



Town Council Offices  
Maison Dieu House  
Biggin Street  
Dover  
CT16 1DW

DATE OF ISSUE:  
25<sup>th</sup> November 2024

## DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE will be held at the Town Council Offices on **MONDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2024** at 6pm when the business shown on the agenda below will be transacted.

Any member of the public who requires further information, wishes to make representations to the Committee, or has any special requirements in respect of this meeting please contact Ms Allison Burton, Town Clerk, on 01304 242625.

Allison Burton  
TOWN CLERK

The Press and Public are welcome to attend.

### AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence. *Prior to a meeting Councillors' apologies, with a reason for absence from that meeting, should be submitted to the Clerk.*

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary and/or other interests as required by law. *(Guidance for Councillors concerning disclosable pecuniary and/or other interests is attached for your information).* (Pages 1 to 2).

3. **MINUTES**

To note the approved Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 as resolved at the Full Town Council Meeting, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024, Minute No: 146a.

4. TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- 4a) To note that the schedule of payments for October 2024 were approved at the Town Council's Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024, Minute No: 150a.
- 4b) To note that the budget out-turn to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 was approved at the Town Council's Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024, Minute No: 150b.
- 4c) To note the 2025/26 budget process is underway. Members wishing to make representations should contact the Chair of the committee. The Town Council budget will be resolved at the Full Town Council meeting on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

5. GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5a) To consider the Town Clerk's report dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024 concerning Election costs (Copy attached). (Pages 3 to 4)
- 5b) To note a meeting of the Governance Working Group is being arranged.

6. COUNCILLORS' WARD GRANTS

To note the current situation with Councillors Ward Grants (to follow).

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 @ 6pm.

**NOTE: A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT IN LARGER TYPE MAY BE OBTAINED ON REQUEST FROM THE COUNCIL OFFICES, MAISON DIEU HOUSE, BIGGIN STREET, DOVER.**

**COPIES OF THE DOCUMENTS MENTIONED IN THIS AGENDA ARE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES - MONDAY TO FRIDAY - 9.30am to 4.30pm. COPIES MAY BE REQUESTED GIVING 1 WORKING DAYS NOTICE AND WILL BE CHARGED AT £1 PER COPY.**

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

### Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a Member has a new or registered DPI in a matter under consideration, they must disclose that they have an interest and, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed in advance that the DPI is a 'Sensitive Interest' explain the nature of that interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a DPI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation permitting them to do so. If during the consideration of any item a Member becomes aware that they have a DPI in the matter they should declare the interest immediately and subject to any dispensations, withdraw from the meeting. Members should remember that a finding of a breach of the law with regard to DPI's carries a fine of up to £5,000 and a criminal record.

### Other Significant Interest (OSI)

Where a Member is declaring an OSI they must also disclose the interest and explain the nature of the interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a OSI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation to do so or the meeting is one at which members of the public are permitted to speak for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter. In the latter case, the Member may only participate on the same basis as a member of the public and cannot participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter and must withdraw from the meeting in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

### Voluntary Announcement of Other Interests (VAOI)

Where a Member does not have either a DPI or OSI but is of the opinion that for transparency reasons alone they should make an announcement in respect of a matter under consideration, they can make a VAOI. A Member declaring a VAOI may still remain at the meeting and vote on the matter under consideration.

### **Notes:**

Situations in which a Member may wish to make a VAOI include membership of outside bodies that have made representatives on agenda items; where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person; or where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position. It should be emphasised that an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer etc would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI.





## DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

**Report to:** Finance and General Purposes Committee  
**Meeting date:** 2 December 2024

**From:** Town Clerk, Ms Allison Burton

**Date written:** 22 November 2024

**Subject:** Cost of Elections

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

As a prudent Council, there has always been a sufficient allowance in the forecast budget for Dover Town Council to cover the possible election/by-election costs for the coming year. In a non-election year this has historically been the estimated cost of two by-elections based on the most recent actual costs and this has always sufficed until this year.

### 2. INFORMATION

A by-election was called in St Radigunds following the resignation of a Councillor – as is usual in Dover. Following that election, Council was invoiced by Dover District Council which is the body responsible for holding elections in the district. Costs have risen by 77% largely because of printing, postage and staffing costs. Postage costs have risen again recently since the election.

As a result, a second by-election in this year will lead to an overspend in the elections budget. As there is currently a casual vacancy in Tower Hamlets a second by-election may be called.

Good financial management would authorise a virement from the General Reserve of up to £15,000 should a second by-election be called in this municipal year. Future budget forecasting will take account of the dramatic rise in the costs of elections.

The Mayor and Town Clerk intend to discuss the issue with the Returning Officer at Dover District Council as soon as possible. The Town Clerk has requested that a motion be brought to the National Association of Local Councils as this is an issue which will affect many councils. Elections at DDC has already provided some further information on costs but have said that there is no work currently being undertaken by Elections Officers in Kent to explore new ways of working to reduce and control costs of elections as yet.

3. DECISION

Committee is asked to resolve to recommend to Council a virement of up to £15,000 as necessary if a further by-election is called. Funds to be taken from the General Reserve to the Elections Budget for 2024/25 with all decisions delegated to the Responsible Financial Officer and Town Clerk

Statutory Powers - Local Government Act 1972