



New Council Offices Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Remit

- Phase 1
 - To draw up the physical requirements for the Council Office.
 - To draw up a short list of possible locations in Goring and relevant information, including costings, on each.
 - Taking into account the factors above to recommend to Council
 - the long-term location for the Council Office.
 - the short-term location for the Council Office, pending the availability of the long-term location, if the long-term location involves a new build or long wait.

- Phase 2 – following Council agreeing on a long-term and (if necessary) short-term location
 - To propose a procurement process and schedule for moving to the short-term location (if one is necessary)
 - To propose a procurement process and schedule for moving to the long-term location.
 - To create a fully scoped proposal for the long-term location to include, if necessary:
 - Seeking proposals
 - Where required to define the brief for a professional, expert report from a suitably qualified consultant.
 - Seeking quotes for chosen design(s)
 - Obtaining planning permission if required
 - Seeking funding and where applicable applying for grant funding
 - Organising and managing fundraising projects to contribute funding, if needed.
 - Having regard to the results of the items above to recommend to the Council the most appropriate course of action.

- Where applicable, to work with any other stakeholders, and those using either the short or long term locations, to facilitate the project.

- Regular updates and motions to be brought to the Full Council for approval.

2 Meetings

To hold meetings, as required, to support the remit and scope of the Working Group. These meetings may be virtual.



3 Appointment of Members

The Working Group will be comprised of three councillor members, who are appointed by the full council, with a quorum of two.

A chairman shall be appointed at the first meeting of the Working Group, and the first meeting after the annual meeting of the parish council each year after that.

4 Review

This Terms of Reference document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 11th September 2023, it shall be reviewed periodically.

Signed:

Dated: 11 September 2023

_____, Chair of the Council.



New Council Offices Working Group

Report to Council September 2023

1 Physical requirement of the Council office

Office: containing

- 1 Clerk's desk (1.6m w x 1.2/0.81m d– curved on one side) with chair
- 2 other desks (1m w x 0.6m d) with chairs
- 1 filing cupboard (1.8m w x 0.45m d x 1.8m h)
- 1 filing cupboard (1m w x 0.48m d x 2.0m h)
- Photocopier/printer (0.7m x 0.7m)
- Shelving

Gardiner was 4.0mx3.7m =>14.8m², OJFS office was 4.8mx4.3m => 20.6m²

Meeting room:

Pair of big meeting desks together are 2.46mx2.01m =>5m².
Chairs at desk and around.

Gardiner meeting room was 6.1mx4.7m =>28.7m², OJFS meeting room was 6.1mx4.3m
=>26.2 m².

Storeroom:

two 1.9m long racks for keeping records, files,
safe (0.7mx0.7m) etc etc.

Gardiner pavilion – no storeroom, OJFS storeroom was 4.5mx2.2m =>9.9m²,

Requirement ~15m² office + ~25m² meeting room.

Other requirements

- Electricity / heating / lights / phone /internet / wifi
- Secure access for authorised personnel only.
- access to kitchen space for small fridge/sink etc
- access to Toilet suitable for disabled use
- 2 Parking spaces nearby
- Accessible access route
- A central village location would encourage more interaction with villagers.

2 Short list of possible locations

Freehold properties

Old Jubilee Fire Station – no longer habitable and being sold to medical practise.



GORING-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Gardiner Pavilion – needs to be returned to intended use as Sports Pavilion – ideally before the start of the next cricket season.

Sheepcot Pavilion – nowhere suitable in its current form. Not central to village. Including a Parish Office in any Sheepcot upgrade for sports clubs would complicate fund raising from Sport bodies.

New build www.checkatrade.com/blog/cost-guides/building-cost-per-sq-m/ gave (on 26/8/23) an average UK new build cost as £2,387/m² implying a build cost, including 15% for architect fees etc, for 40 m² of ~£110,000.

Leasehold Properties

Commercial properties – there is no obvious commercial location. Commercial rents are high (eg £30,00 per annum for 138m² office space in the Boathouse - equivalent to £8,700 per annum for 40m²) compared to the Community centre option (see below).

Village Hall – no suitable location.

Community Centre – the East Wing of the Community Centre (CC) (area ~40m² - 8.5mx4.8m) is available as a self-contained unit with access from both a hall via a private front door, with disabled access ramp, and from the car park via a communal door.

- Large light room with potential to split into two independent areas using modern 100 insulated partition and solid door.
- The CC would arrange for work to reconfigure it into two parts, (office and meeting room), and improve thermal efficiency, security, lighting and electrical power points.
- A rough mock-up of how the area might be configured into two parts, one for offices (4.8mx3.63m => 17.4m²) and one for small meetings (4.8mx4.85m => 23.3m²) is on the following page with photos of the unsplit room on the subsequent page.
- Access to kitchen with all appliances, to standard and disabled toilet facilities. Car parking in the CC car park.
- Adjacent rooms are available (hourly hire) if required for larger meetings.

- When the offer was originally made the annual rental was £5,500 (+ payment of heating and lighting costs). So instead of £110,000 for a new build, up to 20 years of rental payments could be covered at the same (uninflated) cost. In view of increased costs since 2021 the CC may wish to increase the annual rent, but it should still be much cheaper than any (non-available) commercial property.

- There would also be a strong community benefit to parish residents because the parish office's presence will help support the finances of the CC which has seen a fall in bookings since COVID.



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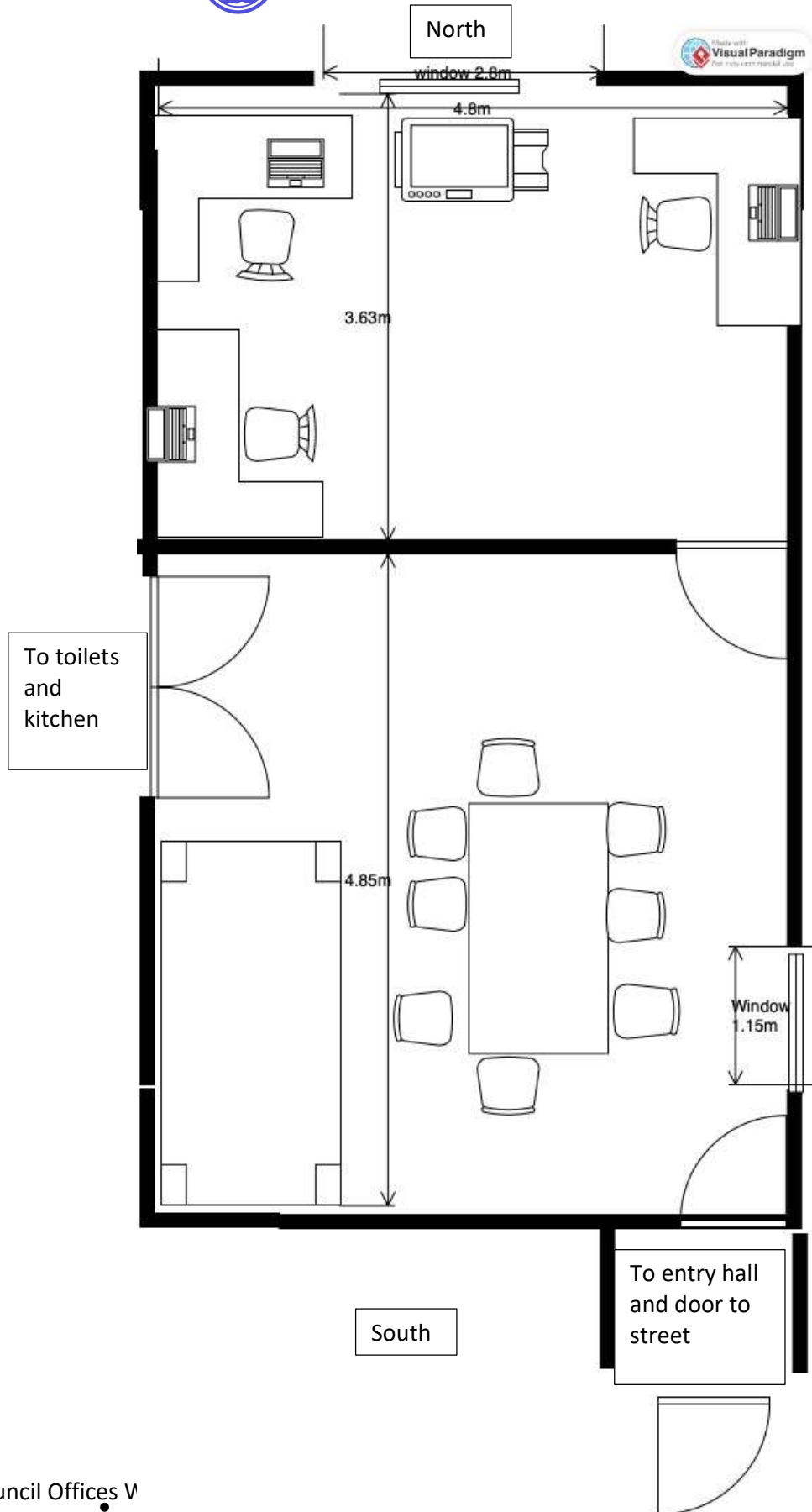




Figure 1 Looking North from entrance door.



Figure 2 Looking South to entrance door and hall.



3 Long-term location

Renting the East Wing of the Community Centre seems a good option for the foreseeable future. In the longer term it might be possible to help the CC purchase the freehold from OCC, which might allow a reduction in rent.

If some suitable Council owned space later became available it should not be impossible to terminate our lease at the CC, although this would be undesirable because of the support GPC should be giving to the CC.

4 Short-term location

No new office can expect to be built on Sheepcot or elsewhere before the start of the next cricket season so, regardless of the choice of long-term location, the East Wing of the Community centre is the preferred short term

5 Motions

- 1) As a short term solution Goring-on-Thames Council wishes to transfer the Parish office to the East Wing of the Community Centre, subject to a suitable agreement.

- 2) To approve the Working Group, together with the Clerk, to negotiate terms of an agreement with the Community Centre Trustees. Full terms and costings to be brought to Full Council for approval prior to any move, which will ideally be complete before the start of the next cricket season.



Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Annual Report

1 Introduction

The Goring-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan (Plan Made -July 2019) is downloadable as 2019-10-28-Goring-NP-made-version-compressed.pdf via the 'Goring Neighbourhood Plan' link at

www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/neighbourhood-plans/emerging-neighbourhood-plans/goring-neighbourhood-plan/

The Monitoring framework is laid down starting on page 119 as follows.

'14.3 Monitoring framework

The Plan contains 20 policies in areas of housing need, site allocation and site-specific requirements, landscape and biodiversity, environmental impact, building design, heritage and conservation, social infrastructure, traffic congestion and parking, and the local economy. The implementation of these policies should be monitored on a continuous basis.

To ensure effective monitoring, a draft framework has been defined in the SA, setting out key targets and measures/indicators for each policy. This will be used to assess the performance of the Plan over its course up to 2033 and will help to address questions such as:

- Are policies achieving their purpose and in particular are they delivering sustainable development?
- Have policies had unintended consequences that were not originally anticipated?
- Are the assumptions and objectives underpinning the policies still relevant and applicable?
- Are the targets, measures or indicators being achieved?

Ongoing monitoring of this framework will give a clear indication of the effectiveness of the Plan. Where policies are ineffective, an early review will be undertaken to inform the actions that need to be taken to address the issues. In addition, GPC will review progress of the Plan at its Annual Council Meeting and publish a monitoring report for the residents of Goring.

The detailed monitoring framework including targets, measures or indicators, the responsible bodies and frequency of monitoring in relation to each Plan policy will be outlined in the Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement issued by the district council.'

2 Adoption statement

The Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement is downloadable as 2019-08-01-Goring-on-Thames-NP-SA-Post-Adoption-Statement.pdf via the 'SA/SEA Adoption Statement' link at the url above.



Page 74 starts

‘The following table provides a summary of the monitoring framework, which will be used by GPC to monitor the Plan. It includes key measures or indicators of success, identifies the authority involved in the implementation of policies and the timescale of progress reviews. It also highlights where CIL money should be prioritised to support the policy or action. ‘

And then has a table covering 20 Policies (P.01 to P.20) and 10 Actions (A.01 to A.10)

3 Process

The Table was imported into two Tables, one for Policies and one for Actions, and a final column labelled Monitoring Notes added to each. The status of each Action, or Policy, was entered into the Monitoring Note column. These notes have been reviewed and updated by the Planning Committee.

The two spreadsheets form the remainder of this document which contains the meat of the Report.

Goring Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring:

Policies

No	Policy Title	Measure, Indicator of Success or Key Milestones	Body Responsible for implementation of Policy	Timescale for Review	CIL other	Monitoring notes
Housing need						
P.01	Number of dwellings to be allocated.	Approximately 94 dwellings to be delivered on the four allocated sites during the plan period.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	On track to to achieve 94 dwellings on four sites using the reserve site GNP8 in lieu of GNP10 which was withdrawn by the owner. ~2 years have been affected by COVID. GNP2 (14 built 2022). GNP3 (20 being built finish 2024). GNP6-main (44 planning permission pending P20/S2488/FUL). GNP6-triangle (3/4 planning permission pending P22/S2363/FUL). GNP10 (intended for ~14) withdrawn by owner and reserve site GNP8 (at least 13) will be activated 31/03/2024.
P.02	Infill	All new planning applications for Infill sites adhere to this policy and the other policies in the Plan.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	Policy factored into GPC planning comments.
P.03	Housing Mix	New builds on allocated sites in Goring will include at least 80% 1, 2 or 3-bedroom units including low cost/affordable accommodation and properties suitable for older people, built to accessible and adaptable dwelling standards (or built to lifetime living standards).	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	GNP2: 4x2-bed 10x3-bed => >100% 1-3-bed GNP3: 9x2-bed, 8x3-bed, 3x4-bed => 85% 1-3-bed GNP6-main: 27 market (7x2-bed, 11x3-bed, 4x4-bed, 5x5-bed), 17 affordable (4x1-bed, 11x2-bed, 2x3-bed) => 80% 1-3-bed GNP6-triangle: planning application not yet compliant GNP8: planning application not yet submitted Note that whilst the GNP sites increase the number of 1,2,3 bedroom units, the planning applications on existing dwellings tend to be to make houses have more bedrooms
P.04	Housing for the elderly	Development of independent living for older people in mixed-age residential areas and development of purpose-built housing for people aged 55+ and/or 75+ will only be supported where it can be shown that existing specialist provision in Goring: *Has fallen below the proportions recommended by Oxfordshire County Council in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment operating at the time; and *Does not have sufficient capacity to meet demand from local residents.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	No such applications have yet been made.
P.05	Affordable housing	On all sites where there is a net gain of 6 or more dwellings at least 40% will be affordable.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	GNP2: not met but paid £320k see P18/S2308/RM Decision Notice. GNP3: 40% affordable. GNP6: 17/44 => 39% affordable GNP8: planning application not yet submitted
Allocated sites						
P.06	Allocated site GNP2	The approved Master Plan for this site includes the site specific requirements defined in this policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	6.1-6.3 OK. 6.4 Screening is there a legal agreement?. P20/S0767/FUL Decision Notice requires landscaping to be maintained in accordance with the approved scheme and any trees or shrubs lost in the first 5 years to be replaced. 6.5 No net gain - contribution paid to SODC in lieu - see P20/S0767/FUL Decision Notice "No development shall commence unless and until a certificate confirming the development shall commence unless and until a certificate confirming the agreement of an Offsetting Provider to deliver a Biodiversity Offsetting Scheme totalling a minimum of 3.17 biodiversity units has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The details of the biodiversity enhancements shall be documented by the Offset Provider and issued to the Local Planning Authority for its records. Reason: To compensate for the net loss of biodiversity resulting from the development by providing biodiversity enhancements off site (Policy ENV3 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 and paragraphs 170 and 175 of the NPPF) 6.6 OK.

Goring Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring:

Policies

No	Policy Title	Measure, Indicator of Success or Key Milestones	Body Responsible for implementation of Policy	Timescale for Review	CIL other	Monitoring notes
P.07	Allocated site GNP3	The approved Master Plan for this site includes the site specific requirements defined in this policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	7.1-7.4 OK. 7.5 being done by recontouring where necessary OK. 7.6 Acceptable to Environment Agency and Thames Water and SODC, OK. 7.7-7.10 OK. 7.11 gain demonstrated. 7.12 OK.
P.08	Allocated site GNP6	The approved Master Plan for this site includes the site specific requirements defined in this policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	The whole site envisaged in NP was not submitted as one site making this difficult to evaluate. GNP6-main (44 planning permission pending P20/S2488/FUL), await result GNP6-triangle (3/4 planning permission pending P22/S2363/FUL) await result GNP6-manage & orchard - no planning application made
P.09	Allocated site GNP10	The approved Master Plan for this site includes the site specific requirements defined in this policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	Site withdrawn by owner - GNP8 to take houses to make up to (at least) 94 total
P.10	Reserve site GNP8	The approved Master Plan for this site includes the site specific requirements defined in this policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	Ongoing	No	GNP8: Not yet available under the plan
Landscape and biodiversity						
P.11	Conserve and enhancing Goring's landscape	No new planning applications are approved unless they adhere to this Policy and the other policies in the Plan.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	The final paragraph of P. 11 means the policy must be borne in mind. We believe it is, but it is impossible to check and monitor this.
P.12	Conserve and enhance biodiversity	All new planning applications demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity and include management plans to ensure biodiversity features are sustainable.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	This is included in the site specific conditions for each site - see P.06 to P.10. Except for GNP2, where a financial contribution was paid in lieu. These gains have been demonstrated for GNP3 to the satisfaction of SODC. GNP6 and GNP8 awaited.
Environmental impact						
P.13	Light pollution	All new Planning applications adhere to this Policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	Yes. This has been adopted for GNP2 and GNP3. GNP6 and GNP8 awaited.
P.14	Air quality pollution	All new Planning applications adhere to this Policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	No pollution source have been identified. This condition is checked by SODC
P.15	Water, sewage and drainage	All relevant Planning applications adhere to this Policy. With specific reference to GNP3 and GNP6; *Developer commits to Grampian condition with relevant authorities; *All relevant authorities agree Grampian condition; *Grampian condition work completed before development commences.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	Reliant on Thames Water to confirm to SODC that this condition is met.
Building design						
P.16	Building Design principles	All new Planning applications adhere to this Policy and adhere to the SODC and Chiltern Design Guides.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	GPC builds into planning comments and rely on SODC to check that this condition is met.
Heritage conservation						
P.17	Historic environment	Any planning applications involving designated heritage assets and their setting include plans to conserve and enhance them.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	No such applications have yet been made.
Social infrastructure						

Goring Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring:

Policies

No	Policy Title	Measure, Indicator of Success or Key Milestones	Body Responsible for implementation of Policy	Timescale for Review	CIL other	Monitoring notes
P.18	Open Space, sport and recreation in new residential Development	All new Planning applications adhere to this Policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	GPC builds into planning comments and rely on SODC to check that this condition is met. GNP6 will include a playground. GPC may use CIL to improve communal sports facilities to accommodate expanded population.
Traffic - congestion and parking						
P.19	Adequate parking within new developments	Routine monitoring of parking provision in Planning applications. All new Planning applications adhere to this Policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	Adequate was defined as 'at least in line with Local Plan guidelines'. SODC now seeks 1 parking place for each 5 residents so GPC cannot require more.
Pedestrian and cycle routes						
P.20	Walking and cycling	Where possible, new Planning applications adhere to this Policy.	GPC Planning Committee and SODC Planning	On submission of all relevant Planning applications	No	Done for GNP2, GNP3 and GNP6 done. GNP8 awaited. In the wider village there is little action from GPC to promote cycling.

Goring Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring:

Actions

Action No	Action Title	Measure, Indicator of Success or Key Milestones	Body Responsible for Implementation of Policy	Timescale for Review	CIL other funding required	Monitoring Notes
Heritage and Culture						
A.01	Conservation Area appraisals	<p>Conservation Area appraisals will be undertaken and management Plans prepared to ensure future development is sensitive and appropriate.</p> <p>* This action calls for engagement between GPC and the responsible body, South Oxfordshire District Council, and Historic England to undertake Conservation Area Appraisals for Goring and Gatehampton Conservation Areas;</p> <p>* Management Plans will be developed for their preservation and enhancement.</p> <p>Resources to address this action will be sought via SODC, in accordance with emerging Local Plan 2033 Policy ENV6.</p>	SODC in conjunction with GPC	Annual at GPC annual general meeting	This is an existing responsibility of SODC	<p>Working Group set up 11/03/2019. Latest reappointment July 2023.</p> <p>Partial draft submitted to SODC June 2021 followed by their 2 conservation officers spending a day in Goring looking at the area and giving feedback. Complete draft text of the Goring conservation area appraisal sent to SODC March 2023. Feedback from the conservation officers has been implemented, photographs have been collected, and maps to accompany the text have been prepared. The Annex cataloguing the buildings of local historic or architectural interest is complete. The draft appraisal is almost complete and should be submitted in early September. SODC may make some changes and will then run a public consultation process before adoption. The form that this will take is still unknown.</p>
A.02	Protecting and repurposing historic assets	<p>Finding new uses for old buildings, listed and unlisted, will protect them and ensure they bring environmental, social and economic benefits for Goring. Listed and unlisted heritage assets should be identified and formally recorded and added to the new Locally Listed Buildings List proposed by SODC, noting their history, assessing their role and value, for example as part of a heritage cluster, a character area or a view. GPC will liaise with SODC, Historic England and local volunteer groups for example, Goring Gap Historical Society and the Goring and Streatley Amenity Association to achieve this.</p> <p>This action will encourage:</p> <p>* Investment in and/or enhancement of buildings and/or spaces between them;</p> <p>* Consideration of potential future uses for vulnerable buildings, for example, conversion of upper floors to flats, or a home for a local museum which would add value to the growing tourism and hospitality economy of the village.</p>	GPC and volunteers	Annual at GPC annual general meeting	Yes, from GPC annual budget	No opportunities have yet arisen to do this. Goring and Streatley Amenity Association no longer exists.
A.03	Co-ordinated use of village hall and room facilities	The Plan proposes that a full evaluation be carried out of the level and nature of present use of the different hall and room facilities leading to the development of a coordinated booking system making all sites accessible through a single point of access. At the request of GPC this process could be led by the Goring and Streatley Amenity Association.	GPC and Amenities Association plus external expertise	6 monthly report to GPC meeting	Yes, from CIL and other sources if CIL funds are inadequate	There is no longer an Amenity Association. The Community Centre were not interested. The Village Hall was not supportive.
Social Infrastructure						
A.04	A Plan for the future of the school	A strategic project should be initiated to determine any need for upgraded, extended or new facilities in Goring Primary School and the best way to provide these. Subject to consultation, the preferred option should be put forward in a planning application to the relevant Planning authority if appropriate or as part of a subsequent iteration of the Plan.	School Governors, Diocesan Board of Education, GPC, SODC, Oxfordshire County Council	Annual, and also strategic project monthly progress report	Yes, from CIL and other sources (e.g. Diocese)	This strategic project ran for some time but as no planning application was appropriate it has now been wound up
A.05	Consider space needed for medical practice	It is not within the scope of the Plan to propose a policy for the Medical Centre but consideration of the relocation of GPC Office and the consequent availability of additional space for the Medical Centre should be reviewed between the parties and agreement on whether to develop a scoping appraisal.	OCC and Medical Centre.	Annual at GPC annual general meeting	From GPC annual budget	Following leaks in office the Old Jubille Fire Station it has now relocated and sale to the Medical Centre is being pursued.

Goring Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring:

Actions

Action No	Action Title	Measure, Indicator of Success or Key Milestones	Body Responsible for Implementation of Policy	Timescale for Review	CIL other funding required	Monitoring Notes
A.06	Improving village centre congestion and safety	This action has already been initiated by GPC and is ongoing	GPC and OCC	Ongoing, monthly at GPC meeting	Yes, from CIL and other sources if CIL funds are inadequate	The Traffic Management, Parking and Pedestrian Safety Committee's actions list logs progress. New actions currently underway include 2022 - 015 a full yellow line review and 2022 - 007 new indicator signs to support the 20mph now in place.
A.07	Improving Wallingford Road access and safety	Implementation of Wallingford Rd to the station pavement improvement proposals.	Mobility Issues Group for Goring (MIGGS)/GPC	Ongoing, monthly at GPC meeting	Yes, from CIL and other sources if CIL funds are inadequate	The Traffic Management, Parking and Pedestrian Safety Committee monitor all pavements and in the first instance recommend to Members of the Public to use the Fix my Street App. New permanent signs to support 20 mph and children crossing on this road are part of Action 2022 - 07
Travel – congestion and parking						
A.08	Stopping illegal use of the High Street by heavy goods vehicles	The Plan supports the monitoring and reporting of illegal HGV movements through Goring to enforce the 7.5 tonne weight restriction to deter HGV movements through the High Street. GPC, Streatley GPC and responsible bodies, namely Oxfordshire County Council and West Berkshire Council's Highways and Trading Standards Departments and Thames Valley Constabulary should devise a strategy to monitor and report offending HGVs.	GPC	3 monthly included in strategic project monthly progress report to GPC	Yes, from CIL and other sources if CIL funds are inadequate	The Traffic Management, Parking and Pedestrian Safety Committee monitors new builds in Goring. New signs to indicate 20 mph will be in place to help slow traffic. Action 2022 007.
A.09	Sustainable village centre parking	A feasibility study, supported by CIL funds accruing to GPC, should be commissioned to develop and consult on options for a sustainable village centre parking strategy. The aim will be to provide a sufficient number of suitably located and managed car parking spaces to sustain the long-term economic, social and environmental needs of Goring. The study should review on-and off-road parking.	GPC	3 monthly, and also included in strategic project monthly progress report to GPC	Yes, from CIL and other sources if CIL funds are inadequate	The Traffic Management, Parking and Pedestrian Safety Committee have initiated a consultation as part of Station Rd Pedestrian safety 2021-004 with inclusion of a full yellow line review in line with sustainable parking. This review should take place Autumn 23. Additionally under 2022 - 013 EV points will be added where possible.
A.10	Rejuvenation of Goring village centre around the Arcade area	An initiative should be taken to redevelop all or the majority of this brownfield site comprehensively and sensitively, with the aim of regenerating the village centre, making it more attractive visually, strengthening the Goring Conservation Area and improving the economic sustainability of the village. Redevelopment could include a mixed retail, residential and office development and additional community facilities such as an outdoor meeting area. GPC will take advice and explore the feasibility of establishing a Neighbourhood Development Order for all or part of the area to secure the comprehensive redevelopment of this important site in the heart of the village for the future.	GPC	3 monthly, and also included in strategic project monthly report to GPC to progress a feasibility report (initiated by GPC), followed by review as appropriate	Yes, from CIL and other sources if CIL funds are inadequate	This strategic project has not yet started. The architect who raised the idea has since passed away, and no member has the expertise to take it forward. Willing property owners and an interested developer would need to be identified. There is also concern that in the current economic climate small shops might not survive any necessary temporary relocation.



RESERVES POLICY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Goring-on-Thames Parish Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the Council. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of reserves.
- 1.2 Local Government Finance Act 1992 s32 & 43 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specified minimum level of reserves that an authority should hold and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Financial Officer to advise the Council about the level of reserves and to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.

2 Types of Reserves

- 2.1 Reserves can be categorised as general or earmarked.
- 2.2 Earmarked reserves can be held for several reasons:
 - a) Renewals – to enable services to plan and finance an effective programme of vehicle, equipment and infrastructure replacement and planned property maintenance. These reserves are a mechanism to smooth expenditure so that a sensible replacement programme can be achieved without the need to vary budgets.
 - b) Carry forward of underspend - some services commit expenditure to projects, but cannot spend the budget in year. Reserves are used as a mechanism to carry forward these resources.
 - c) Insurance reserve – to enable the Council to meet the excesses of claims not covered by insurance.
 - d) Other earmarked reserves may be set up from time to time to meet known or predicted liabilities.
 - e) General Reserves are funds which do not have any restrictions as to their use. These reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cash flows, offset the budget requirement if necessary or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

3 Earmarked Reserves

- 3.1 Earmarked reserves will be established on a “needs” basis, in line with anticipated requirements.
- 3.2 Any decision to set up a reserve must be made by the Council.
- 3.3 Expenditure from reserves can only be authorised by the Council, except that the RFO has delegated authority for up to £5,000 expenditure from reserves between Council meetings, any such expenditure to be reported at the next Council meeting.
- 3.4 Reserves should not be held to fund on-going expenditure. This would be unsustainable as, at some point, the reserves would be exhausted. To the extent that reserves are used to meet short term funding gaps, they must be replenished in the following year. However, earmarked reserves that have been used to meet a specific



liability would not need to be replenished, having served the purpose for which they were originally established.

- 3.5 All Earmarked Reserves are recorded on a central schedule held by the Responsible Financial Officer which lists the various Earmarked Reserves and the purpose for which they are held.
- 3.6 Reviewing the Council's Financial Risk Assessment is part of the budgeting and year end accounting procedures and identifies planned and unplanned expenditure items and thereby indicates an appropriate level of Reserves.

4 General Reserves

- 4.1 The level of General Reserves is a matter of judgement and so this policy does not attempt to prescribe a blanket level. The primary means of building general reserves will be through an allocation from the annual budget. This will be in addition to any amounts needed to replenish reserves that have been consumed in the previous year.
- 4.2 Setting the level of General Reserves is one of several related decisions in the formulation of the medium term financial strategy and the annual budget. The Council must build and maintain sufficient working balances to cover the key risks it faces, as expressed in its financial risk assessment.
- 4.3 If in extreme circumstances General Reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council would be able to draw down from its earmarked reserves to provide short term resources.
- 4.4 Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the Council's finances the Council must keep a minimum balance sufficient to pay one month's salaries to staff in General Reserves at all times.

5 Opportunity Cost of Holding Reserves

- 5.1 In addition to allowing the Council to manage unforeseen financial pressures and plan for known or predicted liabilities, there is a benefit to holding reserves in terms of the interest earned on funds which are not utilised. This investment income is fed into the budget strategy.
- 5.2 However, there is an "opportunity cost" of holding funds in reserves, in that these funds cannot then be spent on anything else. As an example, if these funds were used to repay debt, the opportunity cost would equate to the saving on the payment of interest and the minimum revenue provision, offset by the loss of investment income on the funds. However, using reserves to pay off debt in this way would leave the Council with no funds to manage unexpected risks nor provide a mechanism to fund the planned expenditure for which the reserves were earmarked.
- 5.3 Given the opportunity costs of holding reserves, it is critical that reserves continue to be reviewed each year as part of the budget process to confirm that they are still required and that the level is still appropriate.

6 Current Level of Financial Reserves

- 6.1 The level of financial reserves held by the council will be agreed by the Parish Council during the discussions held regarding the setting of the budget for the next financial year.
- 6.2 The current level of operating reserves to be held by the Council is approximately 40% of the annual precepted figure, this fully covers approximately six months'



expenditure of standard payments. This figure is current £71464 for the financial year of 2023/24. The Council agreed to the following levels of reserves:

EARMARKED RESERVES				
	Account	End Last Year FY 2022-2023	In Year Amendment	Proposed End of Year FY 2023-2024
320	EMR Operating Reserve	71464		71464
325	EMR Tree Felling & Replacement	12000		12000
330	EMR Playground Equipment	20500		20500
335	EMR MIGGS Pavement Widening	5000	-3000	2000
340	EMR Car Park Reserves	12000	2000	14000
345	EMR CIL	68940	-15000	53940
350	EMR Pedestrian Safety	511		511
355	EMR Street Lighting Replacement	41450		41449
360	EMR Covid-19 Response	4555	-4555	0
365	EMR Security	3249		3249
370	EMR Public Spaces Strategy	11007		11007
375	EMR GGBN Reserved Monies	699		699
380	EMR External Audit Costs	0		0
385	EMR WHBG Reserved Plots	5500		5500
390	EMR Summer of Play	0		0
395	EMR Winter of Play	0		0
400	EMR Jubilee 2022	0		0
410	EMR WHBG - 99y Maintenance	5000	1000	6000
415	EMR Public Buildings	8000	5000	13000
420	EMR Election Costs	0		0
425	EMR Freedom of Goring	940	500	1440
430	EMR Previous Financial Year Commitments	0		0
435	EMR 23/24 Sink Reserves		39560	39560
	TOTAL RESERVES	270815	25505	296319

6.3 These levels of Reserves reflect those agreed at the meeting of the Parish Council in November 2022, and also the monies spent from reserves during the remainder of the 2022-2023 FY.

7 Review of the Policy

7.1 This policy was reviewed and updated by the Parish Council at its meeting on 11th September 2023 and will be reviewed periodically, but not less than once per council term (nominally 4 years).

Signed:

11th September 2023
Chair of the Council



CASH RECEIPTS POLICY

1 Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 To ensure the control and safeguarding of cash transactions at the Council
- 1.2 To minimise the risk of loss through fraud, misappropriation or mistake.
- 1.3 The policy applies to Council staff, Councillors and any volunteer or helper collecting money on behalf of the Council.

2 Cash Storage & Banking

- 2.1 All cash must be stored within a locked container. No cash float or Petty Cash is held by the Council.
- 2.2 Cash will only be held where monies have been collected by or donated to the council and must be deposited in the Council's bank account as soon as practically possible after it has been collected regardless of quantity.
- 2.3 When cash is counted on behalf of the parish council, it shall be in a secure location, no cash should be left out unattended or on desks.
- 2.4 There must be segregation of duties where possible. A Councillor or member of staff, not the RFO should receive and count cash receipts, and where possible be present when the RFO records cash payments in the accounting software. Where this is not possible, the person who counted the receipt will keep a personal record, signed by both the member of staff or councillor and RFO of the amount received. This record will be verified against the Bank Reconciliation at the next available opportunity.
- 2.5 To ensure the safety of staff when banking or collecting cash, deposits and withdrawal amounts should be kept to a minimum. If significant cash deposits are to be made, a councillor or other member of staff shall accompany the RFO when the deposit is made. Staff, councillors and volunteers must on no account put themselves into situations of danger and should give up/not seek to recover cash if they are in physical danger.

3 Review of the Policy

- 3.1 This policy was adopted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 11th September 2023 and will be reviewed periodically, but not less than once per 4-year council term.

Signed:

C Ratcliff
Chairman



STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

For the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

1. Scope of the Responsibility

- 1.1. Goring-on-Thames Parish Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 1.2. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

- 2.1. The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.2. The system of internal control is in place at the Council from date of approval for the year ending 31st March 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts in accordance with proper practice.

3. The Internal Control Environment

3.1. The Council

- 3.1.1. The Council has appointed a Chairman who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.
- 3.1.2. The Council has appointed 4 members, including the Council Chairman, to a Finance Committee to meet monthly to work with the Responsible Financial Officer in the management of the Council's financial resources and to consider and recommend strategy and action on policy and operational matters concerned with Council's finances and property.
- 3.1.3. The Finance Committee reviews Council's obligations and objectives and proposes budgets for the following year at its October or November meeting. The November or December meeting of the Council approves the level of precept for the following financial year.
- 3.1.4. The Council monitors progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and carries out regular reviews of financial matters.
- 3.1.5. The full Council normally meets 10 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the Clerk.
- 3.1.6. The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

3.2. Clerk to the Council & Responsible Financial Officer

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

3.3. Payments

All payments are reported to the Finance Committee for approval. Two members of the Committee must authorise all payments.

3.4. Risk Assessments / Risk Management

The Council carries out regular risk assessment in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls including the use of a risk register.

3.5. Internal Audit

The Council will appoint an independent Internal Auditor for the year 2023/2024 who will report to the Council on the adequacy of its records, procedures, systems, internal controls and risk management. The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually.

3.6. External Audit

3.6.1. The Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments organisation appoints an External Auditor for all the Parish Councils within a County. The Council's appointed External Auditor is Moore until further notice. Following completion of the External Audit the annual certificate of Audit is provided, which is presented to the Council.

4. Review of Effectiveness

4.1. The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal controls. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal controls is monitored and informed by:

4.1.1. the Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer

4.1.2. the Finance Committee

4.1.3. the work of the Independent Internal Auditor

4.1.4. the External Auditors through the Annual Return and their annual letter

4.1.5. the number of significant issues that are raised during the year.

5. Review of the Statement

This statement was accepted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 11th September 2023 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Dated: 11th September 2023

_____, Chair of the Council



EXPENSES POLICY

1. Introduction

Goring-on-Thames Parish Council will make reimbursement for all or some of the expenses the Clerk and other staff, and the Chairman or Councillors may meet on its behalf when incurred in performing the duties required by the Council.

All expense claims must be submitted using the Travel and Expenses Claim form (Appendix 1 to this Policy) and accompanied by receipts.

2. Staff, including Clerk

Staff of the Council will be able to claim the following expenses:

- Travelling and associated travel expenses on journeys on council business to include mileage at current National Joint Council for Local Government Services: England, Wales and Northern Ireland (NJC) rates and parking.
 - Where it is expected that these expenses will average a total of £20 per month, only by arrangement with the Clerk, rather than claiming per journey staff can opt for a fixed amount of £20 per month for mileage. A record of journeys taken shall be kept for auditing & monitoring purposes to ensure the Council is not out of pocket. The Clerk may revoke permission for this arrangement giving 1 month notice.
- Subsistence which may include overnight accommodation and meals incurred in the performance of Council business (“other expenses”) provided that the other expenses have been receipted and approved by the Council.
- Small purchases such as postage or supplies in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- The fixed tax free rate for homeworking as agreed by HMRC, to be paid monthly, only when the Council has officially shut the Council Offices, for example during national lockdown in 2020. (Christmas or other holiday shutdown do not attract this expense payment).

3. Councillors, including Chairman

Parish Councillors are unpaid and only councillors may receive an annual allowance if agreed by Council. When this policy was approved there was no allowance budgeted for any Councillor, including the Chairman.

- Councillors (including the Chairman) may be reimbursed for expenses for travel and subsistence on Council business outside the parish:
 - Travelling and associated travel expenses on journeys on council business to include mileage at current NJC rates and parking.
 - For the purpose of making mileage claims, councillors are permitted to claim for “allowable journeys” only – made with the prior approval of the Council.



- All claims are to be made promptly to the Clerk (within 2 months of expenditure) and where relevant MUST be accompanied by a receipt.
- Councillors may be reimbursed for purchases made on behalf of the Parish Council – made with the prior approval of the Council or Responsible Financial Officer.

4. Review

This document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 11th September 2023, it shall be reviewed periodically, at least once per council term or if legislation dictates.

Signed:

Dated: 11th September 2023

C Ratcliff, Chair

[Appendix 1, Claim Form, follows)



EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

Name of Claimant				
Date of Claim				
Milage Claims				
To	From	Date	Miles Claimed	
Total Milage Claimed (number of miles)				
Other Expenses (attach all receipts numbered sequentially to this claim form)				
Receipt Number	Details	Date	Amount Claimed	
Total Expenses Claimed (in GBP)			£	



DECLARATION BY CLAIMANT

I declare the following expenses have been incurred in executing my duties for the Council, and are being claimed in accordance with the Expenses Policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

VERIFICATION BY THE CLERK / RFO

I have verified the expenses and present them to the Finance Committee to be formally approved for reimbursement.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED FOR PAYMENT BY FINANCE COMMITTEE

These expenses were approved for payment at the Finance Committee meeting on (date)

_____.

Confirmation Signatures of 2 Committee Members

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____