. The last date of re-declaration of compliance was 30/9/2025.*

*Contracts of Employment and subsequent salary agreements are in place for all staff employed by the Council.*

**Asset control**

Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets  
Cross checking on insurance cover

*A separate asset register is in place. Values are recorded at cost value. The total value of assets are recorded at £1,495,280. The figure in the asset register corresponds with the figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR.*

**Bank Reconciliation**

Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements

*All were in order. Bank Reconciliations are carried out regularly. The bank statements reconciled with the end of year accounts and bank reconciliations for all accounts.*

*Bank Balances at 31 March were confirmed as:*

<i>Lloyds Community</i>	<i>xxxx2863</i>	<i>£8,736.69</i>
<i>Co-op Current</i>	<i>xxxx0533</i>	<i>£0.00 (account closed 21/1/2026)</i>
<i>Co-op Savings</i>	<i>xxxx0533-53</i>	<i>£0.00 (account closed 21/1/2026)</i>
<i>Unity Trust</i>	<i>xxxx5040</i>	<i>£60,939.21</i>
<i>Unity Trust</i>	<i>xxxx1802</i>	<i>£81,067.11</i>

*It is noted that the Council resolved to move their banking to Unity Trust at a meeting held on 18/11/2025 (Ref: 25/78).*

*The Council had no outstanding loans at the year end.*

## Reserves

General Reserves are reasonable for the activities of the Council  
Earmarked Reserves are identified

*The Council have adequate general reserves of £122,554.28 and have identified earmarked reserves of £23,568.82 in their year end accounts.*

## Year-end procedures

Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents  
Verifying sample payments and income  
Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate.

*End of year accounts are prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis. It is noted that this is the second year that the Council have exceeded the £200,000 threshold. Should income or expenditure exceed £200,000 in the 2026-2027 financial year the Council would be required to produce their accounts on an Income and Expenditure basis, as opposed to a Receipts and Payments basis.*

## Sole Trustee

The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee

*The Council is not a sole trustee.*

## Internal Audit Procedures

*The 2024-2025 Internal Audit report was considered by the Council at a meeting held on 17/7/2025 (Ref: 25/21).*

*There was no evidence that a review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit was carried out during the year of audit. It is noted that the Council are due to adopt a Statement of Internal Controls during the 2026-2027 financial year. If the model document is adopted then the review of effectiveness of the Internal Audit will fall within this.*

**Recommendation:** *To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit.*

*Heelis & Lodge were appointed as Internal Auditor at a meeting held on 17/3/2026 (Ref: 25/148.b).*

## External Audit

*The Council formally approved the 2025 AGAR at a meeting of the full Council held on 7/8/2025 (Ref: 25/29.a and b).*

*The External Auditor's report was considered at a meeting held on 18/11/2025 (Ref: 25/75), where the Council considered the outstanding audit issues from the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 audits.*

*The following matters were brought to the attention of the Council:*

## 2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with 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.

- The smaller authority failed to approve the AGAR in time to publish it by 1 July 2025, the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and did not disclose this by answering 'No' to Section 1, Box 1.
- The smaller authority has disclosed that it complied with laws, regulations and proper practices during the year 2024/25, by answering 'Yes' to Section 1, Assertion 3. However, as was reported last year, we are aware that it failed to do this as it did not publish explanations for 'No' responses to the 2023/24 governance assertions and therefore should have answered 'No' to this Assertion. It has also disclosed that it took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit, by answering 'Yes' to Section 1, Assertion 7, which, on the basis of the above, is not correct.
- Section 1, Assertion 5 has been incorrectly completed. Information received from the smaller authority highlights that risk management arrangements were not reviewed and approved by the authority as a whole during the year. As a result, this assertion should have been answered 'No'.
- Section 2, Box 8 does not agree to the bank reconciliation and the smaller authority has failed to provide an adequate explanation for the difference between them.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2025/26 for the exercise of public rights, since the period for the exercise of public rights did not include the first 10 working days of July. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2026/27.

The smaller authority has not provided:

- an adequate explanation for the variance between the prior and current year values in Box 4 of Section 2.

*It is noted that the Council are addressing the matters raised in the External Auditor's report.*

### **Additional Comments/Recommendations**

- The Annual Parish Council meeting was held on 21/5/2025. The first item of business was the Election of Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- It is noted that there have been ongoing challenges with the Council for a number of years. To this extent, as part of the audit, I would like to recognise the progress made in the 2025-2026 financial year and the 2026-2027 financial year to date to make significant and positive change.
- There are no additional comments/recommendations to make in relation to this audit.
- I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for their assistance during the course of the audit work and the quality of documentation provided for the audit.



**Heather Heelis**  
**Heelis & Lodge**  
5 June 2026

Contact details : 1 Hembling Terrace, Mill Lane, Suffolk, IP13 0PP  
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# HEELIS&LODGE

Local Council Services • Internal Audit

[www.heelisandlodge.co.uk](http://www.heelisandlodge.co.uk)

## INVOICE

**To:**

Earls Colne Parish Council  
Village Hall  
York Road  
Earls Colne  
Essex  
CO6 2RN

Invoice No: HL9738

Date: 5 June 2026

Details	Quantity	Amount (£)	Total (£)
To carry out Internal Audit for Earls Colne Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2026 £200,001 - £300,000 banding	1	440.00	440.00
Total			440.00

**Please make cheques payable to: H J Heelis**

**Bank Details: Account 92002930 Sort Code 40-47-80**

**NB Change to bank account details**

Terms – 14 days

Thank you.

HEELIS&LODGE

Contact details : 1 Hembling Terrace, Mill Lane, Suffolk, IP13 0PP  
Tel: 07732 681125  
Email: [heather@heelis.eu](mailto:heather@heelis.eu)

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# **EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **CO-OPTION POLICY**

Adoption Version 2026



## Document Control

Document	Co-option Policy
Version	1.0
Owner	Parish Clerk
Approved By	Full Council
Adoption Date	To be completed
Review Frequency	Annual
Next Review	May 2027

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out the procedure for filling vacancies by co-option and ensures a fair, transparent and consistent process.

1.2 The policy is based upon the Local Government Act 1972, associated electoral legislation and recognised sector good practice.

1.3 The power to co-opt councillors rests with the Council.

### 2. When Co-option May Be Used

2.1 Co-option may be used where a casual vacancy arises and no election is claimed, or where insufficient candidates stand for election.

2.2 The Council will comply with all statutory requirements and notifications administered by Braintree District Council.

2.3 Where an election is not required, the Council may fill the vacancy by co-option.

### 3. Publicising the Vacancy

Following confirmation from Braintree District Council, the Council will publicise the vacancy and invite applications. The application period will be determined by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Council meeting schedule.



#### **4. Eligibility**

Applicants must satisfy the statutory qualifications for office and confirm that they are not disqualified under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 or other relevant legislation.

#### **5. Application Process**

Applicants must complete the application form at Appendix A. Application forms will be circulated to councillors before the meeting. Personal information will be processed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.

#### **6. Consideration of Applications**

Applicants may be invited to give a short presentation and answer questions from councillors. Councillors should have regard to the information supplied and the guidance contained in Appendix B.

#### **7. Voting**

Voting shall be by show of hands in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. A successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of members present and voting. Further rounds of voting may be undertaken where necessary until a majority is achieved. The Chairman may exercise a casting vote where permitted by Standing Orders.

#### **8. Appointment**

The successful applicant must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before acting as a councillor and complete a Register of Interests within 28 days.

#### **9. Equality and Data Protection**

Earls Colne Parish Council welcomes applications from all eligible persons and will process information in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

#### **10. Review**

This policy shall be reviewed periodically and following any significant legislative change.



## Appendix A – Co-option Application Form

Full Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	

### About You

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### Reasons for Applying

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### Skills, Experience and Community Involvement

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## Eligibility Declaration

- Registered local government elector for the parish
- Occupied land or premises in the parish during the previous 12 months
- Principal or only place of work in the parish during the previous 12 months
- Lived in the parish or within three miles during the previous 12 months
- Not disqualified from holding office as a parish councillor

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix B – Guidance for Applicants

The following criteria are intended as guidance and do not form a formal scoring matrix.

Attribute	Examples
Commitment to Community	Interest in local issues and improving Earls Colne
Communication	Ability to listen, engage and work constructively with others
Team Working	Ability to work positively with councillors, staff and partners
Integrity	Commitment to the Nolan Principles and the Code of Conduct
Availability	Willingness to attend meetings, training and community events
Knowledge & Skills	Experience, local knowledge or professional expertise that may benefit the Council



# **EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **LONE WORKING POLICY**

2026 Edition



## Document Control

Document	Lone Working Policy
Version	1.0
Owner	Parish Clerk
Approved By	Full Council
Adopted	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
Next Review	May 2027

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the arrangements for protecting employees who work alone or without direct supervision. It applies to office staff, grounds staff, the Village Hall Caretaker and any employee undertaking duties on behalf of Earls Colne Parish Council.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to work undertaken in Council offices and chambers, Council-owned buildings, workshops, outdoor locations, inspections, opening and closing facilities and any other duties where an employee may work alone.

### 3. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working includes situations where an employee works by themselves and cannot be directly supervised or receive immediate assistance from colleagues.

### 4. Responsibilities

- The Council will provide a safe system of work so far as reasonably practicable.
- The Clerk will ensure suitable risk assessments are completed and reviewed.
- Employees must follow safe working procedures and report concerns, incidents and hazards.
- Employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others.

### 5. Lone Working Risk Assessment

The Council shall maintain a separate Lone Working Risk Assessment covering office-based work, grounds and community work, workshop activities, caretaker duties and any other lone working activities. Employees must comply with all control measures identified within the assessment.



## **6. Office and Council Chamber Lone Working**

- Office staff may work alone where it is considered safe to do so.
- Staff should have access to a telephone or mobile phone.
- Meetings with members of the public should be arranged with personal safety in mind.
- Staff should report any concerns regarding security or personal safety.

## **7. Grounds and Community Staff**

- Employees working outdoors may work alone where permitted by the risk assessment.
- Staff should carry a mobile phone where practicable.
- Work locations and expected return times should be known to a colleague where appropriate.
- Accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported.

## **8. Village Hall Caretaker**

- The Caretaker may work alone when opening, closing, inspecting, preparing or securing facilities.
- The Caretaker should have access to a mobile phone.
- Particular care should be taken when opening and locking buildings.
- Any security concerns, incidents, defects or safeguarding concerns should be reported promptly.

## **9. Workshop Lone Working**

- Workshop activities must follow risk assessments and safe systems of work.
- High-risk machinery or hazardous tasks must not be undertaken alone unless specifically authorised and risk assessed.
- The workshop should be kept secure and tidy at all times.

## **10. Opening, Closing and Out-of-Hours Working**

- Employees may occasionally work early mornings, evenings or weekends.
- Employees should ensure they have access to a mobile phone.
- Employees should remain alert to personal safety risks when entering or leaving buildings.
- Buildings must be secured in accordance with Council procedures.



## **11. Communication Arrangements**

The Council does not require a formal check-in/check-out system for routine lone working activities. Communication arrangements should be proportionate to the activity being undertaken.

The Council maintains an employee WhatsApp group to facilitate operational communication and employee welfare. Employees may use the group to advise colleagues of their location, report delays, raise health and safety concerns and communicate urgent operational matters. The WhatsApp group is supplementary and does not replace emergency procedures or formal reporting arrangements.

- Informing a colleague of work location and expected return time.
- Maintaining access to a mobile phone.
- Using work schedules or shared calendars where appropriate.
- Agreeing contact arrangements for higher-risk activities.

## **12. Violence, Aggression and Personal Safety**

Employees should not place themselves at risk when dealing with members of the public, contractors, hirers or other third parties.

- Aggressive, threatening or abusive situations should be avoided where possible.
- Employees should withdraw and seek assistance where necessary.
- Incidents involving abuse, intimidation, threats or violence must be reported.

## **13. Emergency Procedures**

- Employees should contact emergency services where necessary.
- Accidents and incidents must be reported in accordance with Council procedures.
- Employees should be familiar with emergency contact arrangements.

## **14. Training**

Employees will receive appropriate information, instruction and training relevant to lone working activities and associated risks.

## **15. Related Policies**

- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policy
- Member/Officer Protocol
- Data Protection Policy



- Equality and Diversity Policy

## **16. Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically and following any significant incident, change in working arrangements or legislative change.