Agenda item 7a - Members Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit Procedures and Controls report

Present: Cllrs J Davison, FJ Smith, A Bourke-Waite, Town Clerk C Mills and Assistant Town Clerk E Byfield.

1. The following documents had been distributed and reviewed prior to the meeting:

   - Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control (February 2019)
   - Review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit – Meeting the Standards (February 2019)
   - Risk Management Risk Assessment (Jan 2019)
   - Various other risk assessments

2. Insurance policy

   In preparation for the end of the existing 3 year policy with Zurich, competitive tenders were obtained from three different companies. We endorse the Officers recommendation that the insurance is renewed on a new 3 year agreement with Zurich, the premium being £4,658.65 in year 1.

3. Recommendations to Royston Town Council at its meeting to be held on 25th March 2019.

   3.1 The Council’s insurance policy is renewed with Zurich on a new 3 year agreement.

   3.2 The Fidelity Guarantee insurance cover should remain at £500,000.

      (The current guarantee is £500,000. As for last year, the balance of reserves and precept exceeds £500,000 by around £50,000 only for a few months.)

   3.3 The above documents (highlighted in italics) are adopted as a true statement of procedures undertaken by the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk. The review concluded that risk is significantly mitigated by the procedures currently in place.

      Note minor changes were recommended to some of the risk assessments.

   3.3 Based on a review of the above documentation and the recent exemplary internal and external audits, the Councillors’ review recommends that Royston Town Council consider that the internal audit procedures and controls at Royston Town Council are effective and meet its needs.

Cllr J Davison

Cllr A Bourke-Waite

Cllr FJ Smith
Royston Town Council
Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control
February 2019

Scope of Responsibility
The Accounts and Audit regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The authority needs to scrutinise the actions it has taken during the year, and the decisions it has made, and satisfy itself that it has acted properly within its powers and in accordance with any relevant Regulations.

Royston Town Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council’s functions and includes arrangements for the management of risk. It falls on the Councillors to exercise a reasonable degree of control over financial matters. Particularly as, during the completion of the Annual Return, Councillors have agreed the following: We acknowledge as the members of Royston Town Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements.

Internal Control Procedures

Cash Book/Bank Reconciliations
The cash book is kept electronically using SAGE software, and kept up to date from original documents – receipts, invoices, payments. The cash book is reconciled to bank statements and a bank reconciliation is presented to monthly Finance committees for approval and signing by the Chairman. The balances reported can be traced back to the expenditure approved in the previous meeting via the minutes. The original bank statements are reviewed and signed by a member of the Town Council quarterly.

Standing Orders
The Town Council has adopted Standing Orders based on the NALC model. The Standing Orders are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary via approval by the Town Council. Standing Orders were updated in September 2018.

Financial Regulations
The Town Council has adopted Financial Regulations based on the NALC model. The regulations are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary via approval by the Town Council. Financial Regulations were updated in May 2018. A Responsible Financial Officer has been appointed and this was recorded in the Council minutes.

Clerk to the Council
The Council has appointed a qualified Clerk to the Council. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks.

Order/Tender Control
Financial Regulations refer to procedures relating to tenders and orders.

Legal Power
A proper legal power is identified for each expenditure. The Council holds the General Power of Competence as resolved on 14th May 2018.
**Payment Controls**

Delegated powers on expenditure are made to the Finance Committee at the first Full Council meeting of each year. All payments are reported to the Finance Committee monthly for approval via the accounts for payment included on the agenda. Two members of the council and the Town Clerk must sign every cheque or order for payment. Signatories are agreed annually by the Council. The signatories consider each cheque against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil. All authorised cheque signatories are Members/Officers of the Council. An accounts for payment is attached to the minutes of the meeting. The Clerk/Assistant Clerk maintain control of the cheque books at all times. The Council has a commitment to two loan repayments per year and this is included in the annual budget. The Clerk/Assistant Clerk check adequate funds are held in the current account before payments are made on a monthly basis.

**VAT Reclaims**

The Clerk/Assistant Clerk ensure that all invoices are addressed to the Town Council. The Clerk/Assistant Clerk ensure that the correct amount of VAT is reclaimed in the year. VAT is shown separately in the cash book and is reclaimed correctly on petty cash. VAT is reclaimed quarterly and the VAT return is prepared by the Assistant Clerk and checked by the Town Clerk.

**Income Controls**

All income is received and banked in the council’s name in a timely manner and reported to the council.

**Budgeting/Precept/Reserves**

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves the level of precept for the following year at its January meeting. The Clerk requests the agreed precept from the precepting authority (NHDC). The Clerk/Assistant Clerk ensure that the amount of precept received is correct and received when due. Income and expenditure reports are given to the Finance Committee monthly and significant variances are highlighted. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes of the meeting. The Council has a reserves policy introduced in 2016. Reserves are assessed and agreed annually during the budget process. Earmarked reserves are assessed during the budgeting process and are agreed annually by the Council.

**Employees/Salaries**

All employees are issued with a written statement of employment particulars within two months of the start of their employment. All contract details, pay and conditions are agreed by Finance Committee, minuted, and employees are paid by those decisions. Salaries are processed electronically using SAGE software and the Assistant Clerk ensures that all RTI returns are made to HMRC as required. PAYE and NI are paid as required. Staff who meet the criteria are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme.
**Risk Management**

The Risk Management Assessment is reviewed annually as part of the annual review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The policy is submitted to Full Council for approval.

Insurance cover is reviewed regularly for adequacy and updated when necessary.

**Asset Control**

An asset register is maintained detailing all assets valued in excess of £100. The existence and condition of assets is checked, as a minimum, on an annual basis.

**Audits**

Members carry out an annual review of the effectiveness of internal audit procedures. Findings are reported to Full Council.

Independent internal audit is carried out twice a year. The auditor provides a report to the Council on records, procedures, systems, internal control, regulations and risk management and will complete page 5 of the annual return.

The Council submits an annual return to the external auditor within permitted timescales.

**Other controls**

Data Protection Registration is held and the Council has appointed a DPO.

Fidelity Guarantee insurance is held.

Electronic data backup arrangements are in place.

Bank balances and investments are checked to ensure their safety and performance.

An investment strategy is adopted annually.

**Purpose of the System of Internal Control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. Risks should be identified, evaluated, prioritised and managed.

The Council will regularly review its systems and controls and will review its risk management policy annually.

**Recommendation**

That the Town Council consider this statement of the internal control procedures implemented to ensure that they are effective. This statement was reviewed during Members review of the internal effectiveness of audit controls.

This statement of the effectiveness of internal control procedures was considered by Royston Town Council at its meeting on 25th March 2019 and was approved by the Council as a true statement of procedures undertaken by the Clerk/RFO/Assistant Clerk.

Chairman

RFO/Clerk

Approved by Royston Town Council 25th March 2019
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Internal Controls <em>(bold indicates areas where work is needed)</em></th>
<th>Internal Audit Assurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>Protection of physical assets owned by the council – buildings, furniture, equipment etc. (loss or damage).&lt;br&gt;Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability).</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Buildings insured. Value increased annually by RPI. Valuation on buildings for insurance purposes.&lt;br&gt;Town Hall valuation done by NHDC March 2012.&lt;br&gt;Assets register kept and, where there is a change, updated for all properties. From 2013 minimum asset value for register £100.</td>
<td>Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.&lt;br&gt;Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover. Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the council providing services or amenities to the public (public liability).</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Annual review of risk and the adequacy of cover.&lt;br&gt;Public liability insurance held (£10m)&lt;br&gt;Ensuring the robustness of insurance providers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The risk of consequential loss of income or the need to provide essential services following critical damage, loss or non-performance by a third party (consequential loss).</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Valuation of 30 Kneesworth Street done December 2013.&lt;br&gt;Reserves held in accordance with reserves policy.&lt;br&gt;Loss of rent/income cover included in insurance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Security of buildings, equipment etc.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Caretaker or responsible person checks security of Town Hall when hirers leave. CCTV installed at all entrances to the Town Hall. CCTV installed at Market Hill Rooms.&lt;br&gt;CCTV notices displayed and policy held.&lt;br&gt;Museum staff secure building when leaving.&lt;br&gt;Museum has an audible alarm and CCTV.</td>
<td>Compliance contract in place for Town Hall, Museum and Market Hill Rooms. This is in the process of being updated with a new provider and will be for a three year period from February 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance of buildings etc.</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Buildings currently maintained on a Maintenance Plan.&lt;br&gt;Health &amp; safety checks on equipment and buildings done monthly by contractor, any defaults are rectified.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liability</td>
<td>Risk to third party, property or individuals.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Insurance in place. Cover £10m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ad hoc provision of amenities/facilities for events to local community groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>Risk assessments on all properties carried out yearly and updated as required/when necessary. Risk assessments of individual events such as Christmas lights and May Fayre carried out as necessary.</td>
<td>The Internal Control Review Team reviews all Risk Assessment documents and insurance schedules as part of their check on effectiveness. A report on the Effectiveness of the Internal Controls is then submitted to Full Council for adoption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Markets management</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health &amp; Safety Policy reviewed yearly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car Parks – Market Place &amp; Angel Pavement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management
Professional services (planning, architects, accountancy, design, etc).

Car park surfaces checked twice weekly for defects & records kept.
Contractors employed to put up Christmas lights and test fixings when installing them.
Public Liability insurance in place (£10m).

Checked by internal auditor and confirmed as part of the annual return.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantations management</td>
<td>Comply with Employment Law and regulations.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Clerk is member of SLCC Advisory Group Employer Liability insurance in place (£10m) Council is a member of HAPTC Professional HR advice sought where necessary</td>
<td>Internal auditor checks compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer Liability</td>
<td>Comply with Inland Revenue requirements</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Advice from IR and Sage when required. Internal auditor checks books 6 monthly and external auditors carry out annual audit. VAT advice received from an independent advisor.</td>
<td>Internal auditor checks compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of Staff and Visitors</td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>General risk assessment checks of all properties and office working conditions as required. Health and Safety Policy in place – updated as required. Health and Safety posters displayed in all properties Signing in/out book in operation. Adoption of codes of conduct for members and an employee handbook. CCTV installed at all entrances to the Town Hall and the main entrance at Market Hill Rooms. CCTV notices displayed. CCTV policy adopted.</td>
<td>Internal auditor checks compliance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Legal Liability

| Proper and timely reporting via the Minutes | M | Council receives and approves Minutes of meetings held. Minutes made available to press and public at the Town Hall and on web site. Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public. Responding to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection. Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept in safekeeping. Also from April 2010 copy of all minutes kept electronically | Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are available, and the basis of the powers recorded and correctly applied. |

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to local councils.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitations. Ensure Council has the power to act. Meeting the requirements for the Local Council Award scheme or other accreditation. Monitoring arrangements by the council regarding the Foundation Level.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Backups done daily and stored in fireproof safe. Cloud storage currently being investigated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Data Protection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss or theft of personal data (GDPR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Finance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Finance Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Banking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payroll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring all requirements are met under HM Revenue and Customs Notices and regulations (Income Tax and National Insurance).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **L**: All cash monies received receipted and invoices marked paid. Banked weekly. Petty cash balanced monthly. Market takings banked weekly. Insurance cover review ensures adequacy of Fidelity guarantee insurance. Cover £500,000.
- **M**: Banking arrangements reviewed. Reserves invested between two banks. Investment policy currently being drawn up, will be adopted and published.

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### Area | Internal Controls (bold indicates areas where work is needed) | Internal Audit Assurance
---|---|---
Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty (fidelity guarantee) | All cash monies received receipted and invoices marked paid. Banked weekly. Petty cash balanced monthly. Market takings banked weekly. Insurance cover review ensures adequacy of Fidelity guarantee insurance. Cover £500,000. |
**L**: Review and testing of arrangements by auditor to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. Checked by internal auditor and reviewed by Councillors annually at the Annual Audit Review.

Catastrophic Bank failure | Banking arrangements reviewed. Reserves invested between two banks. Investment policy currently being drawn up, will be adopted and published. |
**L**: Banking reviewed annually by Councillors and reported to Finance Committee. Finance Committee to agree any changes.
Monthly reconciliation prepared by Assistant Town Clerk and checked by TC and reported to Finance Committee.

Invoices initialled when cheques are signed by Councillors. Three signatories on cheques required. Authorised cheque signatories confirmed annually and recorded in the minutes.

Internal Auditor visits and checks 6 monthly. External Audit year-end accounts.

Standing orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts for services or the purchase of capital equipment. Reviewed annually. Annual review of contracts.

Reporting on performance by suppliers/providers/contractors as required.

Monthly scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for approval of expenditure. Adoption of and adherence to codes of practice for procurement and investment.

Clear statements of management responsibility for each service.

Developing systems of performance measurement to scrutinise performance against targets.

Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption. Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements.

Review of internal controls in place and their documentation. Review undertaken by councillors and reported to Full Council.

Internal Auditor
Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to Full Council.

Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions.

Payroll checked
Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers.

Debtor and creditor turn checked.

Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Financial controls and records</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Monthly reconciliation prepared by Assistant Town Clerk and checked by TC and reported to Finance Committee. Invoices initialled when cheques are signed by Councillors. Three signatories on cheques required. Authorised cheque signatories confirmed annually and recorded in the minutes. Internal Auditor visits and checks 6 monthly. External Audit year-end accounts. Standing orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts for services or the purchase of capital equipment. Reviewed annually. Annual review of contracts. Reporting on performance by suppliers/providers/contractors as required. Monthly scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for approval of expenditure. Adoption of and adherence to codes of practice for procurement and investment. Clear statements of management responsibility for each service. Developing systems of performance measurement to scrutinise performance against targets. Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption. Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements.</td>
<td>Review of internal controls in place and their documentation. Review undertaken by councillors and reported to Full Council. Internal Auditor Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to Full Council. Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions. Payroll checked Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers. Debtor and creditor turn checked. Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ensuring the proper use of funds granted to local community bodies under specific powers or under The General Power of Competence as adopted by Council on 14th May 2018, minute number 16/19.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Comply with Customs and Excise Regulations</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Use help line when necessary. VAT payments and claims calculated by Assistant Town Clerk and checked by Town Clerk. Submitted via accounts package. Process quarterly. Training for the Responsible Officer and Assistant Town Clerk in matters of VAT and other taxation issues as necessary. VAT advice sought from an independent advisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept Adequacy of Reserves – General &amp; Earmarked</td>
<td>M L</td>
<td>Income and Expenditure against budget reported to Finance Committee monthly. Considered at review of final accounts and budget setting. Budget Working Party review draft Budget for following year. Finance Committee receive detailed draft budget in the late autumn. To discuss and amend. Annual Precept derived directly from this. Presented to Full Council Dec/Jan for approval. Budget reviewed by internal auditor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Complying with borrowing restrictions</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Public Works Loan Board facility agreed for the purchase of the Market Place - £300,000. Repayments included in annual budget. Loan taken out on the 24.7.14 for a period of 25 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>Response to emergency situations not covered by NHDC</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Emergency plan/policy in place – pack circulated to Management Team. Pack updated as required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE ISSUED TO ALL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

In accordance with the duty required by section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Royston Town Council hereby publishes its written statement of general policy.

Statement of general policy:

• Royston Town Council accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees, contractors, volunteers and others who may be affected by the activities of the Council.

• The Council will provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities;

• We will consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;

• We will provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;

• We will ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and provide them with adequate training;

• We will work to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;

• We will review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Adopted by Royston Town Council on 25th March 2019 Minute number

Review date March 2021, or earlier if legislation dictates.
Responsibilities

1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the council and for compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Regulations made under the Act and the Occupiers Liability Act is that of Royston Town Council. The Town Clerk is responsible for this policy being carried out at all the Council's premises and the Assistant Town Clerk will be responsible as her assistant.

2. Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Town Clerk. It is also the Town Clerk's responsibility to ensure that the Council is up to date with relevant health and safety legislation and to ensure the Council has adequate insurance cover at all times.

3. To ensure health and safety standards are maintained/improved, the Town Council is responsible for the following areas:

   Town Hall
   Market Hill Rooms
   Royston Museum and Art Gallery
   Priory Centre and Town Council Offices
   Royston Cave
   Market Place

4. Employees responsibilities:
   - Comply with this Health and Safety policy and fully observe the safety rules
   - Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety and use protective equipment provided
   - Report any safety hazard within their work area or malfunction of any equipment
   - Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and fully conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them
   - Observe fire evacuation procedures and be aware of fire routes and equipment
   - Observe all laid down procedures concerning processes, material and substances used
   - Conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the workplace and refrain from horseplay or practical jokes
   - Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy statement)

Consultation with employees

We will consult directly with employees on matters that affect their health and safety. Employees are encouraged and required to raise any health and safety issues concerning their employment on an informal basis with the Town Clerk or their line manager at any time. When undertaking risk assessments, employees who are affected will be consulted throughout the process.

Information and Instruction

- There are Health and Safety Law posters displayed at:
  Priory Centre kitchen
  Town Council offices
  Royston Museum and Art Gallery
  Town Hall
  Market Hill Rooms

- Health and Safety advice is available from the Local Council Advisory Service.
• The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all employees working at locations under the control of other employers are given relevant health and safety information.

• All employees shall receive the necessary training, instruction and information to carry out their roles in compliance with legislation and best practice.

**Risk Assessment**

Identification of hazards, assessment of the risk and the establishment and enforcement of control measures are the cornerstones of effective risk management.

Risk assessments will be undertaken by:
- Town Clerk - Plantations, War Memorial, Risk Management
- Administration Officer – Town Council offices, Priory Centre, Town Hall, Market Hill Rooms
- Museum Curator/Manager – Museum
- Market Manager - Market Place
- Administration Assistant – Allotments
- Cave Manager – Royston Cave

The findings of the risk assessments will be reported and action required to remove/control risks will be approved by the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that the action required is implemented. The Town Clerk will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.

Risk assessments will be reviewed annually or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest. All risk assessments are reviewed annually by Councillors during the internal review of the effectiveness of audit controls. The risk management assessment will be approved by Full Council in accordance with statutory requirements.

**Accidents, First Aid and work-related ill health**

First-Aid boxes are kept on the following premises:
- Town Hall
- Priory Centre
- Market Hill Rooms
- Museum
- Town Hall Offices
- Royston Cave

The appointed persons authorised to take charge when there is an injury or emergency are:
- Administration Officer/Administration Assistant – Town Hall/Priory Centre/Offices
- Caretaker – Town Hall/Priory Centre
- Curator – Museum
- Market Manager – Market Place
- Cave Manager – Royston Cave

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book. Accident books are kept at the Town Council Offices (caretaker’s room and reception), Museum and the Market Manager also has one.

The Town Clerk is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

**Competency for tasks and training:**

Induction training and job specific training for all employees will be provided or arranged by the Town Clerk or Museum Curator. Ongoing training needs will be identified, arranged and monitored by employee line managers. In addition to training, regular staff updates will be
issued to employees which will cover changes in legislation, introduction of new work processes and new work equipment.

**Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures**

- Exit corridors, landings and stair cases must be kept clear at all times.
- All staff must be fully conversant with the "Fire Alert" system displayed in the offices.
- Fire extinguishers should be visually inspected in the Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms by the caretaker, in the Museum by the Curator and maintained and checked regularly by Mears compliance contractors and the Fire Protection Service.
- Fire Alarm call points are tested alternatively on a weekly basis and tested by the Fire Protection Service on an annual basis.
- Emergency evacuation procedures must be tested six monthly.
- Flammable materials must not be stored, even for a temporary period, in the offices or corridors, unless the storage is in a fire resistant structure such as a metal cupboard or bin, clearly marked "Flammable Materials".
- Emergency lighting should be tested regularly in the Town Hall, Priory Centre, Market Hill Rooms & Museum by the compliance contractors and the Fire Protection Service.
- The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that fire risk assessments are undertaken and implemented.

**Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in any of the buildings.

**Control of Substance Hazardous to Health**

Staff handling such substances will be trained as per COSHH guidelines. Staff should be aware of the need to take precautions when using hazardous substances in confined spaces especially flammable or toxic materials or adhesives. Staff will be responsible for checking any materials being used or brought onto any premises owned by Royston Town Council and they must ensure that they are stored safely and correctly. A COSHH register is held and must be updated when required.

**Display Screen Equipment**

All display screen equipment will be monitored to ensure compliance with regulations. All workstations will be assessed whenever their configuration is altered. New equipment will be assessed after installation.

**Lone Working**

Royston Town Council recognises the risks posed to any of its employees required to work alone and will take all necessary precautions to minimise those risks.

**Lone working in the Town Council offices & Museum**

a) Staff working alone have the responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.
b) Staff working alone should ensure the office door is secure and entry to the building by visitors is within their control. Staff should check credentials if they are not satisfied as to the bona fides of any visitor acting in an official capacity (Electricity suppliers, water suppliers etc.).

c) Staff should be trained in emergency procedures (fire, etc.)

d) Under no circumstances should staff use ladders if working alone.

e) Should a member of staff working alone become ill or sustain an accident and requires medical attention they should (if able) ring the emergency services. Staff should undergo First Aid training if deemed necessary.

**Lone working on site**

a) Staff should be in ready contact with the office through a mobile phone or similar.

b) A separate risk assessment should be prepared for any unusual or potentially dangerous site visit (i.e. construction site, gravel pit, etc.).

c) Staff should be trained on how to handle potentially dangerous situations. These may include aggressive behaviour, being approached for valuables, etc.

d) Officers using their own vehicles should ensure their vehicle is serviced, maintained and correctly insured.

**Manual Handling**

The 1992 Regulations apply to lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying and moving by hand or by bodily force. More work injuries are caused through “handling goods” than any other single action. Manual lifting is included in this and an incorrect technique can cause serious injury.

Never attempt to lift anything beyond your capacity. If in doubt get a second person or others to help. If mechanical aids are provided, use them.

The Council will identify tasks that present a manual handling hazard, assess the risks, implement precautions and provide training to all staff at risk.

**Electricity and Electrical Equipment**

The Council will:

- Seek advice from a competent person for all work on electricity and only use such competent persons on electrical work.
- Ensure our fixed installation is safe and inspect it where appropriate.
- Test portable equipment (PAT testing) on an annual basis using a competent professional to do so
- Require all employees to undertake a visual check on all electrical work equipment prior to use. Staff should not carry out repairs on electrical equipment.

**General Working Environment**

1. Office temperature must reach a minimum of 60.8F after the first hour of working time and be maintained between 60.8F and 68F throughout the working day.

2. Office equipment whether manually or electrically operated, must not be used by unauthorised, untrained personnel.
3. High shelves should only be reached through the use of steps provided for that purpose. It is dangerous to stand on desks and chairs, particularly those fitted with castors and this should be avoided at all times.
4. Care must be taken to avoid ingestion, inhalation and skin contact of all chemical substances. Spillage must be cleaned up immediately while observing all precautions.
5. Step-ladders which are used to gain access to heights must be in good condition and free from defects.
6. Floors must be treated only with approved non-slip products. The method of application and quantities to be applied should be that recommended by the manufacturer.
7. Employees should report:
   - Structural faults which appear dangerous.
   - Floor coverings, etc. which cause a tripping hazard.
   - Faulty gas, electric, fittings and equipment.
   - All accidents, however small, should be reported.

**Contractors and Visitors**

The Council shall ensure that where contractors or sub-contractors are engaged by the Town Council, they must maintain effective control of themselves and those working under them so as to ensure they comply with the responsibilities and duties of the Health and Safety at Work Act. (See notice to contractors – appendix 1)

The Council shall ensure that those not in the employment of the council, including the general public are not exposed to risks to their safety or health when on council premises or at events organised by or on behalf of the Town Council.

**Legislation consulted on compiling this policy:**

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (1999 & 2006 Amendment)
- The Personal Protective Equipment At Work Regulations 2018
- The Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002
- The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 2006
- The Health & Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997
- The Smoke-Free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulation 2006
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Work at Height Regulations 2005
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 2013
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations (HSIER) 1996
Notice to Contractors

For Royston Town Council to comply with Health and Safety Legislation, all outside contractors employed to do work on Council Premises are to be made aware of the expected requirements related to health and safety. A contractor accepting a contract from the Council shall be deemed to have agreed to comply with the following requirements:

1. As a contractor, you will supply and ensure that your employees wear and use protective equipment or anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

2. You and your employees will ensure that all equipment, plant machinery and apparatus brought onto or used on the Council premises are safe and without risk to health, and are maintained to a standard that will not constitute an offence under the Act or any of the relevant statutory provisions.

3. You and your employees will conform, in all respects, to your legal duties and responsibilities as laid down by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and relevant statutory provisions.

4. The Council will retain the right to stop any operation, plant or equipment, or the action of any of your employees if it is considered that there is a hazard to the safety and health of employees or others. The Council will not accept any responsibility for any increased costs arising out of such action.

5. In the event of the Council taking this action, your site representative will be notified verbally and will have confirmation in writing by the Council's representative to order such a stoppage.

6. The Council will be indemnified by you or your insurers in respect of any claims, costs or expenses arising out of any incidents on Council premises involving you or your employees.

7. The Council may notify an inspector, appointed under the Authority of the Act, of any breach of the Regulations.
All activities have some impact upon the environment. Royston Town Council recognises its responsibilities to minimise the impact its operations have on the environment and local residents.

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish broad objectives to enable the development of activities or procedures that will minimise negative effects on the general environment and enhance and protect Royston Town Council’s immediate environs.

2 KEY PRINCIPLES

2.1 To strive to make a positive contribution to protecting and enhancing the local and global environment.

2.2 To be mindful of the fact that Royston Town Council’s actions often have an impact on the environment when decision-making.

2.3 Where relevant, to build environmental considerations and sustainability into Royston Town Council policies.

2.4 To minimise environmental pollution and waste in Royston Town Council activities and encourage the conservation, re-use and appropriate recycling of resources within the Town.

2.5 To reduce the effect of adverse impacts, Royston Town Council will aim to embrace the following objectives:

- Minimise material consumption and consider the lifecycle impact of any purchase;
- Reduce waste and re-use material wherever possible and in particular to reduce the use of single-use plastic where possible;
- Embrace recycling opportunities;
- Improve the quality of its working environment;
- Minimise CO2 emissions produced by Royston Town Council activities;
- Minimise energy use and emissions to air;
- Encourage suppliers to raise their environmental performance;
- Encourage users of Royston Town Council allotments to raise their environmental performance;
- Conserve biodiversity on Royston Town Council allotments and at Stile and Greenwalk Plantations and to manage the same so as to encourage wildlife and plant-life where appropriate.
3 SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

3.1 Energy Efficiency
Royston Town Council is committed to responsible energy management and will, where possible, promote energy efficiency through its operations by the following actions:
Increase awareness of energy efficiency amongst employees;
Recommend energy conservation technology where applicable (e.g. low energy light bulbs);
Monitor heating controls;
Encourage staff to close windows and external doors;
Encourage staff to switch off unnecessary lights;
Encourage staff to switch off computers, screens, printers and photocopiers when not in use.

3.2 Recycling and Conservation
Where possible, the office staff should recycle, or re-use, any recyclable material.

3.3 Water Conservation
Where possible, encourage allotment tenants to use water butts and conserve water on allotments and ensure the taps are switched off from November to March. Monitor water usage and taken action where necessary.

3.4 Cleaning Materials
Cleaning fluids, polishes and glues etc. should be as environmentally least damaging as possible. Use of solvents, harmful to the environment, should be avoided.

3.5 Office Equipment
Generally, new equipment will be selected from product ranges with good environmental standards and ratings, both in use and disposal.

3.6 Local Sourcing
Where possible, Royston Town Council will seek to minimise environmental damage caused through transportation of goods by sourcing materials locally. This also has the positive effect of supporting the local economy.

4 PURCHASING
Where possible, purchasing decisions will take account of both environmental and value for money factors.

5 RESPONSIBILITY
Employees and Members of Royston Town Council will:

- take responsibility for the implementation of the Environmental Policy
- encourage volunteers and members of other organisations to adopt good practices so as to improve the environmental performance of Royston Town Council and to improve its impact upon the environment.
Royston Town Council Investment Strategy 2019-2020

Approved by Full Council 25th March 2019 - Minute XX/19

1. Introduction
Royston Town Council (the Council) acknowledges the importance of prudently investing the temporary surplus funds held on behalf of the community. This strategy complies with guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003.

2. Investment Objectives
The general policy objective for the Council is the prudent investment of its balances. The Council’s investment priorities are:

a) The security of its reserves
b) The liquidity of its investments
c) The yield obtained from any investment

The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

All investments will be made in sterling.

3. Specified Investments
Specified investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and with maturity of no more than a year. Such short term investments made with the UK Government or a Local Authority (as defined) or a Town/Parish Council will automatically be specified investments.

For the prudent management of its treasury balances, the Council may use:

- Deposits with banks, building societies, local authorities or public authorities
- Treasury deposits with UK clearing banks
- Money market funds
- UK Government issued gilts
- Other approved public sector investment funds

The choice of institution and length of deposit will be at the approval of the Finance Committee.

4. Non Specified Investments
These investments have greater potential risk and are usually for longer periods and with bodies that are not as highly credit rated. Examples include investment in money markets, stocks and shares. Given the unpredictability and uncertainty surrounding such investments the Council will not use this type of investment.

5. Liquidity of Investments
The Responsible Financial Officer, in consultation with the Finance Committee, will determine the maximum periods for which funds may be prudently committed so as not to compromise liquidity.

6. Long Term Investments
Long term investments shall be defined as greater than one year. The Council does not currently hold any long term investments.
7. Risk Assessment
The Town Council’s funds are not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme as turnover exceeds 500,000 euros and must therefore be carefully managed to mitigate the risk of losses.
To reduce risks, funds should be held in more than one organisation/fund. The Council will only invest in institutions of “high credit quality”. The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by reference to credit ratings. The Council will also have regard for the general and political environment in which institutions operate.
The investment position will be reviewed by the Responsible Financial Officer and reported to the Finance Committee.
The Council does not employ, in-house or externally, any financial advisors but will rely on information which is publicly available.

8. Investment Strategy 2019-2020
The Council will invest as much of its balance as possible in a low risk product in order to achieve its investment objectives.

The Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) has been identified as a low risk, high liquidity option. Funds can be moved in or out on the same day and it has an AAAmmf credit quality and sensitivity rating by Fitch. £100,000 will remain in this investment for 2019-2020 subject to its performance and credit rating being monitored.

The balances remaining, after accounting for working capital requirements, will be invested in a Treasury deposit with Barclays Bank. The Treasury deposit is invested for one month on a rolling basis, the amount being determined and instructed by the Town Clerk. Barclays currently has an A rating from Fitch. This account currently has a balance of £325,000. Whilst slightly less liquid than the PSDF, it is deemed unlikely that the funds will need to be accessed sooner than 1 month (in the worst case scenario).

Working capital sums will be held in bank accounts at Barclays bank.

The Town Clerk shall have delegated authority (as contained within the Financial Regulations) to set up any accounts/funds as approved in this policy, and undertake transfers between Barclays accounts and the PSDF as required.

9. Review and Amendment of Regulations
The investment strategy will be reviewed annually by Full Council and revised if considered necessary. The Council reserves the right to make variations to the investment strategy at any time subject to the approval by Full Council. Any variations will be made available to the public.

10. Freedom of Information
In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this document will be posted on the Council’s website and a hard copy will be available from Royston Town Council offices.
Royston Town Council
Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure
Agreed by Full Council on 25th March 2019 – minute number XX/19

This procedure is for marking the death of the reigning monarch, their spouse/consort and the heir to the throne. At the time of writing, this relates to the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales. By agreement of the Full Council, it may also be used for other prominent people.

The Queen will be given a State Funeral. The Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales will be given a Ceremonial Royal Funeral.

High Sheriffs have responsibility for reading the Proclamation within their county and will work closely with the county Lord-Lieutenant.

Plans to mark a death should only be implemented when a formal announcement has been made.

**Flags**
Currently there is no flag pole in Royston owned by the Town Council. However, if there were, it should be lowered to half-mast from the time of the announcement until 8am on the day following the funeral.

**Book of Condolence**
A Book of Condolence will be opened on the first working day after the day of death. The Town Council will provide the Book of Condolence and it will be available in the reception area of the Council offices during opening hours. A good-size table covered with a suitable cloth, a chair and a supply of pens will be provided. If a suitable photograph is available, that may be in a frame on the table, adorned with black ribbon and a small flower arrangement will be provided.

The Book of Condolence should be closed at the end of day 11, the day following the funeral. The book is a historical record of the sentiments expressed by local people on the death of the national figure. The pages will be collated and bound with a letter being sent to the Private Secretary at Buckingham Palace advising that the Book of Condolence is held in the Council archives.

**Website**
The Council’s website homepage will be overwritten with a black page carrying a portrait of the national figure who has died. There will be a tab to the Council’s homepage during the period of mourning. The website will include details of the Council’s arrangements agreed in this procedure. A statement from the Mayor will also be added to the Council’s homepage.
**Events and Activities**
From the day of the death until the day after the funeral, careful thought should be given to the types of events and activities which should take place. The question ‘why is it really necessary and appropriate for this event to go ahead’ should be considered. For instance, if a celebratory event were to be due to take place during the time of mourning, it may not be appropriate, but it might be possible to hold Council meetings with an appropriate period of silence at the start.

**Dress Code**
Councillors will be encouraged to dress soberly on official business. The Councillors and the Clerk will be provided with black arm bands.

**Public Holiday**
The day of the state funeral will be a Public Holiday and the Council offices and all other Council sites will be closed on that day.

**Area to Lay Flowers**
The Town Council will inform local residents where the agreed area is to lay flowers in remembrance. This will be included in the information published on the website.

Review date - to be reviewed in March 2021 or when legislation dictates.