




Wilton Town Council

Policy & Resources Committee

OFFICER REPORT

 The Council Offices
Kingsbury Square
Wilton SP2 0BA

 01722 742093

 [Email the clerk](#)

 [Wilton TC Website](#)

Report for the Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 21st May 2024 at 7pm
in the Wilton Town Council Chamber.

15th May 2024

Please can you ensure that any questions relating to matters on the Agenda are sent to the Town Clerk by 10am on Monday 20th May.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

As this is the first meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee in the new Civic year the Chair and Vice Chair must be elected.

Request from Wiltshire Police.

This is to use the Mayor's Parlour as somewhere they could use to write up reports, have a break etc. It is not for interviews or meeting with the Public.

Consideration must be given to the location of the Wilton CCTV but it is not possible to download footage without access to the system and the key is locked in the Office.

The Police would require the following keys:

- Front door
- Mayor's Parlour
- And an alarm fob.

Accounts for year ending 31st March 2024.

The External Auditor for Wilton Town Council is PKF Littlejohn LLP. More information on the Audit can be found [here](#).

Wilton Town Council must complete Form 3 of the options available:

AGAR Form 3 for smaller authorities not seeking or not eligible for exemption from Audit

The authority must ensure that, before 1 July:

- 1) the Internal Audit report for the year (page 3) is completed, signed and dated by the Internal Auditor;
- 2) the Annual Governance Statement (page 4: Section 1) is:

- a) completed, with an explanation of any 'No' responses and a description of how the authority will address the weaknesses identified;
 - b) formally approved at a meeting of the authority, with date and minute reference inserted; and
 - c) signed by the Chair and Clerk; and includes the authority's website address, where other information not forming part of the annual governance statement but required by the Transparency Codes may be found;
- 3) the accounting statements (page 5: Section 2) are
- a) completed;
 - b) signed and dated by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO);
 - c) subsequently approved at a meeting of the authority with date and minute reference inserted; and
 - d) signed by the Chair; and
- 4) the authority's name is entered in the box at the head of the External Auditor Report and Certificate (page 6: Section 3) ; and
- 5) the RFO has set a date for the commencement of the period for the exercise of public rights; 6) copies of:
- a) the completed annual governance statement (Section 1), signed by the Chair and Clerk;
 - b) the accounting statements (Section 2) signed and dated by the RFO and Chair;
 - c) the External Auditor Report and Certificate (Section 3) showing the name of the authority only;
 - d) a bank reconciliation as at 31 March;
 - e) an explanation of any significant year-on-year variances in the accounting statements;
 - f) notification of the period for the exercise of public rights;
 - g) the Annual Internal Audit Report; and h) any other documents requested by the auditor are sent to the external auditor.
- 7) copies of:
- a) the completed annual governance statement (Section 1), signed by the Chair and Clerk; and
 - b) the accounting statements (Section 2) signed and dated by the RFO and Chair are published on the authority's website or another publicly accessible website, together with:
 - c) notice of the period for the exercise of public rights; and
 - d) a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited.

Once the external auditor has completed and is able to give an opinion on the limited assurance review, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return including a completed Section 3 will be returned to the authority. The authority must then ensure publication on its website (or another suitable website) not later than 30 September of the complete Annual Governance and Accountability Return, comprising Sections 1, 2 and 3, including notice of the conclusion of audit and any amendments made to the accounting statements as a result of the limited assurance review.

Publication of the Internal Audit Report is also recommended.

Please note that the AGAR needs to be approved by Full Council and signed at the meeting on 4th June, this Committee is to recommend the Approval of the Documents to Full Council.

The year end accounts were agreed at FC on 7th May.

The Internal Audit report has been circulated.

The Internal Auditor's Statement on the AGAR is on page 3.

The Annual Governance Statement. The Council must answer each assertion (page 4)

Please see [Practitioners' Guide](#) for more information – pages 8 – 13 inc.

The Accounting Statements need to be approved for recommendation to FC (page 5).

Page 6 is completed by the External Auditor.

The explanation of Variances is completed electronically;

Explanation of significant variances:

5.192 'Significant' is defined as "being worthy of attention". A significant variance is one that would be of

interest to the authority and to the public when looking at the figures in Section 2 of the AGAR. As per NAO AGN02, that is more than 15% or over £100,000.

5.193. The purpose of showing comparative values in financial statements is so that the reader can observe and note any changes in levels of activity from one year to the next. The absence of significant variances from one year to the next implies that the authority has continued to provide budgeted services at the same level and approximately at the same cost as previously.

5.194. The reason for providing the explanation of significant variances to the external auditor is to support the auditor's review of the figures in Section 2 and to demonstrate the authority's understanding of its accounts and their movements. Where there are significant differences, the external auditor may be concerned that the figures for the current year could be incorrect. Authorities will be able to remove this doubt by providing clear and complete narrative and numerical explanations for the differences.

5.195. For example, it is a reasonable expectation that staff costs would rise each year only by the level of wage inflation. Thus, if the entry in line 4 had risen by around the RPI, 55 this could reasonably be assumed to be attributable to a cost of living increase. However, if the change was significantly higher, then the authority would need to explain the reason for the increase, to demonstrate that a mistake had not been made in recording staff costs. If the explanation was that the authority had employed more staff or changed officer hours, this should be set out in a summary to be provided to the auditor.

5.196. Any change, or even the absence of change when one might be expected, can be considered as significant and the RFO should be prepared to explain any figure presented in the accounting statements.

5.197. Where the value in line 7 does not equal the value in line 8, this difference should be explained. This difference will only occur in cases where the authority's accounts are presented on an I&E basis.

5.198. In deciding what needs to be explained, authorities should think about noting the following:

- One-off items of spending or income from last year and this year
- Regular items of spending and income where the relevant activity has risen or fallen between the two years or where prices have not changed in line with inflation
- Items of spending and income that used to be regular but which were made for the last time last year and do not feature in the current year (ceased activities and facilities)
- Items of spending and income that were made for the first time in the current year and will be made regularly in future years (new activities and facilities).

5.199. As authorities have no legal powers to hold revenue reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs, or for specifically earmarked purposes, whenever an authority's year-end general reserve is significantly higher than the annual precept or rates and special levies, an explanation should be provided to the auditor.

Directors of Auditing Solutions and DCK Accounting.

In the interest of Transparency to confirm there are no issues.

Please note that DCK has been used in the past for Accounts Support, it is not the Council's Accountant.

Money

Pay schedule to be circulated to Councillors.

Accounts for April to be completed and circulated to Councillors

Defibrillator signage has been quoted at £50 each plus shipping costs of £15 for the two.

Fence quotes – please see separate sheet which includes confidential information.

Terms of Reference

See attached generic ToRs. Appendix 1.

In addition ToRs for each Working Group in Wilton Town Council to include:

1. Name of Working Group
2. Membership inc number of Wilton Town Councillors
3. Purpose of the Working Group
4. Quorum inc min number of Wilton Town Councillors
5. Meetings – in person or virtually
6. Frequency of Meetings
7. Chair of Working Group
8. Reporting to the relevant Committee
9. Notes or Minutes of each Meeting – where available, period of retention, publicly available.
10. Public attendance – yes or no

In addition to the Terms of Reference, each Working Group must draft Objectives of the Working Group to be agreed by the Committee the WG reports to.

Wilton CCTV

This request was made at a meeting.

- Council should consider cost of upgrade – no costs requested.
- Access to data – currently it is Officer only.
- Time involved to check and download data for third parties.
- Role of Staff in viewing data – a recent request was made asking Staff to confirm that the data was not of use which would involve checking 13 hrs of data.

Civic Procession Policy

This is a Policy for events organized by Wilton Town Council such as Remembrance Parade and Civic Service where Councillors are required to walk from one venue to another as well as meet in a different venue.

This would not apply for processions that are not organized by Wilton Town Council (eg Wilton Community Carnival) as the organisers for that event would be responsible.

It is advised that Wilton Town Council has a map showing the dropped kerbs within Wilton Town Centre.

Wilton Charters

Unfortunately no company has been found to produce high quality facsimile copies of the Charters.

Enquiries into printing one of the high resolution photos are ongoing.

The matter of moving, preparing and ongoing storage is currently outstanding.

Planning

All planning applications are on the Wiltshire Council website.

Road Closure

This application is made to Wiltshire Council.

To confirm that Wilton Town Council supports the application.

All the information has been circulated to Councillors.

Responses for Planning Applications

No Comment

the Council neither objects to nor supports the application. If the Council does not respond to a consultation we would treat this as no comment.

Comment

The Council wishes to make a comment.

No Objection

The Council has no objection but does not support the application.

Support

the Council supports the application unconditionally (that is, exactly as submitted).

It is suggested, if the Council wishes, to list reasons why it supports the application.

Mixed

For responses that are neither of the alternative options.

Object for reasons set out

the Council objects to the application with specified reasons.

No Objections subject to conditions

the Council has no objections subject to conditions

Call in.

The Council can request the Unitary Cllr “calls in” the application should the Council wish the application be determined by the Southern Planning Committee. It is the decision of the Unitary Cllr as to whether the call in is made and if it is a member of the Council should attend the Committee meeting held in Salisbury. This must be agreed at the meeting. The call in is only for when the Planning Officer disagrees with the Council’s response eg recommends approval when the Council made objections, or recommends refusal when the Council supported the application.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In commenting on Planning applications, it is important that the Council considers planning issues. These include:

- consistency with the development plan for the areas
- Traffic and highway safety issues
- overlooking, loss of privacy and loss of light
- scale of the development
- design, appearance, layout and material
- loss of important open space or physical features
- noise, disturbance or smells
- local knowledge of drainage or other possible problems with the surface
- impact on the surroundings

Issues that are not relevant include:

- Effect on the value of property
- Loss of view over other peoples land
- Possible future development not included in the application
- Private property rights such as boundary or access disputes
- Matters covered by other laws
- The morals or motives of the developer

Special rules apply for listed buildings conservation areas, trees (some are protected by Tree Preservation Orders). Planning permission is needed for advertisements above a special size.

If development appears to have taken place without permission or if the development is more extensive than given in the planning consent, the District Council’s enforcement officer to visit the site and take any necessary follow up action.

Appendix 2 Draft Terms of Reference

1. Wilton Town Council and its standing Committees can set up working groups to carry out tasks as defined by Wilton Town Council or the Committee. The opportunity for residents to join such groups will be made through social media or on Wilton Town Council's noticeboard and website.
2. The purpose of Working Groups formed from both councillors and members of the public is to meet to discuss issues, explore options and develop plans and then report back to the Committee with recommendations. Subsequently, Working Groups may be tasked to deliver their plans. They have no decision making powers but simply present the Committee with their findings. However, their ability to give particular topics that much more time outside agenda-driven meetings can be invaluable.
3. When setting up a Working Group, Wilton Town Council or Committee must set clear terms of reference for it regarding objectives, scope and outcome(s). These will be approved by Wilton Town Council before the Working Group is formed. Once their work has been completed, the Working Group will be disbanded.
4. The Terms of Reference will include this protocol, the name of the Committee to which the Working Group reports and all members of the Working Group will sign it to confirm acceptance.
5. The Terms of Reference and membership will be published on Wilton Town Council's website.
6. The number of Councillors able to join a Working Group will be decided at the time of its formation but it must consist of no fewer than two councillors.
7. The Working Group will notify the relevant Wilton Town Council Committee of the name of the Chair once they are appointed after the first meeting.
8. A quorum for any meeting of a Working Group will be three members, at least one of whom must be a councillor.
9. The role of Wilton Town Council or sponsoring Committee is to consider and question the recommendations put to it by the Working Group before a decision is taken and, in the case of a Committee, to be satisfied with them before making any recommendations to the Full Council.
10. A Working Group will be accountable to its sponsoring Committee unless agreement is made, due to expediency and subject to agreement via email of a majority of members of that sponsoring Committee, for recommendations to be made directly to the Town Council;
11. The Working Group must provide Wilton Town Council or Committee with as much information as possible to ensure it can make an informed decision on its recommendation(s).
12. A Working Group will not have a budget. The budget will remain with the Wilton Town Council Committee.
13. Working Groups do not meet in public, therefore Wilton Town Council's Standing Orders are not applicable. However, the Code of Conduct still applies and Declarations of interests will be required at each meeting. All Working Groups will follow all relevant Wilton Town Council policies
14. The Town Clerk will ensure that a shared email is set up for all Working Groups. The Chair of the Working Group will ensure that the importance of its use is communicated to all members. All documents and records produced and emails shared by working groups will be retained for 7 years in accordance with Wilton Town Council's Freedom of Information Act Procedure.

Draft Objectives

Budget Working Group

To prepare a Budget for the forthcoming Financial Year.
To recommend a Budget to the Policy and Resources Committee
To recommend a Precept to the Policy and Resources Committee
To report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Castle Meadow Car Park Working Group

To look at the existing planning conditions and discuss possible amendments.
To specify a plan for the upgrade of the Car Park to include the pedestrian entrance and compound.
To specify lighting requirements.
To prepare a Tender document to be approved by Wilton Town Council.
To report to Environment and Amenities Committee.

Events Working Group

To plan the Events for Wilton Town Council, to include:

- the Annual Switching on of the Christmas Lights.
- Remembrance Parade on Remembrance Sunday
- Annual Town Meeting in March
- Any additional events to be marked during the year.

To liaise with the Town Clerk on Road Closures and insurance requirements.
To liaise with other groups within Wilton.
To publicise the Events on social media and on local notice boards.
To report to Environment and Amenities Committee, Policy and Resources Committee (or Full Council if required).

Heritage Working Group

To review the Wilton Town Council Town Trail and the Wilton Business Chamber Town Trail.
To consider the installation of the Wilton Town Trail markers.
To feedback on the Wiltshire “Explore Wilton” App
To plan a launch for the Explore Wilton App.
To report to the Environment and Amenities Committee.

Newsletter Working Group

To prepare and publish a Newsletter for the Residents of Wilton.
To report to the Environment and Amenities Committee

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

To confirm whether Wilton Town will pursue the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.
To report to the Environment and Amenities Committee

Policy Working Group

To Monitor and Review all current Wilton Town Council Policies.
To report to Policy and Resources Committee.

Speed Indicator Display (SID) Working Group

To ensure the safe operation including moving of the two Wilton Town Council SIDs.
To attend the Wiltshire SID briefings.

To report to the Environment and Amenities Committee

Toilet Working Group

To consider options to upgrade the existing Public Toilets in Greyhound Lane, Wilton.

To report to Environment and Amenities Committee.

