



## Policy and Finance Committee

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**Date:** 19 April 2021

**Title:** Policies review

**Purpose of the Report:** To provide Committee with the Policy Index and to agree priorities for review during 2021-22.

**Contact Officer:** Sarah Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk

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<b>Corporate Objective/s</b>	<b>LLTC Five Year Plan – Aim 1</b> (to consolidate processes and procedures, ensuring operational efficiency and a structure which will underpin future service delivery by the Town Council).
<b>Implications:</b>	
<b>Financial</b>	None
<b>Human Resources</b>	None
<b>Operational/Service delivery</b>	To ensure policies and procedures remain current and fit for purpose
<b>Risk/Health and Safety</b>	None

### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should the Committee be minded, the proposals are:

- 1.1 To note the Policy Index and to agree priorities for review in 2021-22 as set out in paragraph 3.2.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town Council has a number of adopted policies and procedures which fall broadly into the following categories:

- Financial
- Data protection
- Emergency and business continuity
- Staffing
- Volunteers
- Grounds
- Councillors
- Risk Register
- General Council administration

- 2.2 A number of key policies are required to be reviewed annually as a priority and these include: Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Controls, Investments and Risk Register.
- 2.3 Other policies may have a fixed review term (e.g. three yearly) or may only require review when guidance or legislation changes. This is often prompted by the publication of a Legal Topic Note or Legal Briefing by the National Association of Local Councils.
- 2.4 Policy priorities in recent years have been largely led by changes in legislation (e.g. the 2018 Data Protection Act including the General Data Protection Regulations, which necessitated the review and development of 7 policies and procedures and The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018), or by Council led priorities (e.g. development of the Council's Five Year Plan for 2019-2024, environmental ambitions etc).
- 2.5 In developing the committee work plan for 2021-22, it is felt that the policy index (**attached**) should be revisited and priorities for review agreed.

### 3. FUTURE WORK PLAN

- 3.1 Staffing policies have been reviewed in conjunction with the Council's retained Human Resources provider (Luton Borough Council), with recommendations being made to the Personnel Sub-Committee on 23 March 2021 to undertake the following work (anticipated timescales yet to be confirmed):

Policy name	Last updated	Comment
Sickness Absence procedure	June 2015	Update required
Disability Discrimination Policy statement	Feb 2011	Update required – Replace with 'Equality in Employment' Procedure
Employee Handbook	Jan 2019	Update required to include cycle to work scheme
Equal Opportunities Policy	Feb 2011	Update required – Replace with 'Equality in Employment' procedure
Eyecare Policy	Jan 2013	Current focus is on VDU users; consider whether to add considerations for drivers of LLTC vehicles
Home working protocol	Oct 2017	May require update – moving forward - Covid
Social media procedure	Jan 2017	Update required

3.2 The Personnel Sub-Committee also noted that a review of the Town Council's Statement of Pension Discretions was overdue and that advice was being sought from Bedfordshire Pension Fund on this. Development of a Flexible Retirement Policy to sit alongside the Discretions would be required.

3.3 In addition to the staffing policies outlined above and the annual mandatory policy reviews it is proposed to add the following to the committee work plan for 2021-22:

Policies/procedures to be created:

- i) Procurement policy
- ii) Tendering procedure
- iii) Asset management policy
- iv) Cash handling procedure
- v) Accessibility of Council meetings

Policies/procedures to be reviewed:

- vi) Councillor/officer protocol
- vii) Leader protocol
- viii) Credit card procedure
- ix) Press protocol
- x) Winter salt policy (as recommended by the Market Sub-Committee at its meeting held 25 February 2021)

3.4 Should Committee be minded to endorse the proposed work set out above, these policies/procedures will be factored into the committee work plan for 2021-22.

3.5 Committee is asked to note that completion of this work is dependent upon sufficient time and resources being available to do so. Any additions or changes to Council priorities or other unanticipated workload may result in policy development/reviews being unavoidably delayed.

**End.**