



# MIDDLETON CHENEY Parish Council

Parish Meeting Room  
Main Road  
Middleton Cheney  
Banbury  
OX17 2LR

## PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING Venue: Parish Meeting Room 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 Minutes

Present:  
Cllr Alan Youel, Chairman  
Cllr Mark Allen  
Cllr Kristian Burgess  
Cllr Peter Cook

Cllr Ruth Hoose  
Cllr Nina Truman  
Pip Davis, Clerk and RFO  
3 members of the public

**Meeting started 19:15PM**

### **24/098 Apologies for absence**

The Chairman acknowledged the resignation of Nigel Mills and thanked him for his valued contributions.  
Apologies received: Cllr Washer, Cllr Solesbury-Timms  
Absent: Cllr Jerrams Coughtrey  
On the proposition of Cllr Allen it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the apologies for absence.

### **24/099 Election of Chairman for the Year 2024/2025**

On the proposition of Cllr Allen and seconded by Cllr Burgess it was **RESOLVED**: to elect Cllr Youel as Chairman.

### **24/100 Election of Vice Chairman for the Year 2024/2025**

On the proposition of Cllr Hoose and seconded by Cllr Youel it was **RESOLVED**: to elect Cllr as Vice-Chairman.

### **24/101 OPEN MEETING**

The Chairman made a statement regarding the requirement for Councillors to sign and abide by the Code of Conduct, and made comments on acceptable behaviour of residents.  
No public representations.

### **24/102 Members' declaration of interest in items on the agenda**

None.

### **24/103 Minutes of Annual Meeting of the Parish Council of 9th May 2023**

On the proposition of Cllr Allen it was **RESOLVED**: To ratify approval of minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council 2023.

### **24/104 To confirm Standing Committees of the Council**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to confirm the Standing Committees: Finance and Policy, Human Resources, Highways & Planning for year 2024/25, standing down Amenities Committee.

### **24/105 Appointment of members to existing committees**

No amendments to Committees.

### **24/106 Review of Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation**

On the proposition of Cllr Cook it was **RESOLVED**: to adopt Terms of Reference, pending amendment of title to omit "working groups"; to adopt the Scheme of Delegation.

### **24/107 Review and adoption of Standing Orders - attached**

On the proposition of Cllr Allen it was **RESOLVED**: to confirm the Standing Orders for 2024/25.

### **24/108 Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses - attached**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to approve and adopt the document detailing the arrangements for 2024/25.

# MIDDLETON CHENEY

## Parish Council

**24/109 Review of Code of Conduct – attached**

No changes.

On the proposition of Cllr Cook it was **RESOLVED**: to adopt the Code of Conduct.

**24/110 Review Effectiveness of Internal Audit - attached**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to receive the Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit.

**24/111 Review Financial Risk Assessment - attached**

On the proposition of Cllr Allen it was **RESOLVED**: to adopt the Financial Risk Assessment:

**24/112 Determine the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council – attached**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to adopt the calendar of meetings for the next Council year.

**24/113 Next meeting 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 - Full Council Meeting.**

**Meeting closed: 19:56PM**

**Signed:**



# MIDDLETON CHENEY Parish Council

Parish Meeting Room  
Main Road  
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OX17 2LR

## PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING Venue: Parish Meeting Room 15<sup>th</sup> April, 7:15pm Minutes

### 24/071 Apologies for absence

Apologies received: Cllr Washer

On the proposition of Cllr Allen it was **RESOLVED**: to approve apologies for absence,

### 24/072 OPEN MEETING

Non-agenda items.

A resident raised a question regarding the Annual Parish Meeting. A resident raised a question regarding a planned community event.

**Open meeting closed 19:18PM**

### 24/073 Members' declaration of interest in items on the agenda

None

### 24/074 Approval of minutes of full council meeting 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

On the proposition of Cllr Solesbury-Timms it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the minutes of meeting 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

### 24/075 Receipt of committee minutes - attached

On the proposition of Cllr Mills it was **RESOLVED**: To receive the approved minutes of meetings 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Draft minutes of Finance and Policy Committee meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> April noted by members.

### 24/076 Planning – letters, decisions and applications - attached

To consider planning applications as outlined:

[2024/1619/FULL](#) Rectory Farm, Unit 5-6, Waters Lane, Middleton Cheney, OX17 2<sup>ND</sup>

On the proposition of Cllr Solesbury-Timms it was **RESOLVED**: to **object** on the following grounds: Outside village confines, encourages more development further in open countryside, contrary to the Local Plan.

Potential loss of retail and commercial space.

[2024/1243/FULL](#) 12 The Moors Drive Middleton Cheney OX17 2PN No Comment

[2024/1556/TPO](#) 11 Chacombe Road Middleton Cheney OX17 2QS No Comment

### 24/077 Reports from Ward Councillors

Cllr Rosie Herring present:

Noted high volume of case work for Middleton Cheney, to include:

- Derelict bungalow.
- Highways – Phil Larrat and inspector – to complete a walk round of the village.
- Dands Drive disability parking.
- EV charge points near New Inn.
- Potholes, access down Waters Lane. Waters Lane construction agreements – blocked by works vehicles, mud on road etc.
- Footpath AU/015 along Chenderit. Lexton Wall.
- Consultations – flood risk on the website, Transport – Buses (Brackley and South Northants), Local Plan.
- Funding – start-up funds for businesses. Tesco better start bids – schools etc.

Cllr Solesbury-Timms present:

WNC have replaced a litter bin reported a significant time ago. Reminder to the community to report potholes on Fix My Street.

### 24/078 West Northamptonshire The Local Plan Regulation 18 Draft (2024)

Information to be published on the website / noticeboards, circulated on social media and newsletter.

Highways and Planning Committee to meet and form a response to recommend to next meeting.

### 24/079 Community Governance Review Stage 1, Purston Proposal (attached)

On the proposition of Cllr Solesbury-Timms it was **RESOLVED**: to support Review Stage 1 proposal for Purston to join Middleton Cheney Parish.

# MIDDLETON CHENEY

## Parish Council

### **24/080 Budget and Expenditure report Qtr 4 2023-24.**

On the proposition of Cllr Allen it was **RESOLVED**: To receive budget and expenditure reports for Jan-Mar 2024.

### **24/081 Royal British Legion Events 2024**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to spend £250 for Band accompaniment to 3 RBL and Council partnership events.

### **24/082 Remembrance Parade**

Requirements to be agreed between Clerk, Cllr Cook and Cllr Solesbury-Timms to apply for a TTO and obtain quotes.

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to approve use of a management company for traffic during Remembrance Parade.

### **24/083 Cemetery requirements**

Clerk to liaise with WNC for support. Clerk to work with Cllrs Burgess, Truman, Cook, Solesbury-Timms and Youel to identify potential sites, to meet in May.

### **24/084 VAS new posts requests**

Clerk to seek licences (or quotes for costs of-) and seek quotes for post installation.

### **24/085 Accessibility of the village**

The Council did not proceed the Highways and Planning Committee's proposal to investigate way of public survey.

### **24/086 Village maintenance**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to replace the street lamp column, pending decision of cover from Insurers. Further quotes to be sourced for the wall.

To consider village maintenance matters including replacement of damaged street lamp column at Arrow Close and stone wall at Parish Meeting Rooms.

### **24/087 Street naming consultation**

William Morris Way to be put to Ward Councillors.

### **24/088 Induction of New Councillors**

Deferred to next meeting.

### **24/089 Street lamp stress test**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the spend of £800 to stress test up to 10 columns as identified by the Clerk and Cllr Hoose.

### **24/090 Christmas Lights update**

To receive updates regarding planning for Christmas Lights installation for December 2024.

### **24/091 Authorisation of Payments – (attached)**

On the proposition of Cllr Burgess it was **RESOLVED**: To approve and provide dual signatory on payments scheduled March 2024 – April 2024.

### **24/092 Matters for information**

Damage to Carousel play equipment, reported to police and made safe.

### **24/093 Exclusion of press and public**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: To exclude Press and Public from the meeting for agenda items 24/094, 24/095, 24/096 pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted to consider.

### **24/094 Appraisal feedback**

HR to review questions raised and scrutinise details highlighted by Council.

### **24/095 Employment hours**

On the proposition of the Chairman it was **RESOLVED**: to increase Clerk's contracted hours to 30/week, review in September.

# MIDDLETON CHENEY

## Parish Council

**24/096 Representation to resolution process.**

On the proposition of Cllr Burgess it was **RESOLVED**: Pursue resolution process within agreed parameters.

**Meeting reopened to Press and Public 22:14PM.**

**24/097 Next meeting**

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 – Finance and Policy Committee.

6<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Annual Parish Council Meeting.

20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Full Council Meeting.

**Meeting closed 22:14PM.**

**Signed:**



# MIDDLETON CHENEY Parish Council

Parish Meeting Room  
Main Road  
Middleton Cheney  
OX17 2LR

## FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Location: Parish Meeting Room

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024, 7PM

### MINUTES

#### Present:

Cllr Alan Youel, Chairman

Cllr Nigel Mills

Cllr Richard Solesbury-Timms

Cllr Peter Cook

Meeting started: 19:02PM

1. **Resolution to approve apologies for absence.**

Apologies received: Cllr Mark Allen, family commitments, Cllr Ruth Hoose, family commitments.  
On the proposition of Cllr Youel, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of interest.**

None

3. **Approval of minutes of meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (attached).**

On the proposition of Cllr Mills it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the minutes of meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

4. **Pipe Band for Hood commemoration event in May**

- To consider a quote and make a recommendation to full council.

Quote received in line with expectations (£250), all other details in hand. Sea Cadets leading event organisation, possible senior officer attendance **Recommend council approve expenditure and give full support to event**

5. **Review of policies**

- Subject access request – Cllr Youel **Complete** new pages added to website
- Website accessibility Statement – Cllr Allen **Ongoing**
- Lettings and Hire – Cllr Mills to finalise and bring back to next F&PC meeting
- Induction of new Councillors – Cllr Mills **Recommend for adoption.**

Agreed consideration of priorities and allocation of further policies for review at next F&PC meeting

6. **Review for Annual Parish Council Meeting**

- Arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses – Discussed and reviewed, identified possible omission of Scouts & WI **Recommend full council discuss.**

- Code of Conduct **Recommend for adoption.**
- Effectiveness of Internal Audit **Recommend for adoption.**
- Financial Risk Assessment **Recommend for adoption.**
- Internal Control Objectives not met AGAR 2022-23 and AIAR explanations – Discussed all not met

and considered AIAR explanations **Committee satisfied appropriate measures taken, and all issues adequately addressed.**

7. **Urgent Business .**

- Cllr Cook reminded his review and subsequent comments regarding Standing Orders, Cllr Youel to liaise with Clerk to agree appropriate action.

Signed

**SIGNED** ✓

Date

1st May 2024.



# MIDDLETON CHENEY

## Parish Council

Parish Meeting Rooms  
Main Road  
Middleton Cheney  
OX17 2LR

### FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Location: Parish Meeting Room

1st May 2024

Minutes

Present: Cllr Mark Allen  
Cllr Peter Cook

Cllr Ruth Hoose  
Pip Davis

#### Meeting started 19:07PM

1.	<b>Resolution to approve apologies for absence.</b> Apologies received: Cllr Alan Youel, Cllr Nigel Mills, Cllr Richard Solesbury-Timms On the proposition of Cllr Cook it was RESOLVED: to approve apologies for absence.
2.	<b>Declarations of interest.</b> None
3.	<b>Approval of minutes of meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 (attached).</b> On the proposition of the Chairman it was RESOLVED: to approve minutes of meeting 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024.
4.	<b>Utility services provision.</b> Recommendation: full Council signs to YU Energy for energy supply for streetlights and Parish Meeting Rooms
5.	<b>Review of policies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lettings and Hire policy – Recommendation to Full Council accepting amendments as discussed.</li></ul>
6.	<b>Review for Annual Parish Council Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standing Orders – Recommendation to Full Council including some amendments</li><li>• Financial Regulations – deferred until NALC publication is released.</li><li>• Terms of Reference – Recommend to Full Council</li><li>• Scheme of Delegation – Recommend to Full Council</li></ul>
7.	<b>Urgent Business.</b> Hearing loop to go back on the agenda to clarify decision.

Signed:

Dated:



**MIDDLETON CHENEY**  
Parish Council

Parish Meeting Room  
Main Road  
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OX17 2LR

**Highways and Planning Committee Meeting**  
**Venue: Parish Meeting Room**  
**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May, 09:30AM**  
**Minutes**

Present: Cllr Peter Cook, Chairman  
Cllr Ruth Hoose

Cllr Richard Solesbury-Timms  
Cllr Kristian Burgess  
Pip Davis, Clerk and RFO

**HP2412 Apologies for absence**  
Apologies received: Cllr Rachel Washer  
Absent: T Edwards.

**HP2413 Members' declaration of interest in items on the agenda**  
Cllr Solesbury-Timms declared an interest in HP2414 as a WNC Ward Councillor.

**HP2414 West Northamptonshire The Local Plan Regulation 18 Draft (2024)**  
The Committee to form a response to recommend to next full Council meeting (20<sup>th</sup> May 2024).

To send a response on behalf of Middleton Cheney, summary:

Appreciate the longevity of the document providing there is good opportunity for reviews.

Support the prioritisation of development on available brown field sites over green site developments.

2 references to Middleton Cheney – both in reference to Green Infrastructure.

Network of multifunctional green and blue spaces.

To keep a rural boundary / corridor between Middleton and larger local towns (i.e. Banbury, Brackley)

Concern around urban sprawl.

Green matters – would encourage more regarding renewables and incentives.

More regarding solar / heat source pumps incentives for domestic installations.

Bio-diversity net growth.

Safe green perimeter of Middleton Cheney?

Council appreciate and support that there are no current plans for industrial development in the area.

Committee to send a representative to the local consultation briefings if possible.

**HP2415 Urgent business**  
None

**HP2416 Next meeting**  
20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Full Council Meeting  
Highways and planning 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

**Meeting closed 10:20**

**Signed:**





# MIDDLETON CHENEY

## Parish Council

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### HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

**Location: Parish Meeting Room**

**14<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

#### AGENDA

Clr Mark Allen  
Clr Ruth Hoose  
Clr Nina Truman

Clr Alan Youel  
Pip Davis, Clerk and RFO.

#### Meeting started: 19:05PM

In the absence of an elected Chair, on the proposition of Clr Youel it was **RESOLVED**: to elect Clr Mark Allen to Chair the meeting.

1.	<b>Resolution to approve apologies for absence</b> None received.
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b> None.
3.	<b>Approval of the minutes of the meeting 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b> On the proposition of the Chairman it was RESOLVED: to approve minutes of meeting 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024.
4.	<b>Resolution to exclude the public</b> On the proposition of the Chairman it was RESOLVED: that, pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act <u>1960</u> , and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for agenda items 5, 6, and 7.
5.	<b>Operations management</b> Recommendation regarding services requirement to be made to full Council.
6.	<b>Staff management</b> Recommendation to full Council regarding salary payments.
7.	<b>Resolution processes</b> HR Committee to update full Council and discuss outcomes.
8.	<b>Urgent Business</b> None

Meeting closed 20:59PM

Application Number	Comments due	Location	Proposal	Parish Council Comments
<b>Applications Determined</b>				
<a href="#">2024/1123/NMA</a>	Approved	Land at Waters Lane Middleton Cheney	Non-Material Amendment to WNS/2022/2252/MAR [Variation of conditions 1, 3, 6, 7, 12, 15 and 16 of application WNS/2021/1815/MAR (Application for Reserved Matters Consent for Layout, Scale, Appearance, Landscaping and Access in respect of a Residential Development comprising 54 no. dwellings (pursuant to outline planning permission S/2020/0441/MAO)) to amend previously approved plans (amended plans and description)]. Amendment sought: update the approved Salcey House Type Plans.	
<a href="#">2024/2299/NMA</a>	Approved	Land South East Of Thorpe Road Middleton Cheney	Non-Material Amendment to WNS/2023/0484/NMA [relating to S/2019/1953/MAF (Development of 32 homes and associated access and infrastructure)]. To reflect the site layout amendments as approved under WNS/2023/0484/NMA and incorporate sustainability requirements (PVs) under Building Regulations Approved Document Part L 2022, conservation of Fuel and Power.	
<a href="#">WNS/2022/0978/MAF</a>	Approved	Land South Of Thenford Road Middleton Cheney	Variation of condition no 2 (Approved Plans and Details) and no 8 (Engineering Drawings) to S/2020/0183/MAF (Erection of 20 no. dwellings) to vary the property types to facilitate the delivery of 100% affordable housing	
<a href="#">2024/0457/FULL</a>	Approved	40 Horton Road Middleton Cheney OX17 2LG	Removal of lean to conservatory and replace with single storey dual pitched extension to side	
<a href="#">2023/8038/FULL</a>	Approved	37 Main Road Middleton Cheney OX17 2QT	Change of use of offices to dwelling	
<a href="#">2023/7345/LBC</a>	Approved	37 Main Road Middleton Cheney OX17 2QT	Listed building consent for change of use of offices to dwelling	
<a href="#">2023/7444/FULL</a>	Approved	10 Glovers Lane Middleton Cheney OX17 2NU	Single storey front extension, insertion of new window and increasing the width of an existing window in the first floor east elevation.	
<a href="#">2024/0441/FULL</a>	Approved	109 Main Road, Middleton Cheney, OX17 2PD	Proposed Roof with Associated Internal and External works and Staff welfare modifications.	
<a href="#">2024/1971/LDP</a>	Approved	5 Kings Stile Middleton Cheney OX17 2QZ	Lawful Development Certificate ( Proposed) Demolish existing rear conservatory and create a single story flat roof extension	

<a href="#">2024/1182/TPO</a>	Approved	52 Main Road Middleton Cheney OX17 2LT	Tree C on the map. It is a TPO Yew tree. The work is a simple trim, to reduce growth over the drive, shed and public right of way in front of the house. The plan is to trim up to 1 meter from over hanging branches.	
<a href="#">2024/1897/NMA</a>	Approved	Land East of Waters Lane, Middleton Cheney	Non-material amendment to WNS/2021/1815/MAR (Variation of conditions 1, 3, 6, 7, 12, 15 and 16 of application WNS/2021/1815/MAR (Application for Reserved Matters Consent for Layout, Scale, Appearance, Landscaping and Access in respect of a Residential Development comprising 54 no. dwellings (pursuant to outline planning permission S/2020/0441/MAO) to amend previously approved plans. (amended plans and description)) to amend plans of the approved houses in order to accommodate PV panels.	
Application Number	Comments due	Location	Proposal	Parish Council Comments
Applications Received				
<a href="#">2024/2454/TCA</a>		3 Glovers Lane Middleton Cheney OX17 2NU	Reduce 1 x Birch & 1 x Prunus Section Fell to Ground Level 2 x Apple	
<a href="#">2024/2411/FULL</a>		18 Longburges Middleton Cheney OX17 2QD	Rear single storey and side garage extension	
<a href="#">2024/1939/FULL</a>		24 Queen Street Middleton Cheney OX17 2NP	Widening the access to an existing driveway, including removing part of the boundary wall and paving the driveway with block paving	
<a href="#">2024/1243/FULL</a>		12 The Moors Drive Middleton Cheney OX17 2PN	First floor extension to front elevation and two storey extensions to side and rear elevations	

# Financial Regulations

## 2024

MIDDLETON CHENEY  
Parish Council



Middleton Cheney Parish Council  
 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

<b>Category:</b> Policy, Statutory	<b>Status:</b> Adopted
<b>Responsible:</b> Full Council, RFO	<b>Adoption minute ref:</b>
<b>Applicable to:</b> Council	<b>Adoption date:</b>
<b>Version:</b> 1.0	<b>Next review:</b> 05/2025

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## General

These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.

Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

In these Financial Regulations:

- 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
- "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
- "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
- 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
- *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
- 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
- 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the council;
- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

**The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of [£2,000; and

## Risk management and internal control

**The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**

The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by [the council], a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.

**At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**

**The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**

- ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
- ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
- prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
- allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
- identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and
- ensure division of responsibilities.

At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair member of the mandate shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council .

Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

## Accounts and audit

All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

**The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**

- day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;

The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

**The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**

**Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.

The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.

The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:

- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
- reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
- can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the management or control of the council

Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

## Budget and precept

**Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its [council tax (England)/budget (Wales)] requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**



Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee at least annually in October for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council.

No later than October each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all [receipts and payments/income and expenditure] for the following financial year, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the finance committee not later than the end of October each year.

The draft budget with any committee proposals, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the finance committee and a recommendation made to the council.

Having considered the proposed budget, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of December for the ensuing financial year.

**Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**

The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of** January and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.

Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

## Procurement

**Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.

**For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**

Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:

For contracts estimated to exceed £12,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

**For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation<sup>1</sup> regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**

For contracts greater than £3000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes; where the value is between £500 and £2000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.

For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

**Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council or Finance Committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council (or Chair of the Finance Committee, for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT.
- a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £3000 excluding VAT
- in respect of grants, the Finance committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.
- the council for all items over £3000;

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council or make any contract on behalf of the council.

No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference except in an emergency.

In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for

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<sup>1</sup> The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

## Banking and payments

The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Barclays. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO. Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO.

Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

All payments shall be made by online banking or debit card, in accordance with a resolution of the council or a delegated decision by an officer, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.

For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council may authorise in advance for the year.

A copy of this schedule of regular payments shall be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is made - to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.

A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council for information only.

The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:

- i. any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.

- ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
- iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of [the council], where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.
- iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.

The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

## Electronic payments

Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.

All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.

No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to an authorised signatory.

In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.

An authorised signatory shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online .

A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting.

With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.

Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and

any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk and a member. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.

Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

## Cheque payments

Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members

A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council meeting. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council or Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.

## Payment cards

Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to [the council] and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council.

Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

## Petty Cash

The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

- a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
- b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on any schedule of payments presented for approval.

## Payment of salaries and allowances

**As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**

**Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**

Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or relevant committee.

Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.

Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.

Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by 2 members of the Council to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.

Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

## Loans and investments

Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

## Income

The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

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

Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made quarterly at least annually at the end of the financial year.

Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.

## Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

## Stores and equipment

The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section

Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

## Assets, properties and estates

The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.

The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

## Insurance

The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.

The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the Finance Committee of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to [the council] at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the finance committee.

All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

## Charities

Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

## Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded



and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

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## Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order [insert reference of the council's relevant standing order] and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

Version	Author	Date	Changes	Status	Minute ref
1.0	P Davis	15/05/2024	New NALC template	Draft	

## Internal Audit Report

(to be read in conjunction with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

Name of council:	Middleton Cheney Parish Council		
Name of Internal Auditor:	John Marshall	Date of report:	22.04.2024
Year ending:	31 March 2024	Date audit carried out:	22.04.2024

*Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. It is important to note that managing the council's internal controls is a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and councillors and it would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of the council in order to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to and seen by me. **The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to a qualified audit opinion.***

### To the Chairman of the Council:

I met with Pip Davis, Clerk & RFO on 22 April to conduct the year-end internal audit that by mutual agreement was conducted via email and an online meeting platform. I would thank Pip for her assistance in carrying out the audit.

Prior to our meeting, I examined the publicly available information displayed on the council's website including the council's policies, procedures, agendas, minutes, financial and other records. I sought evidence that the previous year's Internal and External Audit reports had been properly reported to and where necessary acted upon by the Council; they had. I then examined the council's arrangements for the management and control of its business in the areas of bookkeeping, due process (ie compliance with the 'proper practices' as set out in the Practitioners' Guide\*), risk management, budget setting and monitoring, payroll, asset register, bank reconciliations, internal control and year-end procedures including the display of information and the exercise of public rights.

Where necessary, I requested and was provided with supplementary evidence to enable me to reach a conclusion regarding the enquiries I am required to make as set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR) that forms part of the council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). This supplementary information was obtained through inspection of documents and questioning at the audit meeting.

I noted just one audit item. Whilst the precept is displayed on the website, the council's approved budget is not; the statement that "Further details of the Parish Council's budgets for the Financial Year can be obtained from the Parish Clerk" that historically, has been present for many years is not appropriate.

Notwithstanding that single observation, there has been a significant improvement in the council's performance over the last 12 months. Based on the information made available to me, I am satisfied that in all significant respects, the internal control objectives are being delivered and achieved to a standard adequate to meet the council's needs. As a consequence, I am pleased to be able to report that I have answered 'yes' to all relevant

questions in the AIAR. This is greatly to the credit of the council's dedicated members supported by their competent and diligent Clerk.

John Marshall, CILCA  
Internal Auditor to the Council  
07505 139832  
wjm.marshall1@gmail.com

The figures submitted in the Annual Return are:

	Year ending 31 March 2023	Year ending 31 March 2023
1. Balances brought forward	353,113	332,581
2. Annual precept	136,680	133,728
3. Total other receipts	24,846	73,985
4. Staff costs	38,007	52,708
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
6. Total other payments	144,051	99,458
7. Balances carried forward	332,581	388,128
8. Total cash and investments	332,581	388,128
9. Total fixed assets and <u>long term</u> assets	455,311	456,713
10. Total borrowings	0	0

\*The 'proper practices' referred to in Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 are set out in the current version of the *Practitioners' Guide* available for free download from this page:

<https://www.pkf-littlejohn.com/services-limited-assurance-regime-useful-documents-and-links>

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Middleton Cheney Parish Council

www.middletoncheney.org.uk

PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, 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 2023/24 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. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with 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 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
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 (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		

No petty cash

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

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: 22/04/2024  
 NORTHANTS CALC LTD  
 INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE  
 Name of person who carried out the internal audit: W J McL. Marshall, CiLCA  
 INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: *W J McL Marshall* Date: 22/04/2024

\*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).

# Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 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 £6.5 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 2023/24

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 2024**.
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 2024**. 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 2024
  - 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 2023/24

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 **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 2024 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 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 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) 2023/24

- 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 initialed.
- 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 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- 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 as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- 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.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten 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 2024**.

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 2024</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)

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

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 2024, that:

	Agreed		
	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 took all reasonable steps to assure 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>

**\*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 2023/24 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	353,113	332,581	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	136,680	133,728	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	24,846	73,985	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	38,007	52,708	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.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	144,051	99,458	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	332,581	388,128	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	332,581	388,128	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>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	455,311	456,713	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.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 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**

*P. Davis* **SIGNATURE REQUIRED**

Date

18/04/2024

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**



# MIDDLETON CHENEY

## Parish Council

Parish Meeting Room  
Main Road  
Middleton Cheney  
OX17 2LR

<b>Category:</b> Finance	<b>Status:</b>
<b>Responsible:</b> Clerk/RFO	<b>Adoption minute ref:</b>
<b>Applicable to:</b> Finance Committee	<b>Adoption date:</b>
<b>Version:</b> 1.0	<b>Next review:</b>

### Internal Controls Checklist

TEST	Y/N	Observation Recommendation	Action
<b>1. Proper Bookkeeping</b>			
Has income/expenditure ledger been updated?	Y		
Are all RBS cashbooks maintained and up to date?	Y	MARCH 30th	
Is the cashbook regularly balanced?	Y		
<b>2. Payment Controls</b>			
Is the Responsible Financial Officer aware of specific duties?	Y		
Have items or services above the de minimis amount been competitively purchased?	Y	WHERE POSSIBLE.	
Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?	Y		
Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?	Y	PENDING YEAR END	
Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?		N/A	
<b>3. Income Controls</b>			
Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?	Y	DELAYED BANKING	
Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification?			
Are security controls over cash adequate and effective?		N/A	
<b>4. Payroll Controls</b>			
Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions?	N	UNDER REVIEW	
Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?	Y		
Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council?	Y		
Have PAYE/NI been properly operated by the council as an employer?	Y		
Have wageslips been provided?	Y		
Have pension obligations been met?	Y		
<b>5. Asset Controls</b>			
Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care?	Y	UPDATED 23/26	


Are the assets and Investments registers up to date?	Y		
Record of deeds, articles and land register references available?	Y		
Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?	Y	NEED RE-EVALUATION	
<b>6. Risk Management</b>			
Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity?	N	RECENT REVIEW (2NT AUDITOR)	
Do minutes record the Council carrying out an annual risk assessment?	Y	APPROVED TUE. 7 <del>11</del> 11/24	
Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?	N	UNDER REVIEW	
Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?	Y		
Minutes initialled, each page identified and overall signed?	Y		
Regular reporting and minuting of bank balance?	Y		
Does the Council have any cash investments?	Y	STOCK BOND (HISTORIC)	
If 'yes', has the Council considered the Government's investment guidance?	N		
<b>7. Budget Controls</b>			
Has the council properly minuted and approved precept demand?	Y		
Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?	Y		
Budget against spend comparisons provided regularly to the Council with bank reconciliation?	Y		
Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?	N		
Level of general reserves within Proper Practice? ie between 3 and 12 months running costs	Y		
Are earmarked reserves balanced and up to date?	Y		
<b>8. Bank Reconciliation</b>			
Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion?	Y		
Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?	N		
Is the value of investments held summarised on the reconciliation?	N	(STOCK BOND)	
<b>9. Year End Procedures</b>			
Are year end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)?	Y		
Do bank statements agree with the cashbook?	Y		
Has the council reviewed any unfulfilled objectives of the previous AIAR?	Y	# FINANCE POLICY MEETING 3/4/24	
Has the council reviewed any exceptions in the latest AGAR?	N/A	AWAITING COMPLETION. 2023/24	
<b>10. Due Process</b>			
Standing Orders reviewed and adopted for current year?	Y		
Financial Regulations reviewed and adopted for current year?	Y		
Adequate internal controls for payments? (Do arrangements for all payments satisfying complex madate?)	Y		
Register of Member Interests held and provided to Democratic services?	Y		
Summons signed, and issued to councillors with agenda, with 3 clear			

days' notice?	Y	
Notice of meeting displayed with 3 clear days' notice in a conspicuous place in the parish?	Y	
Committee terms of reference reviewed and adopted?	Y	PENDING MAY 24 REVIEW
Scheme of delegation reviewed and adopted?	Y	PENDING MAY 24 REVIEW
<b>11. Housekeeping</b>		
Invoice folder completed for previous month?	Y	NA.
Authorisation of Payments signed and kept with invoices?	Y	
All bank statements filed correctly?	Y	
Paying-in book current?	Y	PENDING LATEST PAYMENTS
Have policies and procedures been tracked and checked for renewal?	Y	
Planning files tracked and updated?	Y	
Register of Burials up to date?	Y	
Map of Cemetery up to date?	Y	DIGITAL MAPS.
Cemetery risk assessment completed?	Y	
Allotment invoices / receipts provided? (quarterly)	Y	PENDING
Allotment risk assessment completed?	Y	
Play area inspection completed?	Y/N	ANNUAL PENDING WEEKLY YES
Employee appraisals completed?	Y	

6.

**point transaction spot check**

Transaction ID	H250X	FROSTS	RYDA SECURITY
Recorded in ledger	Y	✓	✓
Timely payment	Y	RECEIPT ✓	DIRECT DEBIT
Dual signatory provided	Y	N/A	Y
Payment approval minuted	24066	N/A	24018
Invoice / receipt provided	SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT	Y	Y
Reconciliation, minute and invoice value match	26th MARCH 24	29/2/24	31/JAN/24

Signed:   
Internal Control Checklist Monitor  
Middleton Cheney Parish Council

No. of councillors	10	Clerk:	PZP
Quorum	Y	RFO (if different)	
Electorate	PENDING	ICCM	MR RICHARD SOLESBURY
Precept	132,935	Date of review	31/5/24
Gross budgeted income	40,255	Quarter reviewed	QUARTER 4

Signed:   
Clerk, RFO  
Middleton Cheney Parish Council

## West Northants Local Plan - Brief for Middleton Cheney Parish Council on Public Consultation Response

### ISSUE

1. Full Council tasked the Highways and Planning Standing Committee (H&PSC) to prepare a response to the "West Northamptonshire Local Plan Regulation 18 draft" Public Consultation before the next meeting of the Full Council on 20 May 2024.

### TIMING

2. This task is Priority; WNC require responses to the Public Consultation by midnight 2 Jun 2024.

### MIDDLETON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

3. The H&PSC comprising Cllrs Cook, Hoose, Solesbury-Timms and Burgess along with the Clerk studied the draft Local Plan prior to meeting on 7 May 2024 to discuss observations/findings and to develop a draft outline response for consideration at the Full Council Meeting to be held on 20 May 2024.

4. The draft document is long and detailed and is analogous to 'War and Peace'. The pack contained over 1000 pages. Nonetheless, Middleton Cheney is mentioned only once in the document in the context of a Green Infrastructure<sup>2</sup> Corridor extending from Middleton Cheney via Brackley to Buckingham. This gives (perhaps falsely) the impression that Middleton Cheney will be left alone for a period.

5. The H&PSC recommends that, although there is scarce mention of Middleton Cheney in the Draft Local Plan, the Parish Council should respond in as full a way as possible to this Public Consultation. This approach would help ensure our credibility and integrity as a contributor to the resolution of wider issues.

6. As part of the consultation, we have also been asked to respond to WNC's request for input to the following:

a. Call for Sites. WNC has opened up applications for its Call for Sites. This means that if there is land which we consider to be available and able to help deliver development to meet housing and employment needs, or the needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Show-people, we can nominate these sites to WNC .

b. Local Green Space Nominations. WNC is asking for Local Green Space nominations. Green Spaces will be designated and protected from development in the Local Plan if they meet certain criteria. We can nominate Local Green Spaces either through our response to this consultation or by using the usual Council local Green Space Nomination Form 2024.

7. The main points of the suggested outline draft are as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> The Plan defines Green Infrastructure as a 'Network of multi-functional green (land) and blue (water) spaces, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity. Green infrastructure includes assets such as parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, churchyards, field boundaries, archaeological sites, street trees, allotments and private gardens.

- a. Thank WNC for the opportunity to comment on the draft and agree with the principles of merging 4 plans into one and extending the Plan period out to 2041.
- b. Commend the 'Brownfield First' strategy.
- c. Explain that the Parish Council would like to see Green Incentives such as Biodiversity Net Gain, installation of solar panels and heat source pumps in residential properties encouraged more.
- d. Emphasize the importance of a 'Local Gap' to prevent any urban spread from Banbury impinging on Middleton Cheney.
- e. Welcome the absence of plans to develop light industry in the area (eg warehousing) which will affect other areas in WNC.
- f. Submit 'Nil Return' to the Call for Sites.
- g. Submit Local Green Space Nominations for the following (to be approved at Full Council):
  - (1) Playing Field and specifically the children's play area.

14. The H&PSC also suggests that Full Council considers Green Space Nominations for the additional areas as follows:

- a. Stanwell Park.
- b. The "D" on Archery Road.
- c. The Bull Ring on Bull Baulk.
- d. Village Green.
- e. Land behind BT Building.

Peter Cook  
H&PSC



“The BIG HELP OUT is a national initiative which is running 7-9<sup>th</sup> June.

We would like to try and get village groups and residents involved in this initiative and do a number of projects around the village and encourage volunteering. Some of those projects may be on Parish Council ground so we would like the support of the parish council to do these.”

**Utility services provision.**

- To consider quotes for electricity supply for street lighting and Parish Meeting Rooms and make a recommendation to full council.

Comparisons and recommendations sought through Clear Utility Solutions:

Northants CALC has an energy buying partnership with Northamptonshire-based Clear Utility

Solutions (CUS). Not only does it save member councils money, but through preferring green energy suppliers it saves carbon too. It also provides a source of market news so that parish and town councils can keep up with what's happening in the energy markets

<b>CURRENT</b>		<b>Provider 1</b>						
<b>Fuel</b>	<b>SITE</b>	<b>MPAN</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Fixed Term</b>	<b>Unit Rate (p/kWh)</b>	<b>Standing Charge (p/day)</b>	<b>Day Consumption</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Cost</b>
Electricity	Unmetered Street Supply	1100039906726			50.180	0.000	11233	£5,636.72
Electricity	Unmetered Street Supply	1100039906717			50.180	0.000	433	£217.28
Electricity	Xmas Lights	1170001366848			50.180	0.000	1642	£823.96

		<b>Provider 2 (Council Basket Supplier)</b>						
<b>Fuel</b>	<b>SITE</b>	<b>MPAN</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Fixed Term</b>	<b>Unit Rate (p/kWh)</b>	<b>Standing Charge (p/day)</b>	<b>Day Consumption</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Cost</b>
Electricity	Unmetered Street Supply	1100039906726	29/04/2024	36 Months	28.662	21.701	11233	£3,298.81
Electricity	Unmetered Street Supply	1100039906717	29/04/2024	36 Months	24.748	21.701	433	£186.37
Electricity	Xmas Lights	1170001366848	29/04/2024	36 Months	24.748	21.701	1642	£485.57



Provider 3								
Fuel	SITE	MPAN	Start Date	Fixed Term	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Standing Charge (p/day)	Day Consumption	Estimated Annual Cost
Electricity	Unmetered Street Supply	1100039906726			32.520	60.000	11233	£3,871.97
Electricity	Unmetered Street Supply	1100039906717			28.950	60.000	433	£344.35
Electricity	Xmas Lights	1170001366848			28.950	60.000	1642	£694.36

CURRENT Provider 1								
Fuel	SITE	MPAN	Start Date	Fixed Term	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Standing Charge (p/day)	Day Consumption	Estimated Annual Cost
Electricity	Parish Meeting Rooms	1100015736622			26.290	30.000	7501	£2,081.51

Provider 2 (Council Basket Supplier)								
Fuel	SITE	MPAN	Start Date	Fixed Term	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Standing Charge (p/day)	Day Consumption	Estimated Annual Cost
Electricity	Parish Meeting Rooms	1100015736622	13/06/2024	28 Months	21.976	73.860	7501	£1,918.01

Provider 3								
Fuel	SITE	MPAN	Start Date	Fixed Term	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Standing Charge (p/day)	Day Consumption	Estimated Annual Cost
Electricity	Parish Meeting Rooms	1100015736622			25.500	60.000	7501	£2,131.76

