

CouncilHive

Council Hive empowers parish and town councils to communicate more effectively and compliantly with their communities, by providing access to expert advice and easy-to-use resources covering all aspects of community engagement, communication and GDPR/FOI.



BREAKTHROUGH
COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALISTS IN CONNECTING COUNCILS WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES

Introducing Breakthrough Communications



We're passionate about connecting councils with their communities

Who we are and how we support local councils

We're Breakthrough Communications, a specialist communications and compliance company that helps local councils communicate with their communities in a more efficient and compliant way.

Our team have decades of combined professional experience in the world of communications and engagement as well as information governance and compliance - *and many of us have been councillors and clerks.*

We're proud to be the National Association of Local Councils' national partner for council communications and compliance advice, services and support.

We work with and directly support hundreds of parish and towns right across the country, as well as partnering with over 30 County Associations of Local Councils

Our work supporting local councils across the country includes:

- Workshops and training courses in a range of technical and soft skill subjects covering all aspects of communications, community engagement and compliance.
- Tools and toolkits for local councils, providing on-demand access to a range of professional advice, support, guidance and resources that adds value to their work.
- We work directly with councils to enhance their community engagement work, and support them on specific projects.
- Together with our legal and professional partners, we provide local councils with GDPR and FOI training, advice, support and done-with-you services.

We're proud to be NALC's national partner for local council communications and compliance

| nalc



Council Hive is a unique subscription service that empowers town and parish councils to provide even more effective and compliant communications to the community.

Local councils want to have positive conversations with residents in a sustainable and compliant way. Perhaps to share success and important news and updates. Maybe to take the pulse of the community or find out what they think about your services. And to ensure everything you do is GDPR and FOI-compliant.

Unfortunately time constraints, budget limitations, skill shortages, and legislative barriers often hold councils back and make it difficult to 'know where to start'. When it comes to FOI and GDPR it can be hard to know if you're acting in a compliant way. How many times have you questioned what you are doing shortly after sending something?

Council Hive will save your council time, alleviate pressure, and provide expert advice when you need it most; ensuring sustainable and compliant communications every time.

Council Hive provides parish and town councils with access to on-demand and regularly updated training and guidance, templates and resource packs, best practice and much more, covering all aspects of community communications and engagement as well as GDPR and FOI and compliance.

Clerks and any other authorised members of council staff are given their own unique login to the service, so they can access the ever-increasing suite of resources when they wish to do so.

Council Hive Premium also includes ongoing access to our team for advice and support on communications as well as on compliance advice - at no extra cost. From a compliance perspective, this includes advice and guidance on Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information / EIR requests, so the council can ensure it is fully compliant at all times. This also includes best practice advice and guidance on the council's public-facing communications and community engagement.

What's included with Council Hive?

24/7 access to the Council Hive Hub

Our 24/7 access online hub contains regularly-updated resource packs, templates, how-to guides and best practice examples. As a Council Hive subscriber these packs are available to you when you need them. New packs will be regularly added to give you the latest support and advice. The Council Hive Hub includes 24/7 access to:

Council Communications and Compliance Resource Packs

From local council events to the climate emergency, from tourism to council facilities and services; we have everything you need to communicate more effectively. When it comes to GDPR and FOI, we support you through the steps you need to take in order to ensure your council remains compliant.

Online On-Demand Learning Centre

Our ever-growing learning centre of on-demand, bitesize training videos is there for you to refer to whenever you need. Our learning centre covers all aspects of local council communications and compliance. Our bitesize video-based training library includes

- Council data protection
- Freedom of information
- Council social media
- Planning and managing council communications
- Dealing with the press and media
- Software and tools for councils
- And so much more...

Access to regular communications and compliance E-Bulletins

When it comes to council communications and compliance, the only constant is change. Whether it's the latest examples of best practice, legislative updates, or new case law; we'll keep you posted by email with the important things your council needs to know.

Regular virtual masterclasses and workshops (Council Hive Professional and Premium)

Our masterclasses focus on specific needs and issues, rather than being general training sessions. Throughout the year we hold a range of live, virtual masterclasses, where we 'deep dive' into a range of communications topics for councils of all sizes, including:

- How councils can best communicate their work on the climate emergency
- Getting the most from council social media
- Best practice for council print and digital community surveys
- Complying with complex Subject Access Requests and FOI requests
- And many more...

You'll also get access to the recordings afterwards.

Access to Council Hive Magazine four times a year (Council Hive Professional and Premium)

Jam-packed with useful case studies from other councils, examples of best practice, in-depth how-to guides, and so much more; our carbon-neutral Council Hive Magazine is delivered straight to your council office four times a year. Our magazine is a useful physical resource that you can keep and refer back to again and again.

Yearly communications and compliance MOTs and Action Plans (Council Hive Professional and Premium)

Local councils continually evolve, grow, and take on new services and challenges. It's therefore crucial that councils are able to regularly review and assess what they're doing.

Our yearly communications and compliance MOTs help your council understand what's working well, where the gaps are, and to get the most from its communications. The Council Communications MOT works with you to objectively assess your council's communications and engagement with the local community. We will also consider if your council's communications helps to support its key aims and objectives.

Our Compliance MOT focuses on GDPR and FOI issues. We work with you to objectively assess your council's compliance with GDPR, PECR, and FOI legislative frameworks. Following the MOT you'll receive a clear Action Plan detailing what your council should consider prioritising over the coming year

Unlimited access to expert communication and compliance advice (Council Hive Premium)

This is one of the most important benefits of Council Hive, available exclusively to Council Hive Premium subscriber councils.

Our team of experts stand ready to provide your council with advice and guidance on any aspect of council communications, community engagement, GDPR, or FOI.

Unsure whether your council's GDPR policies and procedures are in order? Not sure how to correctly comply with a tricky FOI request? Want to know how to carry out a safe and effective community survey? Want to get the most from a forthcoming consultation? Dealing with a crisis situation and need professional communications support?

Whatever you need help and support with, from a Data Protection, Freedom of Information or Council Communications perspective, our team at Breakthrough Communications has got your council covered.

Council Hive Service for Local Councils

	Council Hive Free	Council Hive Professional	Council Hive Premium
<p>24/7 access to training, templates and resources</p> <p>Our online hub provides access to regularly-updated bitesize training, templates and resource packs.</p>	Very basic content only	✓	✓
<p>Access to regular Comms and Compliance e-bulletins</p> <p>Latest information, news and guidance delivered to your inbox.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p>Access to unlimited virtual masterclass events</p> <p>Throughout the year we run a range of communications and compliance-focused training masterclasses.</p>	✗	✓	✓
<p>Access to Hive Magazine four times per year</p> <p>Our carbon-neutral publication includes best practice, case studies, how-to guidance and so much more.</p>	✗	✓	✓
<p>Yearly Communications and Compliance 'MOT'</p> <p>We'll review your communications and GDPR/FOI compliance, and give you advice for improvements.</p>	✗	✓	✓
<p>Access to our in-house team of local council communications and compliance experts</p> <p>Access council communications and compliance advice, support and guidance, when you need it. It's like having an additional member of council staff on standby, ready to help and assist.</p>	✗	✗	✓
	Free	£993 per year, exc VAT.	£1793 per year, exc VAT.

Council Hive Frequently Asked Questions

We have collated some of the most common questions we get asked by Clerks, Officers and Councillors about our Council Hive service. If you have further questions, we'd be delighted to answer them. Get in touch by email to hello@breakthroughcomms.co.uk or by giving our team a call on 01273 282111.

What types of council will benefit from Council Hive?

Effective and compliant communications matter more than ever, and so parish and town councils of all sizes benefit from our Council Hive service. For smaller parishes, Council Hive saves you time by giving the Clerk and officers access to templates, resources, bitesize skills-based training and more. For larger councils, Council Hive can also provide expert knowledge to add value to the existing officer team.

Is Council Hive worth the investment?

Council Hive will save your council time, alleviate pressure, and provide expert advice when you need it most; ensuring sustainable and compliant communications every time. Council Hive provides parish and town councils with access to on-demand and regularly updated training and guidance, templates and resource packs, best practice and much more, covering all aspects of community communications and engagement as well as GDPR and FOI and compliance.

Doesn't our council already pay for this service from elsewhere?

The tools, resources and masterclasses in Council Hive can't be accessed from anywhere else. We are also the only organisation that provides access to our in-house team of communications and compliance experts.

We are concerned there are other more things we should be focusing on.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that clear communication is key to effective engagement with our local communities. New and emerging forms of communication in particular are important, such as online surveys, virtual engagement meetings and better use of social media. These communication channels allow your council to quickly, effectively and (often) cheaply communicate with the community. Council Hive will support you to get the most from your council's communications. It will also help you to ensure it is done in a compliant way and save you time. There really is no better time than the present to communicate more effectively and in a safer way.

Our council doesn't have a specific budget for this.

Investing in Council Hive is a decision for the council. However, we have found that many local councils have used training, communication and compliance budget lines to support the subscription to Council Hive.

Do we really need everything that Council Hive provides?

Breakthrough Communications has worked with or provided training to hundreds of local councils across the country. We have built Council Hive around what they have told us they need. This makes it unique as it reflects the needs of the local council sector. So even if your council isn't doing something in particular today, it might be doing it tomorrow. Council Hive is a future-proofing investment as well as tool that will support you with what you are doing today.

I have never heard of Breakthrough Communications. Who are you?

Breakthrough Communications are a specialist communications and compliance company that helps local councils communicate with their communities in a more efficient and compliant way. Our team has decades of combined professional experience in the world of communications and engagement as well as information governance and compliance. Many of us have been councillors and clerks.

We're proud to be the National Association of Local Councils' national partner for council communications and compliance advice, services and support. We work with and directly support hundreds of parish and towns across the country, as well as partnering with over 30 County Associations of Local Councils.

We don't have enough time/human resources for this?

Council Hive is designed to save your council time and resources. It will help you to use new technology such as email newsletters and social media more effectively. It will support your council to be more compliant with GDPR and FOI. Our masterclasses, resources and online videos will save the council hours in finding out answers.

The Council Hive Premium Membership comes with direct access to our team. So the next time your council has a question it can get an answer quickly.

Is this something our council can just put off for another year or two?

Effective communications are integral to the work of a local council. It is critical that your community knows what is going on and can have a two way conversation with the council. This will aid your decision making and help to ensure that your council is relevant. Ensuring your council has effective and compliant communications is not something you can put off for another year or two.

Are we tied into Council Hive for several years?

No. Council Hive is a yearly investment for parish and town councils and there is no tie in whatsoever. We'll invite your council to renew each year, and it's entirely up to you whether you wish to renew access to the service.

Rangers Report August 2022

Tip runs

1940KG of waste has been taken to the tip. Most of this is from Path clearing.

Pathways

Just a couple of the pathways that have been cleared this month.



Fly tipping

Fly tipping is a very big problem throughout the Parish. Below you can see some of the things that have been fly tipped.



Household waste and recycling

Some people are still putting their household waste out too early. This is causing littering from where the bags are being split by wildlife and cats.

Cardboard boxes should be broken down and placed in clear recycling sacks and not left on the boundary/ pathway.



Skip amnesty

This month's skip amnesty for Bancroft park and Bluebridge was a great success. Thank you to everyone that helped.

September's skip amnesty will be on Bancroft.

Allotment

Everything is going well at the allotment. Some plots that have become available have been big enough to be split in half. This is helping to get the waiting list down a bit.

David Outram

Parish Ranger Supervisor

Document No: ATCSPC190922



STANTONBURY
PARISH
COUNCIL

Allotment Tenancy Terms and Conditions

Signature
The Chair of Allotment Committee

Date ..26.9.22

Signature
The Chair of Stantonbury Parish Council

Date

Document History

Revised by recommendation of Allotment Committee Meeting	22/09/2021
Adopted and signed off at the Main Meeting	06/10/2021
Discussed at Allotment working group	17/08/2022
Changes applied as per meeting	17/08/2022
Allotment Committee reviewed & signed	26/09/2022
Main meeting reviewed & adopted	5/10/2022

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This Tenancy Agreement is subject to the Allotments Act 1908-1950, to any regulations endorsed by or on this Agreement and to the following conditions.

The Council has the right to alter these 'Terms and Conditions' at any time and notification of these changes will be displayed on the notice boards and through social media including the Parish Website.

1. Definition of Person Eligible to be offered Tenancy of an Allotment Plot

Allotments will initially be offered to residents of the Parish of Stantonbury and at the discretion of the Council. Applicants from outside of the Parish may be offered a plot at the discretion of the Council, providing there are no residents awaiting a plot and at a non-subsidised rental.

Applicants must be over the age of 18. However, children are encouraged to work a small area of a parent's/guardian's plot.

2. Rent

The Council shall fix the rentable value of the Allotment plot annually.

Rents will be calculated on the following basis: - Metres ², M²

Allotment Rents will be notified to Tenants before 1st October of any year.

Allotment Rents will be payable from the 1st October of the oncoming Rentable Year. New tenants will pay pro-rata from this date from the date of offer for the first year and annually thereafter.

Allotments may be paid in full for the Rentable Year.

3. Deposits

New applicant tenants are to pay a deposit of £70.00 when taking up an offer of an Allotment plot. This fee will be returnable when the tenant vacates the site, provided the plot is in as good a condition as it was when first taken over. The deposit can be paid in 2 x 6 monthly instalments.

There is a £10.00 key deposit for the toilet facility payable to the Council. The toilet key deposit will be returned upon surrender of the key. Replacement keys will be charged at cost plus a £10.00 administration fee.

4. Offer of Tenancy

A list of vacant plots will be notified through the Parish Newsletter and the Parish Website.

Residents must apply for an allotment using the Parish Council Allotment Waiting List on the website or by emailing into the office (info@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk) or contacting the main office (01908 227201).

The allotment number, size and rent will be provided. Plots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Where a tenant has previously held a plot and the Parish Council has terminated the tenancy for any reason, the Parish Council reserve the right to refuse applications.

Any applicant that declines an offered allotment and wishes to remain an applicant, will automatically be placed back down the waiting list until the next plot becomes available. All our plots are varied in size and rents are in Metres ², M² (1 Pole is approximately 25 M²).

Unless otherwise agreed by the Council, only one plot will be offered per address within the Parish.

Tenants cannot sub-let any part or all of their plot.

5. Tenancy Agreement

A legally binding written document which records the terms and conditions of letting a particular plot to an individual tenant.

The Tenancy Agreement of an allotment is personal to you as the tenant named in the agreement.

Other workers will be asked to sign a co-worker agreement.

You have no right to pass on your tenancy to dependents. However the Council will treat sympathetically any request from immediate next of kin to continue to manage the plot and a new tenancy agreement will need to be signed.

6. General conditions under which the Allotment is to be cultivated

- a) Use the allotment mainly for the production of vegetables and/or fruit and flowers.
- b) Be responsible for ensuring the plot number is clearly displayed (as supplied by SPC).
- c) Do not plant native trees, fruit trees, bushes or canes, likely to be detrimental to the allotment site. Do not plant within five feet of the Allotment site boundary in the case of soft fruits and within ten feet in the case of all other fruits. Fruit trees should be dwarf/pixie rootstock (M27, M9, M26) and maintained as such. All labels must be left on trees for identification purposes. Photos will be taken for our records.
- d) Use water butts and water from the plunge baths.
- e) Do not use a hose on the allotment site.
- f) Keep the allotment clean, ordered and devoid of rubbish, leaving one metre clear from the boundary fence.
- g) Keep the allotment in a productive state of cultivation and fertility.

- h) Do not cause any nuisance or annoyance to the other allotment tenants or guests. **(N.B. Guests are limited to 4 persons (including any children at any one time)).**
- i) Do not obstruct any path. Paths between plots (known as 'ridings') shall be a minimum of 18 inches in width and shall be part of the tenant's responsibility for good order and maintenance. The tenant's riding for upkeep is on the righthand side when facing the plot. Paths do not constitute part of the allotment plot growing area. Please refer to plot map.
- j) Only prune/cut timber if on their own plot. Outside of our perimeter fence DO NOT cut, prune any timber without the written consent of the Council.
- k) Do not use barbed or razor wire.
- l) Do not use the allotment or its land for 'Trade' or 'Business'.
- m) Do not erect any barrier or fence to define an edge or perimeter of the allotment site.
- n) Do not use cement. All foundations should use paving slabs and soft sand.
- o) Do not deposit onto the allotment site any refuse or waste.
- p) Carpet is banned from the allotment site.
- q) Observe conditions, which the Council consider necessary to preserve the Allotment Site from deterioration. Specifically:
 - I. **At any one time 75% should be cultivated. (Other than raised beds the cultivation area will be the ground soils and does not include any other receptacles growing plants).**
 - II. **At any time during the tenancy year, fallow land is to be covered in black matting to prevent growth of weeds. (Matting is available at cost price from the Parish Council).**
- r) Only bring onto the Allotment Site dogs that are restrained by a leash. Any dog fouling must be cleared by the owner.
- s) Livestock (chickens and rabbits) are permitted.
- t) Do not snare, trap, poison any vermin or bird or wild animal. Advice can be sought from the Parish office if a nuisance animal is identified.
- u) Keep a watchful eye for Japanese Knotweed, marijuana or any other invasive or illegal species of plant. The Parish office is to be notified immediately if any such species is identified.
- v) Do not take vehicles beyond the carpark into the Allotment Site.
- w) Tenants are responsible for shutting the gate upon entry or exit at all times.
- x) Speed limit of 5mph on allotment where applicable

The Parish Council will undertake regular inspections of plots. The tenant of any plot that fails to meet the standards set out above will be notified of the termination of their tenancy. The decision of the Council is final.

7. Structures

Structures (sheds, greenhouses and polytunnels) are not to be erected without the permission of the Allotment Committee. A condition for permission is that they will be removed at the end of the tenancy.

One structure is permitted per allotment plot. At the discretion of the Council an additional structure may be allowed. However permission is required (requests could be denied due to size of the plot).

Any structure containing glass will be regularly inspected by the Allotment Manager. Repairs or remedial action needed to maintain a safe environment will be notified to the tenant and must be completed within 30 days. Failure to address the Council's concerns will lead to possible termination of the tenancy.

The Council reserves the right to demolish any structure that is deemed unsafe by the Allotment Manager or our advisors.

Structures must be securely fixed to the ground.

The Council is not responsible for any structure on the Allotment Site.

Glass is permitted in new structures.

8. Bonfires

Bonfires and incinerators are not permitted.

9. Composting

Composting is recommended.

Waste not suitable for either composting or waste collection should be taken to one of the MKC household waste centres.

10. Safety and Duty of Care. (Own and Guests)

All persons on the Allotment Site are responsible for their own safety.

Tenants are responsible for the safety of any guests including children they may bring onto the allotment site and do so at their own risk. The tenant is responsible for reminding their guests of their Health and Safety obligations.

Stantonbury Parish Council cannot accept liability for any injuries incurred due to any unsafe behaviour or unsafe environment.

The terms and conditions noted in this agreement apply to guests irrespective of age.

Tenants should notify the Council of any safety concerns.

Tenants have a duty of care especially with respect to the following:

- The timing and use of mechanical equipment such as a strimmer or rotavator
- Petrol, oil and gas should be stored safely in a metal cabinet
- The prevention of obstruction of paths and ridings
- The sturdy construction of any structures or features on the plot
- The safe application and storage of pesticides, weed killers and fertilisers, petrol and diesel
- The safe storage and use of tools
- The removal of broken glass and other hazardous materials, such as asbestos, in a safe and timely manner
- The security and maintenance of structures on their plot. The plot holder must maintain third liability insurance for potential injury or damage to persons or property on adjacent plots should any structure on their plot cause injury or damage to them or their property. Bradwell Road Allotment Tenants Committee (BATs) can provide details of their insurance cover

11. Termination of Tenancy Agreement.

11.1 Termination of Agreement through Rent Arrears.

Tenants in more than one calendar month of rental arrears will be notified by recorded letter and given fourteen days to clear the arrears. Any tenant with arrears after the fourteen-day notification period will forfeit the allotment with immediate effect.

11.2 Termination of Agreement through non-observance of the Terms and Conditions.

Tenants not complying with the terms and conditions will be notified by recorded letter and given 14 days to bring the allotment to the required standard. If the tenant fails to bring the allotment to the required minimum standard the following will apply:

For tenants who fail to comply with our terms and conditions after the 14 days, a new inspection will be carried out and a notice of seven days will be given to terminate and remove all possessions. During any part of this period, the Council's Allotment Manager will be available and willing to meet any tenant on site.

11.3 Termination of Tenancy Agreement due to the land being required for purposes other than agriculture.

Should the allotment be acquired by the Council for building, engineering, invasive weed suppressant or some other such purpose then the Tenant will be given a minimum of one month's notice of termination of the Agreement by registered letter. The tenant will be liable for rent up to the date of termination. Where the rent has been paid in full unused rent will be reimbursed.

Wherever possible an alternative plot will be offered ahead of the chronological list in these circumstances. The alternative plot will be subject to a new tenancy agreement which will be in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.

11.4 Termination of Tenancy Agreement by the Tenant.

The Tenant is required to give one months' notice of Termination of their Agreement.

11.5 Termination of Tenancy Agreement by the Tenant moving from the Parish.

Tenants moving from the Parish and over a mile outside our boundary will automatically have their Agreement terminated one calendar month after leaving the Parish. Tenants are required to notify the Council of any moves.

Any structure may be left on the plots only with prior agreement with the Council after an inspection.

The value of refund of the deposit will depend on the condition in which the allotment is handed back to the Council and will be subject to inspection by the Allotment Manager.

Where the condition of the allotment requires reinstatement at costs beyond the value of the deposit, the tenant may be charged a clean-up cost in addition to forfeiture of their whole deposit.

12. Transfers

Any tenant wishing to transfer to a larger plot or down-size to a smaller plot must apply in writing to the Parish Council. The same provisions for waiting for a suitable allotment will apply.

13. Stantonbury Parish Council Inspections

There will be regular inspections by the Allotment Manager (Parish Ranger) to establish that the Agreement Terms and Conditions are being met throughout the year. Photos will be taken at these inspections if the plot is not being cultivated as required.

During the growing season a minimum of 75% of the plot is expected to be cultivated.

14. Communication

The Tenant shall give notice in writing to the Council of any change of address within twenty-eight days of such change.

15. Participation in the Parish Council Allotment Committee

The Parish Council welcomes resident and tenant participation at its Council meetings. Participation in the Council allotment meetings does not carry any voting entitlement.

16. Complaints

Complaints will be dealt with as follows:

- i) Threats against a person either physical or verbal will be automatically referred to the police. Upon any conviction of the plot holder he/she will forfeits the plot.
- ii) Any plot holder under investigation by the police for such potential crimes will be asked to withdraw from the plot during the investigation.
- iii) Multiple complaints/disputes between a plot holder and other tenants. The plot holders will be required to put their complaints in writing. The Parish Council will investigate the complaints and if upheld, the offending plot holder will have his/her tenancy terminated with immediate effect. The Parish Council's decision will be final.

17. Public Liability Insurance

Once the tenant has accepted the allotment plot the tenant becomes responsible for the Public Liability, Health & Safety and all other aspects of the plot that could lead to a claim being made against them personally. The Parish Council requires all tenants to obtain insurance to cover this. Failure to do so within 21 days of taking the tenancy or annually thereafter, 11. paragraph 2 will apply.

At the time of distribution BATS (Bradville Allotment Tenants) hold a Public Liability certificate for all tenants. The responsibility will be with the plot holder to ensure that this is in place for their plot.

The tenant will need to ensure that they either register with BATs or purchase their own insurance. Tenants could consider joining an allotment association such as NSALG or SWCAA, which includes insurance with their membership.

18. Definition and Interpretation of these Terms and Conditions

Throughout this Agreement and Terms and Conditions the expression '**The Council**' and '**The Parish Council**' shall mean Stantonbury Parish Council and includes any Committee of the Council or staff assigned to manage the Allotments.

The term '**Allotment plot**': A delineated area of ground owned and/or administered by Stantonbury Parish Council and leased to an individual or group for the purposes of growing food for personal or community use.

The term '**Allotment site**': A collection of allotment plots.

The term '**Allotment Manager**' shall apply to any member of staff assigned by the Council under the Allotments Act 1908-1950 and local Government Act 1972

The word '**Act**' shall mean the Allotments Act 1908-1950.

The expression '**Allotment**' means the Allotment Gardens situated adjacent to Bradwell Road, Milton Keynes MK13 7DH

The word '**Cultivation**' means keeping the plot in good productive order by:

- The maintenance and improvement of the soil
- The control and prevention of weeds
- The planting and maintenance of, herbs, flowers, fruit, vegetable crops and recreational gardening. Wildflowers and flowers should not exceed 10% of the plot
- The non-cultivation, up to 25% max of the plot may be left fallow each season

The term '**Soil fertility**' refers to the ability of a soil to sustain agricultural plant growth

The term '**Growing Season**' means the period of time from 1st April to 1st October.

The term '**Out of Season**' means the period of time from 2nd October to 31st March.

The term '**Rentable Year**' means the period from 1st October to 30th September.

The term '**Guest**' means any individual present on an allotment at the invitation of the tenant.

The term '**Structure**' means any building erected on the Allotment for storage purposes or to house animals irrespective of the materials, shape, height, length or width.

SPC Devolved Services Overview

Produced by Councillor Morgan, Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer.

- SPC have previously confirmed their intention to MKCC to take on Devolved Services from April 2023.
- Following the request of 2 councillors we are revisiting this decision.
- MKCC have given us permission to change the decision made at the Main Meeting held on 16th March 2022.
- We must therefore resolve whether or not to take on the Devolved Services.
- The contract start date has been rescheduled by MKCC and is now due to start 4th Sept 2023 (if necessary, we could request a further delay, although it is not guaranteed to be agreed).
- If SPC resolve not to proceed, the next opportunity to take on the Devolved Services will not be until 2028.
- If SPC resolve to take on Devolved Services, there must be an immediate action plan of evaluating our *preferred* option for the initial delivering of services to our residents.
- MKCC have a specific programme to offload these devolved services, and many local councils are already on board or considering it.
- MKCC have stated there will be 2 x Serco Staff TUPE over to us, which we will meet 3 months before the contract starts. (This needs careful evaluation if we decide to contract out)
- SPC have the opportunity to deliver a better local landscaping service to its residents.
- The area of North Bradville is under the Estate Renewal program and the landscape will be dealt with by MKCC for the duration of the renewal works.
- SPC has specific reserves of £287,085.03 for Devolved Services.
- These reserves are ring-fenced until they become obsolete, at which point the council must resolve how to use the reserves.

Summary of feedback from other local councils

Campbell Park Parish Council – In-house

After a challenging start in the first couple of years, they appear to be successfully delivering the landscaping services in-house. It takes up a lot of their resources, and the 2 staff from Serco are still with them. They have a large team and a purpose-built facility for storing and maintaining their equipment. They undertook a resident survey before increasing the precept to cover the additional costs that were required.

Stony Stratford Town Council – Contract out

The money they received from the council is enough to cover the landscape work without the need to increase the precept – Stony subcontract the work out and they did not have to take the Serco workers.

West Bletchley Town Council – Contract out

One of the original councils who took on the devolved services, they have always contracted the services out. They have a large area to cover and have acquired additional land in their Parish since taking the services on. They were not required to take on Serco staff. They have developed a comprehensive work specification that ensures their chosen contractor delivers above and beyond the service which would be available from MKCC.

Woughton Community Council – In-house

One of the highest precepts per band D in the country, WCC appear to have struggled with delivering on the Devolved Services and the additional workload it has created. They continue to receive a high volume of trivial complaints on a regular basis from residents which creates work for the office staff.

How could SPC deliver the Devolved Services Landscaping services?

IN-HOUSE	CONTRACT OUT	HYBRID
Additional Depot / Storage needs acquiring or developing (timescales)	No depot/storage	Contract out larger works only
Schedule of Works	ITT documentation required	BOTH
Research and investment in lawn-mowers and other capital equipment such as vans, shredders etc	No start-up costs	Allows time to properly evaluate the full cost options of equipment procurement / hire
Supplementary Staff including Management – high additional costs	Contractor could utilise the SERCO staff, managed by existing staff	
Tools, Training & PPE		
Appropriate Insurance		
Software/System for dealing with resident requests	Minimal update to website	
Resident consultation if loan required		
High risk	Low risk	Medium risk

Effect on precept - assuming no change to budgeted expenses, however it should be noted that costs have risen so this will result in SPC having to prioritise services on offer.

Simple Financial Analysis	Tax Base (2022/23)	3200.4			
		Scenarios			
	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
Income from MKC for DS	£ -	£ 75,000.00	£ 75,000.00	£ 75,000.00	£ 75,000.00
Cost to deliver Devolved Services	£ -	-£ 85,000.00	-£ 100,000.00	-£ 115,000.00	-£ 150,000.00
Shortfall	£ -	-£ 10,000.00	-£ 25,000.00	-£ 40,000.00	-£ 75,000.00
		Scenarios			
<u>Budgeted Income</u>	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
MKC Grant	£ 9,700.00	£ 9,700.00	£ 9,700.00	£ 9,700.00	£ 9,700.00
Other(Interest, Hub, CP, Grants)	£ 34,176.00	£ 34,176.00	£ 34,176.00	£ 34,176.00	£ 34,176.00
Contribution from reserves	£ 95,000.00	£ 95,000.00	£ 95,000.00	£ 95,000.00	£ 95,000.00
Precept	£ 442,008.00	£ 452,008.00	£ 467,008.00	£ 482,008.00	£ 517,008.00
Precept per Household Band D	£ 138.11	£ 141.23	£ 145.92	£ 150.61	£ 161.54
Increase %		2%	6%	9%	17%
Budgeted Expenses NO CHANGE	-£ 580,884.00	-£ 580,884.00	-£ 580,884.00	-£ 580,884.00	-£ 580,884.00
	-£ 580,884.00	-£ 680,884.00	-£ 680,884.00	-£ 680,884.00	-£ 680,884.00

Outstanding questions

- How much funding will we receive, and when will we find out the exact figure?
- How long will we receive funding for?
- Can we be released from the obligation of taking on Serco staff if we contract out?
- What is the deadline for changing our decision with MKCC?

A meeting has been arranged on 11th October at 11.00am at the SPC office with a contractor who is familiar with MKC landscaping to get more information about contracting out as an option should this be needed.

Stantonbury Parish Council - Bank Summary

Bank Summary Stantonbury Parish Council From 1 August 2022 to 31 August 2022

Add Summary

Bank Accounts	Opening Balance	Cash Received	Cash Spent	Closing Balance
CCLA PSDF - 0143380001PC	200,170.31	340.15	0.00	200,510.46
Charity Bank	120,895.09	0.00	0.00	120,895.09
Co-operative Bank Current	189,617.03	1,173.53	33,334.19	157,456.37
Nationwide Savings	135,806.08	0.00	0.00	135,806.08
Petty Cash	135.70	7.50	5.00	138.20
Santander Current	1,562.66	0.00	0.00	1,562.66
Santander Savings	122,653.13	69.79	0.00	122,722.92
Soldo Prepaid Debit Cards	621.75	2,000.00	168.57	2,453.18
SUMUP Card Charges Taken at Source	0.00	4.58	4.58	0.00
Unity Trust Bank - Instant Access Account	85,124.75	0.00	0.00	85,124.75
Total	856,586.50	3,595.55	33,512.34	826,669.71

This report includes transfers between bank accounts. The dashboard 'Total cash in and out' graph excludes bank transfers.

Sarah Espey

From: Sarah Espey
Sent: 06 September 2022 13:27
To: Nuo Chen
Cc: SBA; Donna Moore
Subject: RE: Stantonbury Parish Council PKF REF: BU0170 - Query raised for AGAR PART 3

Dear Nuo

Thank you for your email below and the opportunity to provide you with further information.

The total value of additional assets purchased amounted to £8253 for IT equipment including laptops and video conferencing equipment. During the year we disposed of IT equipment to the value of £2747 which were outdated computer equipment that were updated with laptops. SPC councillors are now provided with laptops, and staff had laptops to allow them to work from home. Therefore our asset register increased overall by £5506. In accordance with our financial regulations any items valued below £500 are not to be considered assets. I have provided further information regarding items in box 6 you list below, and why these are not assets.

shelter (4k) – This was a match-funding project with Milton Keynes Council, the shelter is owned by them, therefore not included on our asset register.
stationary (£1277) – The figure for 2021/22 was (£1806), this included low cost printers and printer accessories purchased for councillors that do not require putting on the asset register due to their low value.
community asset transfer – The asset transfer was not completed before the year end, but some survey works were carried out incurring expenditure.
computer equipment (£9279) – Not all the equipment purchased in this category required listing on our asset register due to their low values, this included items such as a mobile telephone, accessories, computer monitors, microphone, stand, and computer leads.
one off projects, including CCTV (£17094) – The CCTV expense is for a service provided by Crimewave and therefore not an asset. The rubbish amnesty provided for several skips to be placed around the Parish. There are no items here to add to the asset register.

Should you require any additional information, I would be happy to provide this but would need an extension into next week as I work part-time.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on the telephone number below.

Kind regards

Sarah

Sarah Espey MAAT
Responsible Financial Officer
Stantonbury Parish Council

Tel: 01908 227201
Mobile: 07305 076471

Please note my regular working days are Tuesday – Thursday (5hrs per day)

From: Nuo Chen <nchen@pkf-l.com>
Sent: 03 September 2022 07:19
To: Sarah Espey <sarah.espey@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk>

Cc: SBA <SBA@pkf-l.com>

Subject: RE: Stantonbury Parish Council PKF REF: BU0170 - Query raised for AGAR PART 3

Dear Ms Espey

Further to my previous query, I still have one point that needs to be confirmed with you:

Section 2 Box 6 explanation shows the purchase of a shelter (4k), stationary (£1277), community asset transfer, computer equipment (£9279) and one off projects, including CCTV (£17094) but Box 9 only increased by £5506 – Please could you provide an explanation for the inconsistency between Box 6 and 9.

I would be grateful if you could respond to the query by **Wednesday 7th September** in order for us to complete our work on the file. If you have any queries and would like to discuss them on the phone, please ask for me on extension 9093.

Kind regards

Nona Chen | SBA Team
PKF

nchen@pkf-l.com

+44 (0)20 7516 2200

For and on behalf of

 **PKF Littlejohn LLP**
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United Kingdom

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We have changed our website and email addresses - [discover more](#)

PKF Littlejohn LLP, Chartered Accountants

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Payments Due (retrospective authority)
Stantonbury Parish Council
September 2022

Payables	Description	Total
Milton Keynes Play Association	Summer Events	£2,721.90
Geoffrey Leaver	Legal Fees	£2,278.00
Smiths Fire LLP	Fire & Security Services	£1,466.94
PKF Littlejohn	Audit Fees	£1,200.00
Microsmiths	IT Equipment	£1,106.40
Marcus Young	Waste Management Services	£1,086.72
Total Payables		£9,859.96

Signature: Date:

Chair - Stantonbury Parish Council

Signature: Date:

Payments Made

Stantonbury Parish Council

For the period 1 August 2022 to 31 August 2022

Date	Description	Reference	Amount
01 Aug 2022	Aldi	GP Sundries	£ 0.65
01 Aug 2022	Soldo DD	Bank Charges	£ 12.60
01 Aug 2022	Milton Keynes Council	Rates	£ 836.00
02 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 0.63
02 Aug 2022	Aldi	GP Sundries	£ 1.15
02 Aug 2022	Milton Keynes Council	Rates	£ 177.00
03 Aug 2022	Xero (UK) Ltd	Computer Software	£ 49.20
03 Aug 2022	Smith Recycling (MK) Limited	Skip Amnesty	£ 56.00
03 Aug 2022	Glyn Hopkin Ltd	Vehicle Expenses	£ 744.96
04 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 1.41
05 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 0.85
08 Aug 2022	Aldi	GP Sundries	£ 2.60
08 Aug 2022	O2 DD	Telephone	£ 27.05
09 Aug 2022	BrightHR DD	HR Services	£ 99.62
10 Aug 2022	COOP	GP Sundries	£ 5.25
10 Aug 2022	Top Up Co-operative Bank Current to Soldo Prepaid Debit Cards	Internal transfer	£ 2,000.00
12 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 0.44
12 Aug 2022	Aldi	GP Sundries	£ 1.80
12 Aug 2022	Smith Recycling (MK) Limited	Skip Amnesty	£ 312.00
15 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 0.13
15 Aug 2022	fuelGenie DD	Vehicle Expenses	£ 300.10
16 Aug 2022	Brinnick Locksmiths and Security Ltd	Lock for notice board	£ 9.95
16 Aug 2022	wilko	Hampers	£ 65.00
18 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 0.13
18 Aug 2022	Coach Trip	Refund	£ 5.00
18 Aug 2022	Post Office	Posatge	£ 5.30
18 Aug 2022	Pandora Technologies Limited	Parish Equipment	£ 396.00
19 Aug 2022	Royal Mail	Postage	£ 0.68
19 Aug 2022	Amazon	GP Sundries	£ 7.70
19 Aug 2022	Staff Expenses	Travel Expenses	£ 9.00
19 Aug 2022	Imagin Products Ltd	Stationery	£ 13.14
19 Aug 2022	Imagin Products Ltd	Stationery	£ 13.14
19 Aug 2022	Total Energies DD	Utilities	£ 17.63
19 Aug 2022	Amazon	GP Sundries	£ 29.26
19 Aug 2022	Viking	Stationery	£ 82.06
19 Aug 2022	Viking	Stationery	£ 106.01
19 Aug 2022	HCE Health-Care Equipment	Parish Equipment	£ 107.87
19 Aug 2022	Skyline Taxis	Cllr Travel Expenses	£ 138.20

19 Aug 2022	Viking	Office Equipment	£ 228.90
19 Aug 2022	Jackie Bennett	Cleaning Services	£ 240.00
19 Aug 2022	Walker MK Autos	Vehicle Expenses	£ 456.00
19 Aug 2022	Martin White Football Factory	Summer Events	£ 480.00
19 Aug 2022	D&L Environmental	Enforcement Services	£ 536.25
19 Aug 2022	Martin White Football Factory	Summer Events	£ 600.00
19 Aug 2022	Marcus Young	Summer Events	£ 925.44
19 Aug 2022	Bill's Minibus & Coach Hire	Coach Trip	£ 3,020.00
19 Aug 2022	HMRC	Payroll	£ 3,867.17
19 Aug 2022	Bucks LGPS Pension Scheme	Payroll	£ 4,357.69
22 Aug 2022	SumUp Payments	Bank Charges	£ 0.99
22 Aug 2022	Virgin Media Business DD	Telephone	£ 33.60
23 Aug 2022	Aldi	GP Sundries	£ 16.62
23 Aug 2022	wilko	Hampers	£ 52.95
25 Aug 2022	Total Energies DD	Utilities	£ 114.08
25 Aug 2022	Total Energies DD	Utilities	£ 324.76
26 Aug 2022	Councillor Allowances	Payroll	£ 596.30
26 Aug 2022	Staff Salaries	Payroll	£ 10,548.01
30 Aug 2022	Securitas	Security Services	£ 119.99
30 Aug 2022	The Great Gappo	Summer Events	£ 720.00
31 Aug 2022	Community Projects	Coach Refund	£ 12.50
31 Aug 2022	Society Of Local Council Clerks	Membership Fee	£ 285.00
31 Aug 2022	Mirus DD	Printing Services	£ 340.58
Total			£ 33,512.34

Signed: **Date:**.....

Chair - Stantonbury Parish Council

Signed:..... **Date:**.....

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **Stantonbury Parish Council – BU0170**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with Proper Practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor report 2021/22

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

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

None.

3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature



Date

06/09/2022

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Stantonbury Parish Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2022

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

	Notes
<p>1. The audit of accounts for Stantonbury Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2022 has been completed and the accounts have been published.</p>	<p>This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website. The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.</p>
<p>2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Stantonbury Parish Council on application to:</p> <p>(a) <u>MRS S ESPEY - RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER</u> <u>STANTONBURY PARISH COUNCIL</u> <u>126 KINGSFOLD, BRADVILLE</u> <u>MILTON KEYNES, MK13 7DX</u></p> <p>(b) <u>Available online www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk</u> <u>Or in person by appointment only</u> <u>TUESDAY - THURSDAY 9.30 - 2.30</u></p>	<p>(a) Insert the name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR</p> <p>(b) Insert the hours during which inspection rights may be exercised</p>
<p>3. Copies will be provided to any person on payment of £2.00(c) for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.</p>	<p>(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs</p>
<p>Announcement made by: (d) <u>MRS S. ESPEY - RFO</u></p>	<p>(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice</p>
<p>Date of announcement: (e) <u>09th September 2022</u></p>	<p>(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice</p>

Allocation of Reserves

Stantonbury Parish Council
As at 1 October 2022

Account	1 Oct 2022
Reserves	
3100 General Reserve and Working Capital	£ 167,828.74
3101 General Reserves - Devolved Services	£ 287,085.03
3102 General Reserves - Asset Improvements/Repairs	£ 25,000.00
3105 Specific Reserves - Contribution to Budget	£ 95,000.00
3106 Specific Reserves - Future Election Costs	£ 5,000.00
3107 General Reserves - Insurance/Legal Liabilities	£ 75,000.00
3109 General Reserves - Allotment Emergency Repairs	£ 2,960.00
3110 Specific Reserves - Yellow Lining MM 211/19	£ 20,000.00
3111 General Reserves - Playground Maintenance	£ 10,000.00
3112 Specific Reserves - Motor Vehicles	£ 22,500.00
3117 Specific Reserves - Neighbourhood Plan	£ 2,196.34
3119 Specific Reserves - Dev Serv Feasibility Study	£ 30,000.00
3123 Specific Reserves - Renewals	£ 5,000.00
3125 Specific Reserves - Ward Budget Donations	£ 150.00
Current Year Earnings	£ 75,034.51
Total Capital and Reserves	£ 822,754.62

Journal #13591

Stantonbury Parish Council

ID 13591 2022/23 Reserves allocation MM Sept 2022 (Manual Journal: Posted by Sarah Espey on 7 Sep 30 Sep 2022)

Account	Debit	Credit
3100 General Reserve and Working Capital (3100)		11,690.00
3127 Specific Reserves - PITP 2021 (3127)	1,250.00	
3125 Specific Reserves - Ward Budget Donations (3125)	1,100.00	
3126 Specific Reserves - Ranger Training HRCM 82/21 (3126)	1,000.00	
3124 Specific Reserves - BH MK Surveys (3124)	840.00	
3122 Specific Reserves - Rubbish Amnesty (3122)	5,000.00	
3112 Specific Reserves - Motor Vehicles (3112)	2,500.00	
	11,690.00	11,690.00