



# Carterton Town Council

Town Hall  
Alvescot Road  
Carterton  
Oxon OX18 3JL  
Tel: 01993 842156  
Email: [clerk@carterton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@carterton-tc.gov.uk)  
[www.carterton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.carterton-tc.gov.uk)

2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025

**Chair:** Cllr M McBride  
**Vice Chair:** Cllr J Guest

**Members:** Cllr K Godwin, Cllr E Hatton, Cllr N King, Cllr M Mead & Cllr D Melvin.

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** on **TUESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025 at 6.00pm** at the Town Hall.

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the Council's public meetings are recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

In accordance with the Council's standing orders any councillor or member of the public must inform all of those present if they wish to film, photograph, livestream or make an audio recording of meeting proceedings.

**We are proud to announce that Carterton Town Council has signed the Civility and Respect Pledge. The Council will treat all Members, Officers, and members of the public, with civility and respect at all times. We please ask that members of the public do the same.**

Simon Garwood  
**Town Clerk and Chief Officer**

## AGENDA

## PAGE NO.

### 1. APOLOGIES

Committee to receive apologies for absence.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST and DISPENSATIONS

With reference to items on the agenda, Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare interests and to update their Register of Interest as required.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Committee to approve and sign the minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3 June 2025.

**Pages 3 – 7**

- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**  
Members of the public are invited to speak on matters on this agenda. The period of time designated for public participation in accordance with Standing Orders shall not exceed 15 minutes, max three minutes per person, and will be under the direction of the Chair.
- 5. TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027** **Separate Document**  
a) To consider and discuss a new town council strategy for 2025-2027 and recommend the next steps to council.
- 6. FINANCES 2025-26 & BUDGET 2026-27** **Pages 8 – 10**  
a) To review the Income and Expenditure budget (2025-26) for the year to date.  
b) To discuss the proposed budget for 2026-27.
- 7. GRANT GUIDANCE AND FORM 2026-27** **Pages 11 – 17**  
a) To review the new Grant Guidance and supporting documents and make a recommendation to council.
- 8. POLICIES** **Pages 18 – 20**  
a) To consider and approve the use of gov.uk email addresses. **Pages 21 – 28**  
b) To review the Social media policy
- 9. CLOSURE OF MEETING TO THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**  
MOTION: Pursuant to s1(s) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and Standing Order 3d, Council to consider and approve the meeting to be closed to the press and public in order to consider the next agenda item due to confidentiality and commercial sensitivity.
- 10. LEASE UPDATE** **Separate Document**  
a) To consider and recommend the new draft lease for No.1 the Sweet Spot.
- 11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  
Committee to note the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 2 December 2025 at 6pm.

**Members of the Press and Public Welcome**



## Carterton Town Council

**A Meeting of the FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE was held on  
3 JUNE 2025 at 6.00pm in the Town Hall and was attended by the following:**

Chair: To Be Elected  
Vice Chair: To Be Elected

Town Councillors: Cllr K Godwin, Cllr J Guest, Cllr C Lincoln, Cllr M McBride, Cllr M Mead  
and Cllr D Melvin

Officers: Claire Evans (Deputy Clerk & RFO)  
Simon Clerk (Clerk)

Also in attendance: No members of the public present

ITEM	MINUTE	VOTE/ ACTION
FG01/2025-26/1	<b>TO ELECT A CHAIR</b>	
	<p><b>To elect a Chair of the Finance &amp; Governance Committee to hold office until May 2026.</b></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that Cllr M McBride be elected as Chair</p>	<p>Proposed: MM Seconded: KG Vote: All For</p>
FG02/2025-26/2	<b>TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR</b>	
	<p><b>To elect a vice Chair of the Finance &amp; Governance Committee to hold office until May 2026.</b></p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED that Cllr J Guest be elected as Vice Chair</p>	<p>Proposed: MM Seconded: DM Vote: All For</p>
FG03/2025-26/3	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
	<p><b>Committee to receive apologies for absence.</b></p> <p>No apologies were received.</p>	
FG04/2025-26/4	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST and DISPENSATIONS</b>	
	<p><b>With reference to items on the agenda, Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare interests and to update their Register of Interest as required.</b></p>	

	No declarations of interest were given, Cllr McBride therefore reminded councillors to make a declaration if the need arose during the course of the meeting.	
<b>FG05/2025-26/5</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	
	<p><b>Committee to approve and sign the minutes of the Finance and Governance meeting held on 3 April 2025.</b></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to agree the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee as an accurate and true record of the meeting.</p>	<p>Proposed: MM Seconded: DM Vote: 6 for NK Abstained</p>
<b>FG06/2025-26/6</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>	
	<p><b>Members of the public are invited to speak on issues relating to this agenda. The period of time designated for public participation in accordance with Standing Orders 3(e) and (f) shall not exceed 15 minutes, maximum of three minutes per person, and will be under the direction of the Chair.</b></p> <p>No members of the public were in attendance.</p>	
<b>FG07/2025-26/7</b>	<b>FINANCES &amp; ACCOUNTS</b>	
	<p><b>To review the AGAR and End of Year financials</b></p> <p>The Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Governance &amp; Accountability Return</p> <p>These documents were provided to members a general discussion was held regarding the documents.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to recommend the documents to Council</p>	<p>Proposed: MM Seconded: DM Vote: All For</p>
<b>FG08/2025-26/8</b>	<b>AUGUST PAYMENTS</b>	
	<p><b>To discuss the August payments and consider proposing to Council that August Payments be agreed by email.</b></p> <p>Members requested a reminder of the process used in 2024. The RFO emailed all councillors the payments list and requested an email return to confirm payment. The payments list will then be ratified at Septembers full council meeting.</p>	

	<b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that members would recommend August payments be agree by email providing there was a majority.	Proposed: KG Seconded: EH Vote: All For
<b>FG09/2025-26/9</b>	<b>FINANCIAL REGULATIONS</b>	
	<p><b>Members to review the financial regulations as set amended by NALC in March 2025 and make recommendations to Council.</b></p> <p>Members reviewed the Financial Regulations, Cllr K Godwin highlighted some grammatical errors which would be sent to the RFO via email to amend.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> Members agreed that the document should be recommended to Council</p>	Proposed: KG Seconded: DM Vote: All For
<b>FG10/2025-26/10</b>	<b>INTERNAL AUDITOR</b>	
	<p><b>To review the internal auditor quotes and make a recommendation to Council with regard to who to appoint for the financial year 2025-26</b></p> <p>Members discussed the quotes provided, Cllr McBride requested the RFO provide an opinion on the three quotes. The RFO explained that Mulberry would be the preferred replacement for IAC as they were comparable to Kevin's fees and they were very helpful at the practitioners conference. They were also recommended to the RFO when consulting and alternative internal auditor.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that members would recommend that Mulberry be assigned as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2025-26 on a one year basis and potentially extended to a three year contract.</p>	Proposed: MM Seconded: EH Vote: All For
<b>FG11/2025-26/11</b>	<b>INTERNAL CONTROLS POLICY</b>	
	<p><b>To review the internal controls policy, making any necessary changes and provide Council with a recommendation.</b></p> <p>The RFO explained that the Council had not reviewed the internal control policy in the financial year 2024-25 and that this had been highlighted on the internal audit report.</p> <p>The RFO has therefore collated a policy which was presented to members with the recommendation of it being completed in 2025-26.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that the document would be recommended to council for approval</p>	Proposed: DM Seconded: KG Vote: All For

<b>FG12/2025-26/12</b>	<b>ASSET REGISTER</b>	
	<p><b>To review the asset register.</b></p> <p>Members discussed items on the asset register. The following items were queried –  The filing cabinet in the mayors parlour is this still there?  The value of the band stand?  How many of the silent soldiers are still operational?  The amount of benches that belonged to Council?  A request was made to change item known as the garden project to St John's Garden.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> the asset register would be recommended to council and that the RFO would make any alterations necessary following the queries raised.</p>	<p>Proposed: DM  Seconded: KG  Vote: All For</p>
<b>FG13/2025-26/13</b>	<b>CIVIC PROTOCOL POLICY</b>	
	<p><b>To review the Civic Protocol Policy and make a recommendation to Council</b></p> <p>The Civic protocol document has been updated to clarify the meaning of some items. The members reviewed the document. A suggestion was made to amend the wording on the Christmas lights event as it no longer takes place on a Friday.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to recommend the document to council.</p>	<p>Proposed: KG  Seconded: NK  Vote: All For</p>
<b>FG14/2025-26/14</b>	<b>CODE OF CONDUCT</b>	
	<p><b>To review the code of conduct, making any necessary changes and make recommendations to Council</b></p> <p>Members were provided a copy of the code of conduct , Cllr K Godwin suggested Councillor's were sent a copy of there register of interests as this may have changed.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the amount that the mayor could accept for a gift before having to notify anyone. It was less that the main body of council. This would be queried with the monitoring officer.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that a recommendation to accept the code of conduct would be made to council.</p>	<p>Proposed: KG  Seconded: NK  Vote: All For</p>
<b>FG15/2025-26/15</b>	<b>INSURANCE RENEWAL</b>	

	<p><b>To review the insurance renewal documentation and make a recommendation to council with regards to renewing the policy.</b></p> <p>Members discussed the cost of the insurance renewal. The new premium has increased in line with index valuation.</p> <p>The insurance quote was not received by the RFO until the day of the meeting so members chose to defer the decision to full council.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to defer the item to full council</p>	<p>Proposed: McB Seconded: KG Vote: All For</p>
<b>FG16/2025-26/16</b>	<b>BANK SIGNATORIES</b>	
	<p><b>To confirm the bank signatories for financial year 2025-2026</b></p> <p>Members noted that the bank signatories had not changed this year. They will remain as follows: Cllr J Guest Cllr N King Cllr M McBride Cllr D Melvin Cllr N Leverton</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<b>FG17/2025-26/17</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
	Committee to note the date of the next meeting as 22nd July 2025 at 6pm.	

The meeting closed at 7.04pm.

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

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

[illegible]



TOTALS			£11,065	£6,500	£267	4.1%	£0	£0	£4,000	£6,500	£0	
SCOUT BUILDING	Maintenance - General	4216/210	£1,500	£1,500	£363	24.2%			£750	£1,500		2025: earmark all remaining funds
SERF HALL (CADETS)	Maintenance - Quinquennial		£1,200	£1,200		0.0%			£1,200	£1,200		2025: serf hall has modest requirements maintain existing budget 2024:Year 3 is £472 year 4 = £1540 Year 5= £1900.00 ptotnial for boxing club to have by year 5
TOTALS			£2,700	£2,700	£363	13.4%	£0	£0	£1,950	£2,700	£0	
SQUASH CLUB												
	Rent	1205/210					£5,850	£1,300			£5,850	2025: rent review is very specialist - can not detirmine whether this is adequate. 2024:rent review due 2025
	Maintenance - General	4215/210	£2,000	£2,000	£170	8.5%				£2,000		
	Maintenance - Quinquennial		£30,552	£15,000		0.0%			£15,000	£15,000		2025: Earmark £15000.00 due to increase in costs maintain existing level of funds required 2024: Year 3 =£9200 year 4=£18600 year 5 = £28500 total needed by year 5 is £56000.00 (£30552.00 was earmarked from24/25 budget)
TOTALS			£32,552	£17,000	£513	3.0%	£5,850	£1,300	£15,000	£17,000	£5,850	
STREATFIELD HOUSE												
	Rent	1230/210					£19,950	£9,025			£19,950	£11,000 PA - Sweet Spot + £8,892.00 Fit Figures This is likely to increase after rent review. However new lease is yet to be agreed.
	Maintenance - General	4230/210	£1,500	£4,500	£3,052	67.8%				£4,500		2025: Maintenance for car park and cleaning of building split 2/11 currently expected to be £287.45 2024:Potentially replace window at No1 sweetspot
	Maintenance - Quinquennial		£700	£5,000	£0	0.0%			£5,000	£5,000		year 3-5 works = £15,000 (£700.0 was earmarked from 24/25 budget)
	Maintenance - Shared costs		£1,165	£1,500	£0	0.0%			£1,500	£2,000		2025: Shared cost for 2024/25 is currently £287.00- the management company are looking to charge us 2/11 they are trying to create a reserve of £45000.00 which would egate to £1636.36 per year for the reserve
	Water	4231/210		£0	£1,046	#DIV/0!					£1,000	
TOTALS			£3,365	£11,000	£3,052	27.7%	£19,950	£9,025	£6,500	£12,500	£19,950	
STREET FURNITURE												
	Benches	4815/170	£0	£2,000	£196	9.8%			£1,500	£2,000		2025: 2024: 1 bench costs £850.00 plus installation this would replace two benches a year
	Bins		£650	£650	£0	0.0%			£650	£650		2025: no money has been spent on extra bins therefore budget ket the same 2024: £650.00 Earmarked from 24/25 budget
	Bus Shelters		£1,000	£6,000	£0	0.0%			£4,000	£2,000		2025:Bus shelter was changed free of charge therefore the money has been earmarked for any addition work required 2024: Current quote to maintain the bus shelters is £2000.00 & £4000.00 for changing position of existing shelter £700.00 was earmarked in 24/25 budget
	Clock		£200	£250	£234	93.6%				£300		2025: price was increased so have allowed for an additional cost. 2024: Annual cost. This has not increased.
	Notice Boards			£6,000	£85	1.4%				£1,000		2025: budget reduced as all noticeboards have been replaced and the budget has been reduced for maintainance only 2024: 4 x notice boards - all notice boards need repairing or replacing. Over head opening is dangerous
TOTALS			£1,850	£14,900	£515	3.5%		£0	£0	£6,150	£5,950	
TOWN HALL												
	Hire income	110/202					£16	£780			£16	
	Maintenance	4110/202	£12,520	£10,000	£4,009	40.1%				£35,000		2025: windows agreed to be replaced in 2025 some budget remaining from the budget however the windows are £27,954.32 + VAT
	Maintenance - Quinquennial			£9,500						£10,000		2025: windows will be completed however budget was lower than anticipated so budget kept the same 2024: Year 3 = £9,212 (windows) year 4 = £4,221 Year 5= £6,647
	H&S		£3,000	£3,000		0.0%				£3,000		
	Defibrillator			£100						£500		2025: battery at the community centre required replacing at a cost of £297.00 2024: replacement pads
	Electricity	4105/202	£5,900	£5,900		0.0%				£6,000		
	Gas		£4,530	£4,530	£1,285					£4,500		
	Water charges	4102/202	£2,000	£2,000	£537	26.9%				£2,000		
	Cleaning	4120/202	£725	£1,500	£1,214	80.9%				£3,000		2025: window cleaning = £300.0 cleaning materials included in this figure
	Waste	4120/202	£1,620	£2,000						£2,500		2025: food waste was £156.00 X 2= £312.00 cost of waste has also increased. 2024: food waste £130.00 x 2 = £260.00 weekly collection recycling 2 x 117 = £234.00 fortnightly collections household £260 x 2 =£520.00 weekly collection 2 x Green waste licences £50.00 each
TOTALS			£30,295	£38,530	£7,045	18.3%	£16	£780		£66,500	£16	
TOWN MAINTENANCE												
	Bins (Lot 2)	4400/220	£32,000	£32,000	£2,654	8.3%				£35,000		2025: new contract for bins initially set out at 25/26 - £23903.28 26/27 - £24327.09 27/28 - £ 24813.63 this did not allow for the additional bins that were added since 2022/23 therefore an additional £10895.04 was intially proposed 25/26 this was not feasible so 8.5k was agreed with the full figure being paid in 2026/27
	General maintenance	4401/220	£4,000	£10,000	£2,157	21.6%				£20,000		2025: potential for maintenance cost of paths at Rec 2024: £890 x 2 = £1,780.00 for cleaning weeds from kerbs. Leaves £8000.00 for general maintenance
	Burford Road Car Park									£15,000		2025: potential for resurfacing work at Burford Road car park
TOTALS			£36,000	£42,000	£4,811	11.5%				£70,000		
VETS												
	Rent	1210/210					£14,000	£5,123			£14,000	2025: vets pay £4200 a quarter which equates to £16800.00 however we charge VAT on the rent
TOTALS			£0				£14,000	£5,123			£14,000	
WAR MEMORIAL												
	Maintenance		£300	£300	£0	0.0%			£300	£1,000		2025: quote to clean war memorial was £2000.00 - ear mark remaining funds
TOTALS			£300	£300	£0	0.0%				£1,000	£0	
CONTINGENCY												
	For the unexpected		£60,000	£20,000	£3,507	17.5%				£20,000		2025: contingency kept the same 2024: in 23/24 money was moved from the burial earmarked funds to a contingency fund to balance the budget. I have added £20000.00 for a contingency this year
TOTALS			£60,000	£20,000	£3,507	17.5%	£0	£0		£20,000	£0	
TOTAL				£715,875	£240,493	33.6%	£56,531	£33,485	£47,200	£792,976	£53,571	
ADDITIONAL COSTS												
	Pension strain		£5,000	£5,000					£5,000	£5,000		2025: pension strain is due to be reviewed money many not be required 2024: no figure has been given for this however pension review will take place in 2025.
	Tree Survey		£5,000	£4,000		0.0%			£4,000			2025: The Survey is due in 2026 2024: tree survey completed in 2024 at a cost of £6780.00 survey will be every two years
	Communications		£10,000	£0	£0				£10,000	£0		2025: 10000 was earmarked for communication in 24/25 and 10k will be earmarked at end of this year so no more money is being allocated.
	Dottys Group		£6,000	£0	£0				£0	£6,000		2025: The group have not yet got a solid plan with how to operate and therefore the money should be reviewed 2024: no funds have been given to Dottys this year however 6k was earmarked
TOTAL			£26,000	£9,000	£0	0.0%	£0	£0	£19,000	£11,000	£0	
TOTAL				£724,875	£240,493	33.2%	£56,531	£33,485	£66,200	£803,976	£53,571	
PRECEPT												
	Precept	1076/150	£750,405									
TOTALS			£750,405									
Additional Income 2025/26			£53,571									
Total Income 2025/26			£803,976									
TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2025/26			£803,976									
Less...												
INCOME FROM ACTIVITIES			£53,571									
MOVEMENT FROM GENERAL RESERVE												
SHORTFALL (PRECEPT)			£750,405									
Total Assets less Current Liabilities as at 02/10/2025												
Represented by :-												
301	Current Year Fund											
310	General Reserves											
322	Cemetery Reserve	£5,000										
Restricted 327	Repatriation Reserve	£17,402										
331	Fitness Trail Reserve	£10,000										
332	Christmas Lights Reserve	£6,530										
Restricted 339	Prosperity Fund	£5,473										
Restricted 341	Stanmore Crescent (S106)	£67,236										
342	Professional fees	£3,000										
343	Allendale	£6,000										
344	training Members	£1,375										
345	Comm Centre Quinquennial	£2,000										
346	The Dell	£1,000										
347	Pavillion Quinquennial	£3,505										
348	Pavilion Legal Fees	£3,000										
349	Squash Club Quinquennial	£30,522										
350	Streatfield House Quin	£700										
351	Bins	£650										
352	Bus Shelters	£700										
353	Pension Strain	£5,000										
354	Communications	£10,000										
356	Marigold Square	£1,000										
357	Scout Hut	£2,000										
359	Dotty's Group	£6,000										
360	Grants	£1,500										
Total Equity			£189,592									
Precept history												
	% difference	Precept		5% increase year on year	Year	Tax Base	Difference					
2026/27					2026/27							
2025/26	32%	£668,344		£728,031	2025/26	5,724.60	48.68					
2024/25	15%	£503,096		£693,363	2024/25	5,675.92	53.56					
2023/24	5%	£432,879		£660,346	2023/24	5,622.36	123.79					



# Carterton Town Council Grants Programme

Carterton Town Council recognises the important role that local organisations play in supporting the wellbeing, identity, and resilience of the community. The Council provides grant funding each year through three distinct streams, designed to support services, community events, and one-off projects that benefit the people of Carterton.

The current programme was developed by the Grants and Finance & Governance Committees in October 2025 and approved by the Town Council on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

## Who Can Apply

Applications are welcomed from not-for-profit organisations operating in or serving the Carterton community, including:

- Residents' associations and community groups
- Charitable organisations providing direct local services
- Amateur sports clubs and arts associations
- Local forum and special interest groups

## Applications will not be accepted from:

- Individuals
- Private businesses
- Political parties or pressure groups
- Other local authorities
- Organisations applying primarily for their own self-interest

## What the Council Will Not Fund

- The Council will not normally fund:
- Projects that do not align with its aims for community development
- Retrospective costs (i.e. items already paid for)
- Projects that are the responsibility of statutory bodies or replace statutory funding
- More than one application per year from an individual organisation

## The Council will also avoid funding projects where:

- It could lead to a withdrawal of statutory funding
- It would subsidise services that a statutory authority should provide

## **Organisational Requirements**

- Applicants must be able to demonstrate:
- That they are a legitimate, constituted organisation (e.g. constitution or governing document)
- Sound financial management, with accounts or budgets available
- That they are not holding reserves in excess of 12 months of operating costs (unless fully justified)
- That they have sensibly planned and costed their project or service
- Willingness to meet monitoring and reporting requirements if awarded funding

## **All recipients must:**

- Publicly acknowledge Carterton Town Council's support (e.g. through publicity materials)
- Comply with any additional terms and conditions set out in the grant award

## **Application Dates**

Applications are accepted throughout the year, subject to the availability of funds. The Grants Committee considers applications at its scheduled meetings in March, July and November. Meeting dates are published on the Town Council's website. To be included on the agenda, applications must be received no later than two weeks before the relevant meeting.

## **Information Required**

Applications must include a breakdown of the costs. Match funding may include verified in-kind support (volunteer time valued at £12/hour unless a professional rate is evidenced). Budgets must state if costs are inclusive/exclusive of VAT.

## **Eligibility clarifications**

Eligible applicants include charities, CIOs, CICs with an asset-lock, constituted community groups, and PTAs for projects beyond the school day. Faith-based organisations are eligible for non-proselytising activities open to all. Applicants must have a UK bank account in the organisation's name.

## **Geographic benefit**

Projects must primarily benefit Carterton residents.

## **Safeguarding, insurance & risk**

Where activities involve children or vulnerable adults, applicants must have a safeguarding policy and appropriate DBS checks. Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5m) is required. Events must provide a risk assessment, permissions (landowner, road closure/TEN), and engage with the district Safety Advisory Group if needed.

## **Payment terms, monitoring & clawback**

Payment is normally made on receipt of a signed grant agreement. For larger SLA awards, payments may be staged. Unspent or misused funds must be returned. Brief outcome reports are required within 8 weeks of project completion. SLAs must provide an annual impact report.

## **Funding Streams**

### **1. Service Level Agreements (SLAs)**

This stream supports organisations that deliver structured, ongoing services to Carterton residents. Funding is awarded annually and is outcome-based.

**Applicants must:**

- Demonstrate clear, measurable benefit to Carterton residents
- Provide evidence of how services align with community needs
- Agree to provide monitoring and outcome reporting

*Examples of previous applicants include:*

*West Oxfordshire Community Transport, Volunteer Link Up, OXPIP*

### **2. General Grants**

This stream supports one-off projects, initiatives or purchases with a tangible benefit to the Carterton community.

**Key criteria:**

- Maximum award: £2,000
- 50% match funding required (through grants, fundraising or in-kind contributions)
- One application per financial year
- Funding available for up to three consecutive years; any further application at the discretion of the Council

Projects must align with one or more of the Council's aims:

- Enhancing civic pride and community identity
- Encouraging use of community facilities
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Supporting recreation and leisure
- Improving the local environment

### **3. Community Events Fund**

This stream supports annual community events that are open to and benefit the town as a whole.

**Key criteria:**

- Maximum award: £2,000
- At least 50% match funding required
- Events must be inclusive and promote community cohesion or celebration

This is distinct from the Council's own Events Budget, which is used for events delivered directly by the Town Council.

## **Carterton Town Council – Grant Agreement**

This Agreement is made between Carterton Town Council (“the Council”) and the organisation named below (“the Recipient”).

Project/Event Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Awarded: £\_\_\_\_\_

Funding Stream:

☐ Service Level Agreement (SLA) ☐ General Grant ☐ Community Events Fund

### **1. Purpose of the Grant**

The grant must be used solely for the project or service described in the approved application dated \_\_\_\_\_, namely:

[Insert short description of the project/service]

### **2. Terms and Conditions**

1. Use the grant only for the approved project/service.
2. Return any part of the grant that is unspent or used for non-approved purposes.
3. Provide a short written report to the Council within 8 weeks of project/event completion (or annually for SLAs), detailing: activities delivered, outcomes/benefits to Carterton residents, and evidence of spend (e.g., receipts/invoices on request).
4. Publicly acknowledge Carterton Town Council’s support in publicity materials, social media, and at events.
5. Maintain proper governance and financial management, and provide accounts/budgets if requested.
6. Ensure appropriate policies are in place, including: safeguarding (where activities involve children/vulnerable adults), Public Liability Insurance (£5m minimum), and risk assessments/statutory permissions (for events).
7. Inform the Council immediately of any significant changes to the project, organisation, or finances.
8. Comply with all relevant laws and regulations, including data protection and equality legislation.

### **3. Payment**

Grants are paid by BACS upon receipt of a signed agreement. For SLA or larger awards, payments may be staged against milestones.

#### **4. Clawback**

The Council reserves the right to withhold, suspend, or recover the grant if:

- The Recipient breaches this Agreement;
- The project does not proceed as outlined;
- The Recipient becomes insolvent or ceases operating;
- Funds are misused or unspent.

#### **5. Duration**

This Agreement is effective from the date signed and continues until the project/event has been completed and the required reporting submitted.

Signed for and on behalf of Carterton Town Council

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed for and on behalf of the Recipient

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## **Carterton Town Council – Grant Outcome Report**

This form should be completed and returned to Carterton Town Council within 8 weeks of completing your project or event. For Service Level Agreements (SLAs), an annual report is required.

### **1. Organisation and Project Details**

Organisation Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project/Event Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Grant Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Grant Awarded: £\_\_\_\_\_

### **2. Activities Delivered**

Please describe what you did with the grant (include key activities, dates, and locations):

---

---

### **3. Outcomes and Impact**

Please describe the difference the grant made to Carterton residents (e.g. number of people reached, benefits to health/wellbeing, community engagement, environment, etc.):

---

---

### **4. Financial Report**

Please provide a breakdown of how the grant was spent. Attach receipts/invoices where possible.

---

---

### **5. Publicity and Acknowledgement**

Please confirm how Carterton Town Council's support was acknowledged (e.g. publicity materials, social media, press coverage):

---

---



## **6. Supporting Evidence**

Please attach any photos, press cuttings, or links that demonstrate the success of your project/event.

## **7. Declaration**

I confirm that the information given above is accurate and that the grant was used for the purposes approved.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Councillor Email Addresses – gov.uk vs Gmail

### Background

Carterton Town Council staff currently use *@carterton-tc.gov.uk* email addresses linked to the Council's website domain and managed by our IT providers, Cloudy IT.

Councillors currently use Gmail addresses in the format *cllr.name@gmail.com*. This approach was adopted due to concerns about:

- Possible clashes for councillors who also serve as district/county councillors ("double hatters" or "triple hatters"), and
- The cost of providing Microsoft 365 accounts for all councillors.

This note sets out the pros and cons of providing councillors with official gov.uk addresses, compared with continuing the current practice.

---

### Advantages of gov.uk email addresses

#### 1. Professionalism & Credibility

- A gov.uk address signals official council business and can increase public confidence.
- Helps distinguish councillor correspondence from personal or party-political emails.

#### 2. Data Protection & Compliance

- Easier to demonstrate compliance with GDPR and FOI requests if council emails are clearly separated.
- Reduces risk of personal data being mixed with private Gmail accounts.

#### 3. Information Security

- Central control (backup, retention, password resets, two-factor authentication) strengthens resilience against cyber threats.
- Aligns with NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre) and NALC (National Association of Local Councils) best practice which advises against councillors using gmail.

#### 4. Consistency & Audit Trail

- Uniform format (e.g., *cllr/firstname.surname@carterton-tc.gov.uk*) improves transparency and simplifies archiving.
- Supports record-keeping, especially when councillors leave office.

## **5. No clash for “double hatters”**

- The advice from Cloudy IT is that different tiers of local government can all issue distinct gov.uk addresses (e.g. john.smith@carterton-tc.gov.uk, john.smith@westoxon.gov.uk).
- It is common and manageable for councillors to hold more than one official account.

---

## **Disadvantages / Challenges**

### **1. Cost**

- Requires licensing (e.g., Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace for gov.uk domains). Approx. £4–£6 per user per month for basic mailbox functionality.
- For 16 councillors, this would be £1,000 - £1,200 per year.

### **2. Management Overhead**

- IT support required to create, maintain, and close accounts.
- Councillors will need training and occasional technical support.

### **3. User Experience**

- Some councillors may find it inconvenient to manage multiple inboxes (especially if they also hold WODC or OCC addresses). Forwarding rules can mitigate this.

### **4. Limited Term of Office**

- Turnover of councillors means accounts will need regular setup and deactivation.

---

## **Conclusion / Decision Point**

- Using gov.uk addresses would improve professionalism, compliance, and security.
- The main downsides are cost and councillor convenience, though both may be less significant than originally thought.
- Double-hatting is not a barrier, as councillors can hold multiple gov.uk addresses for different authorities.

**Recommendation:** The Committee may wish to weigh the reputational and compliance benefits against the annual cost, and consider whether to:

1. Provide gov.uk accounts to all councillors;
2. Provide gov.uk accounts only to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and committee chairs;  
or
3. Continue with Gmail accounts but introduce clearer policies on use, retention, and FOI compliance.



# Social Media Policy

## Carterton Town Council

September 2024



## Contents

### 1. Introduction

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables the Town Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

The Council has a website, a Facebook page and uses email to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. Over time the Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur this policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

The Council's social media intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within our Town and promote our community positively.

#### 1. Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:

- Be civil, tasteful and relevant;
- Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libelous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;
- Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;
- Not contain any personal information.
- If it is official Council business it will be moderated by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to the Council;
- Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political advertising.

In order to ensure that all discussions on the Council page are productive, respectful and consistent with the Council's aims and objectives, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abuse of language will not be tolerated.
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged,  
  
but personal attacks on anyone, including the Council members or staff, will not be permitted.

- Share freely and be generous with official Council posts, but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- Stay on topic.
- Refrain from using the Council's social media for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products

The site is not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, we will endeavor to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities. Please do not include personal/private information in your social media posts to us.

Sending a message/post via social media will not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the council staff and/or members of the council by emailing.

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- Obscene, harmful or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements.
- Plagiarized material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Allegations of a breach of a Council's policy or the law

The Council's response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received.

Any information or comments posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page.

If the post alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Council or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

## **2. Town Council Website.**

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information, or we may forward their question to one of our Councillors for consideration



and response. We may not respond to every comment we receive, particularly if we are experiencing a heavy workload.

**Town Council email.**

Email accounts are monitored mainly during office hours, Monday to Friday, and we aim to reply to all questions sent as soon as we can. An 'out of office' message should be used when appropriate.

Officers are responsible for dealing with email received and passing on any relevant mail to members or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Clerk or Deputy Clerk, and/or otherwise will always be copied to the Clerk. All new emails requiring data to be passed on, will be followed up with a Data consent form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence.

Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with residents in relation to their own personal views, if appropriate, copy to the Clerk.

NB any emails copied to the Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act.

These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

Do not forward personal information to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

Staff and Councillors should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply to All' option if at all possible, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed if possible.

**SMS (texting).**

Members and staff may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

**Video Conferencing.**

If this medium is used to communicate, please note that this policy also applies to the use of video conferencing.

Internal communication and access to information within the Council. The Council is continually looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement.

### **Responsibilities of Members**

Councillors must remember that they are personally responsible for the content they publish on any form of social media.

It is good practice for councillors to clearly separate professional, personal, or political aspects of their communication.

Councillors must ensure that they are familiar with the guidance that is set out within this policy and that their use of social media is not damaging to the reputation of the authority.

Social media sites are in the public domain and it is important that councillors are confident about the nature of the information they publish. They must not publish or report on meetings or discussions that are meant to be private or internal to the Council.

As more and more information becomes available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be seen as a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal investigation).

### **Responsibilities of Officers**

Officers using social media in a personal capacity must ensure that this use is strictly personal, and not professional or political.

As members of the public may nevertheless recognise officers as employees of the Council it is important that officers ensure that their personal use of social media is not damaging to the reputation of the Council.

If an officer receives any threats, abuse or harassment from members of the public through their use of social media then they must report such incidents to the Town Clerk.

Where officers use social media in a professional capacity to represent the town council, the town council's corporate identity will be used and not that of any individual officer.

Town council email addresses will be used. The use will be non-party political. Officers must not download any software, shareware or freeware, unless this has been approved and authorised by the Town Clerk.

Failure to comply with the guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken

### **Accessibility**

These guidelines are intended to help the Council create social media content that is accessible to people with disabilities. Since, in many cases, there are limitations to the accessibility of a platform, one should check its associated documentation to determine which of its features support accessibility.

### **Alternative Text Descriptions for Images**

When social media platforms allow for alternative text descriptions on images, you should provide them. Such text descriptions of images will be read aloud to non-sighted or low-sighted users who rely on screen readers to consume social media content.

Note that alternative text is only available to screen reader users. If there is visible text in your image that is small, low-contrast or low-resolution (cannot be enlarged), low-vision users who do not use a screen reader may not be able to read it.

### **Captioning of Videos**

For video content, the Council should provide captions of the audio for the benefit of those without hearing, who are hard-of-hearing, and who are non-native speakers. Captions can be either closed captions (where a user can turn them on and off) or open captions (where the text is embedded into the video and cannot be turned on or off).

### **Context for Animated GIFs**

On platforms that allow for alternative text descriptions on GIFs, the Council should provide them in the same manner as for still images.

Note that this alternative text is only available to screen reader users. Many users who do not use screen readers may have trouble reading images of text in a GIF that are low-resolution, low-contrast, distorted or only shown briefly.

In either case, make sure the post can be understood through its non-graphical text alone, even if this means the text seems visually redundant to the image.

### **CamelCase Hashtags**

Hashtags are an important component of social media posts. When authoring hashtags that are made up of multiple words, use initial capitalization, also known as CamelCase. Utilizing this simple technique makes the hashtag easier to read for all users and is more consumable by screen readers since their synthesized voices can recognize and pronounce individual words, and won't concatenate and garble them.

