

NOTICE OF MEETING

Finance & General Purposes Committee

7.45pm on Wednesday 13 January 2021 (Virtual meeting)

To Councillors

Mrs Barnard, Ms Dulieu, Fitzwilliams, Strudley and Mrs Wallen

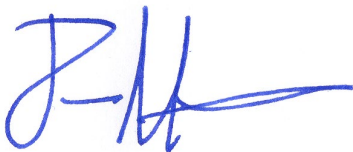
You are summoned to attend a virtual meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on Wednesday 13 January 2021 at 7.45pm

The meeting will take place on the Zoom platform. Please use the link in the e-mail or use the following details

Meeting ID: 881 9681 7251

Passcode: 415222

Any apologies for absence should be communicated to the Clerk ahead of the meeting.



Jason Mawer

Clerk to the Council

The seven principles of public life

Selflessness | Integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness | Honesty | Leadership

AGENDA

Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee

7.45pm on Wednesday 13 January 2021 (Virtual meeting)

Sound recording, photography, filming and use of social media at meetings that are held in public are permitted. Those wishing to record proceedings are however advised to contact the Parish Clerk for further information before the start of the meeting. **This meeting will be recorded by the Clerk through the Zoom platform to assist with the production of the minutes of the meeting.**

No.	Item	Page
001.	Apologies for absence	
002.	Declarations of interest Members are asked to declare any disclosable interest or affected interest in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.	
003.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of 17 December 2020	3
004.	Matters arising from the previous meeting	
005.	Finance update and Write-off proposals To receive an update on the finances to the end of December 2020 and the write-off schedule.	6
006.	Grant applications 2021 To review grant applications considered at the November meeting	8
007.	Draft Budget 2021-22 To consider the second draft and precept consideration for 2021-22	10
008.	Complaints policy To consider and comment on the draft Complaints policy	17
009.	Responsible Financial Officer update To receive a verbal update from the RFO	
010.	Future agenda items and date of the next meeting The next meeting will be on Tuesday 16 February 2021.	27
011.	Closure of the meeting	

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

held **virtually** on **Thursday 17 December 2020** at **7.45pm**

Present: Councillors Strudley (Chair), Mrs Barnard, Fitzwilliams, Ms Dulieu and Mrs Wallen

In attendance: The Parish Clerk

001. Apologies for absence

No apologies were due.

002. Declarations of interest

The following declarations having been made previously, were carried with dispensation from the Parish Clerk granted at the November 2020 meeting.

Cllr Ms Dulieu – treasurer of Warfield Park Community Association and committee member of Warfield Village Fete organising committee

Cllr Fitzwilliams – family interest through employment with Youthline

Cllr Strudley – family interest through employment with Home Start Bracknell

Cllr Mrs Wallen – committee member of Warfield Environment Group and member of Warfield Grow & Share

003. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 24 November 2020 were circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Approval of the minutes was proposed by Cllr Fitzwilliams and seconded by Cllr Ms Dulieu and the minutes were **APPROVED** by members present.

004. Matters arising from the previous meeting

The Communications Working group held its first meeting on 7 December.

Cllr Mrs Barnard joined the meeting

005. Financial Report

The Clerk circulated to members ahead of the meeting the financial report to the end of November 2020.

Members noted errors on the report relating to the allotment budget figures. The Clerk advised that virements within the budget had been made and caused the error and this would be corrected in the next report.

The Clerk updated members on the report. Members were updated on debt collection and asked that the age of debt be reported. The Clerk would bring forward recommendations for debt write off to the next meeting.

Members noted the financial report to the end of November.

006. Draft Budget 2021-22

The Clerk circulated to members the draft budget and precept proposal for 2021-22.

Members asked the Clerk to add additional funds to the Warfield 125 budget and noted the draft budget and precept proposals. The Clerk advised that costs and income projections would be reviewed again ahead of final presentation in January.

007. Grant applications

The Clerk advised members that information requested for this item had been delayed, so it was agreed to carry over to the January meeting.

008. Complaints Policy

The Clerk circulated the revised draft Complaints Policy to members ahead of the meeting.

Members discussed the policy and asked the Clerk to make further changes and bring the policy back to the next meeting. The Clerk would add flow charts of the process to aid understanding.

008. Community Infrastructure Levy report 2019-20

Council delegated authority to the committee to approved the corrected Community Infrastructure Levy report for 2019-20.

Approval for the report was proposed by Cllr Fitzwilliams, seconded by Cllr Mrs Wallen and APPROVED by members present.

010. Responsible Financial Officer update

The Clerk advised members that the change to Tier 3 would have an impact on hire rates, although the Christmas closedown was about to take effect.

The Clerk advised members that 13 applications had been received for the Finance Officer post and shortlisting and interviews would take place shortly.

011. Future agenda items and date of the next meeting

Items for future agenda items were circulated to members. The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 13 January 2021 at 7.45pm.

012. Closure of the meeting

The meeting closed at 8.43pm

FINANCIAL UPDATE TO THE END OF DECEMBER 2020

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report contains an update on the financial report to the end of December 2020. It also contains the write-off schedule.

2.0 Financial report

2.1 Members are advised that at the time of writing, the financial report for the month ending December 2020 was in the process of being compiled, although timing was affected by Christmas delays and the new lockdown regime.

3.0 Debt write-off

3.1 Members asked the Clerk to prepare an initial write-off schedule of bad debts.

3.2 The write-off schedule comprises of two elements. The first, the 2017 debt as this is proving more time consuming than first thought, the second relates to debts where there is no longer an ongoing relationship with the client.

3.3 The debts are anonymised in this report, but are identified by invoice number and value.

3.4 2017 debts

3.4.1 These debts are recommended for write-off due to the time elapsed and the difficulty confirming accuracy. Work will continue to identify and recover these sums and the Clerk would write these debts back if identified and recovered.

Date	Invoice number	Invoice value	Cumulative value
30/04/2017	1158	137.52	137.52
31/05/2017	1190*	24.48	162.00
26/09/2017	1291	137.52	299.52
15/12/2017	1348	171.90	471.42
15/12/2017	1350	123.72	595.39
15/12/2017	1356	98.00	688.14

*There is no ongoing relationship with this party.

3.4.2 The following debts related to parties where there is no ongoing relationship

Date	Invoice number	Invoice value	Cumulative value
5/11/2018	1610	51.00	51.00
5/02/2019	1683	68.00	119.00
30/04/2019	1761	35.00	154.00
1/7/2019	1805	52.50	206.50

3.4.3 The total write-offs submitted total £894.64, which represents 16% of the total recorded debt.

4.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the write-offs listed.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report contains the grant awards previously proposed by the committee. The awards will need to be reviewed ahead of submission to full council for approval.

2.0 Award recommendations

Grant Applications 2021 (expenditure permitted under statutory provisions)

Applicant	Grant requested	Recommended award
Keep Mobile – County Tours	£1,449	£1,449
South Hill Park Trust	£500	£500
Warfield Memorial Ground	£10,000	£8,000*
Total	£11,949	£9,949

*Members asked the Clerk to obtain further information before making a recommendation. This will be forwarded separately.

Grant Applications 2021 (expenditure permitted under section 137 of Local Government Act 1972)

Applicant	Grant requested	Recommended award
1st Warfield Scout Group	£1,000	£1,000
Age Concern Bracknell	£800	£400
Assisting Berkshire Children to Read	£2,000	£1,000
Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre	£375	£375
Berkshire Vision	£440	£350
Bracknell & District Parkinson's Branch	£500	£350
Bracknell & District CAB	£1,750	£1,000
Bracknell North Guides	£840	£840
Bracknell Shopmobility	£1,000	£350
Cruse Bereavement Care	£300	£300
Home Start Bracknell	£1,000	£750
KIDS	£1,800	£500
Pilgrims Hearts Trust	£1,000	£1,000
Relate	£1,000	£350
Spotlight UK	£1,755	£0
St Pauls Child Contact Centre	£150	£150
St Sebastians Playing Field Trust Sports Club	£24,870	£0
The Ark Trust CIO	£1,000	£350

Warfield Environment Group	£178	£178
Warfield Fete*	£2,000	£0
Warfield Grow and Share	£200	£200
Warfield Park Community Association	£1,500	£1,500
Warfield Parochial CC	£1,000	£1,000
Whitegrove Primary School	£800	£800
Wokingham & Bracknell Cancer Support Network	£1,000	£100
Youthline Ltd	£1,700	£1,700
Total	£49,958	£14,543

3.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to recommend the above grant awards to full council as part of the 2021-22 budget.

DRAFT BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2021-22

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report sets out the draft budget for 2021-22 and the precept requirement.

2.0 Commentary

2.1 The budget principles used for the 2021-22 budget were presented to committee previously.

2.2 Members are presented with an updated draft balanced budget today and a draft precept.

2.3 As outlined at those meetings, the greatest unknown at this stage remains non-precepted income, generated from hall hire. Initial figures have been entered and members were advised that these figures would be subject to review ahead of budget setting as the likely impact of COVID and the vaccination programme became clearer.

2.4 The budget is accompanied by a set of notes, with the reference number showing on the right of the budget table.

2.5 The Amenities Committee have reviewed the budget at their last meeting.

2.6 No provision has been made in the budget for changes to the parish office. No decisions have been made at this stage on the scale or scope of the work. Any costs could be met from reserves once identified.

2.7 Members are in the process of discussing changes to the Parish Plan, Climate Change and Communications. Some additional funding has been allocated to cover website costs and climate change costs. Most costs associated with communications and the parish plan can be met from the existing budget.

3.0 Outcomes

3.1 The draft expenditure total in the 2021-22 budget is £279,669. This is a reduction of £37,000 on the previous year and results primarily from £29,000 of big ticket items in the Amenities budget for 2019-20 that were one off purchases.

3.2 There is no assumption that any reserve funding will be used to balance the 2021-22 budget.

3.3 Non-precept income is assumed at £59,273. A small amount of interest has now been assumed, but does not significantly alter the income position.

3.4 The precept requirement to balance the budget is therefore £221,808 for 2021-22 (£212,670 in 2020-21) an increase of £9,138 over last year.

3.5 The draft council tax base figure for Warfield for 2021-22 is 5,153 (5,051 2020-21) is an increase of 102 and results in a band D rate of £43.04 (£42.10 2020-21) an increase of £0.94 per year (+2.2%)

4.0 Next steps

4.1 Members are asked to review and comment on the draft budget. A further draft will be presented to members in January, based upon comments received and any revisions made to income and expenditure lines.

5.0 Notes to accompany the budget

1	The precept comes from the expenditure less no-precept income.
2	A small provision for interest has been included based upon likely returns from CCLA.
3	Energy costs have been based upon averages over the last three years, this is designed to reduce the impact of annual fluctuations.
4	Stamps purchased in 2020 were not used, so limited additional purchase is set aside for 2021-22
5	The insurance split has been adjusted for 2021-22 with 50% to the office, 20% each to Brownlow and Whitegrove and 10% to the allotments. In addition to the main policy, the council also pays buildings insurance for the Parish Office and Whitegrove CC
6	Provision has been increased due to the fees model which is based upon expenditure
7	Legal fees have been removed as no expenditure has been incurred in recent years. Any fees can be met from reserves.
8	Additional provision for website changes have been made.
9	A 2% uplift has been applied to all wages and salaries.
10	The grants total is based upon the provision discussed by members at the November meeting.
11	Provision has been made for consultancy work
12	No additional funding for the parish plan has been made.
13	Hire rates will be finalised at the next meeting
14	Hire rates will be finalised at the next meeting
15	Inspections have been incorporated into the main Brownlow Hall budget.
16	Allotment rent is assumed to be for full occupancy with no discounts applied.
17	Provision made to complete allotment works once the building is installed.
18	Provision has been made for a thank you event.

6.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to note this report

Draft Budget
Warfield Parish Council 2021-22

	2020-21 budget	proposed 2021-22 budget	Note	
Council Administration				
100	Parish Council Income			
1076	Precept	212,670	221,808	1
1090	Interest received	3,000	400	2
	Income	215,670	222,208	
110	Office costs			
4000	Rent	23,500	23,500	
4010	Energy costs	1,000	1,400	3
4025	Telephone & broadband	522	530	
4030	Postage	213	20	4
4035	Stationery	750	650	
4036	Office printing	850	800	
4040	Contract cleaning	641	768	
4042	Window cleaning	240	245	
4045	Cleaning materials	100	100	
4050	Waste collection	180	184	
4060	Insurance	1,850	2,480	5
4135	Data Protection	300	300	
4250	Responsive maintenance	500	500	
4254	Inspections	250	250	
4900	Other costs	1,000	800	
4999	COVID-19 cost	0	0	
	Expenditure	31,896	32,527	
120	Administration			
4080	Audit fees	2,000	2,500	6
4085	Legal fees	2,000	0	7
4090	Memberships	2,500	2,000	
4105	Website	500	750	8
4110	IT hardware	2,300	0	
4115	IT software	600	250	
4120	Training	1,500	1,500	
4125	IT licences	1,745	1,800	
4130	RBS licences	1,309	1,449	
	Expenditure	14,454	10,249	
130	Democratic Services			
4380	Chairman's allowance	300	300	
4900	other costs	150	0	
	Expenditure	450	300	
140	Wages & Salaries			
4350	Salaries	71,196	72,620	
4355	Pension contributions	9,031	9,212	

	2020-21 budget	proposed 2021-22 budget	Note
4360 National Insurance cont.	4,982	5,082	
4365 Expenses	250	200	
4370 Payroll operating cost	150	150	
Expenditure	85,609	87,264	9
Council Administration - Income	215,670	222,208	
Council Administration - Expenditure	132,409	130,340	

Regular Commitments

150 Parish commitments			
4200 Jealotts Hill Comm Lshare	8,600	8,800	
4201 JHCL restructure costs	5,000	0	
4210 BFC Loan repayment	8,191	8,191	
4225 Youth provision	2,570	2,500	
4300 Neighbourhood plan costs	1,000	1,000	
Expenditure	25,361	20,491	
160 BFC Partnership Expenditure			
4320 RoW management contribution	2,244	2,290	
4325 Lily Hill Park contribution	5,440	5,550	
Expenditure	7,684	7,840	
180 Grants			
4400 Section 137 grants awarded	12,350	14,543	
4405 Warfield Memorial Ground	9,000	8,000	
4415 Keep Mobile Comm. Transport	1,485	1,449	
4420 South Hill Park	1,250	500	
Expenditure	24,085	24,492	10
Regular Commitments - Income	0	0	
Regular Commitments - Expenditure	57,130	52,823	

Planned expenditure

170 Planned Expenditure			
1120 Sales	500	500	
Income	500	500	
4095 The Wren - publication	1,450	1,450	
4096 The Wren - delivery	2,450	2,450	
4100 Other communications	1,000	700	
4215 Planning assistance costs	200	200	
4216 Speed awareness	200	200	
4220 Climate change provision	1,000	3,000	11
4230 Green waste sack purchases	500	0	
4395 Parish Plan delivery costs	3,000	0	12
Expenditure	9,800	8,000	

	2020-21 budget	proposed 2021-22 budget	Note
Planned Expenditure - Income	500	500	
Planned Expenditure - Expenditure	9,800	8,000	

Amenities & Environment

600	Brownlow Hall			
1400	Hire - Regular	22,500	18,000	
1410	Hire - Casual	9,000	4,000	
1430	The Cottage rent	10,800	11,000	
1440	Sub Station rent	500	500	
	Income	42,800	33,500	13

4000	Rent	16,500	16,500	
4010	Energy costs	7,000	7,000	
4015	Water & sewerage	1,000	1,200	
4025	Telephone & broadband	379	386	
4040	Contract cleaning	4,080	4,200	
4042	Window cleaning	720	744	
4045	Cleaning materials	460	500	
4050	Waste collection	1,100	1,200	
4060	Insurance	1,005	875	
4250	Responsive maintenance	3,500	3,500	
4252	Planned maintenance	1,360	1,500	
4254	Inspections	850	1,050	
4260	Equipment purchase	500	0	
4620	Music licences	1,202	800	
4650	Tree & hedge maintenance	1,100	1,122	
4655	Hanging baskets	320	330	
4670	Caretaker payroll	5,692	5,850	
4685	Cottage maintenance	140	0	
4999	COVID-19 cost	0	0	
	Expenditure	46,908	46,757	

	Brownlow Hall - Income	42,800	33,500	
	Brownlow Hall - Expenditure	46,908	46,757	

610	Whitegrove Community Centre			
1400	Hire - Regular	23,000	21,000	
1410	Hire - Casual	1,000	0	
	Income	24,000	21,000	14

4000	Rent	200	200	
4010	Energy costs	3,000	3,200	
4025	Telephone & broadband	489	500	
4040	Contract cleaning	4,280	4,600	
4042	Window cleaning	720	744	
4045	Cleaning materials	460	500	
4050	Waste collection	1,100	1,200	
4060	Insurance	1,200	1224	

	2020-21 budget	proposed 2021-22 budget	Note
4250 Responsive maintenance	1,800	1850	
4252 Planned maintenance	700	714	
4254 Inspections	750	750	
4260 Equipment purchase	500	0	
4600 Building improvements	14,000	0	
4620 Music licences	428	437	
4650 Tree & hedge maintenance	300	306	
4670 Caretaker payroll	5,692	5,850	
4999 COVI-19 cost	0	0	
Expenditure	35,619	22,075	
Whitegrove CC - Income	24,000	21,000	
Whitegrove CC - Expenditure	35,619	22,075	
700 Memorial Ground Play Area			
4000 Rent	1	1	
4250 Responsive maintenance	2,000	500	
4254 Inspections	1,202	1,226	
Expenditure	3,203	1,727	
710 Brownlow Hall Play Area			
4254 Inspections	206	0	15
Expenditure	206	0	
720 Quelm Allotments			
1420 Allotment rent	1,169	2,461	16
Income	1,169	2,461	
4015 Water & sewerage	466	600	
4050 Waste collection	424	460	
4060 Insurance	610	437	
4250 Responsive maintenance	210	100	
4805 Allotment - delivery costs	14,866	1,500	17
7810 Allotment - management costs	0	100	
Expenditure	16,576	3,197	
Quelm Allotments - Income	1,169	2,461	
Quelm Allotments - Expenditure	16,576	3,197	
730 Frost Folly			
4250 Responsive maintenance	0	500	
4252 Planned maintenance	4,548	2,000	
4650 Tree & hedge maintenance	300	300	
4999 COVID-19 cost	0	0	
Expenditure	4,848	2,800	

		2020-21 budget	proposed 2021-22 budget	Note
790	Events			
	Warfield Village Fete	2,000	2,000	
4560	Family Cycle Ride	250	200	
4565	Vegetable Take & Grow	200	100	
4570	Arts Week	3,250	3,250	
4580	Summer of Fun event	4,000	4,000	
4585	Christmas tree	1,100	1,200	
4590	Warfield 125 activity	1,500	1,200	18
	Expenditure	12,300	11,950	
	Amenities & Environment - Income	67,969	56,961	
	Amenities & Environment - Expenditure	102,512	73,756	
Grand Totals				
	Income	284,139	279,669	
	Expenditure	318,999	279,669	

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report contains the updated draft Complaints Policy for the council, which incorporates comments and compliments on the council's service provision.

2.0 The policy

2.1 The policy has been developed to cover all feedback the council receives, both positive and negative. The policy sets out the scope of the policy to cover all parties who have relationships with the council, including members of the public, hirers, contractors, and suppliers.

2.2 The focus of the policy is what happens when something goes wrong or appears to go wrong and the steps the council will take to put things right. The policy is also clear the areas the council can investigate and where it cannot who should be contacted.

2.3 The policy sets out how complaints can be made, the time limit for making complaints and how the complaint will be processed.

2.4 A three stage process for handling complaints is made. It will be important that all members and staff are aware of these steps. Members should be aware that they may be required to participate at stage 3 of the process, so should ensure they direct any complainants who approach them directly to the policy.

2.5 The policy has been updated since the last committee meeting. This latest version includes simple flow charts to show the three stages.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to review and comment on the draft policy.

Complaints Policy

Incorporating comments and compliments

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Warfield Parish Council aims to deliver high quality services where the customer is at the heart of everything it does. The council welcomes all customer feedback and aim to deal with customers' concerns in a fair and consistent way. We learn from best practice, your experiences, and our mistakes to improve in the future.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all parties that have a relationship with the parish council, including members of the public, hirers of facilities, suppliers of goods and services and contractors. For the purposes of this document these parties are referred to as customers.

3.0 ~~Our~~The Policy

3.1 A customer has a right to:

- Complain
- Be listened to
- Have their complaint investigated and resolved as quickly as possible
- Have their concerns taken seriously

3.2 We aim to:

- Be accessible and uncomplicated
- Promote customer satisfaction
- Identify areas where services can be improved
- Learn from good practice
- Learn from mistakes
- Implement improvements in processes and procedures

3.3 Warfield Parish Council promotes the right of its customers to raise a concern or make a complaint if they think something has been done incorrectly or if they feel it has been addressed poorly. Similarly, customers may complain if they feel something that ought to have been done has not been done. The council also promotes the right of customers to comment on a policy or council decision which may affect them and express a compliment if things have gone well for them.

3.4 Complaints will be investigated objectively, fairly, and thoroughly. The aim will be to resolve the complaint. Mechanisms will be in place to ensure that lessons are learnt, and improvements implemented.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 Complaint:

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet with the quality of a service or with a failure to provide a previously agreed service, or with the attitude or behaviour of a member of staff or councillor

4.2 Comment:

A comment is a general statement about policies, practices, or a service, which have an impact on everyone and not just one individual. A comment can be positive or negative in nature. Comments may question policies and practices, make suggestions for new services or for improving existing services.

4.3 Compliment:

An expression of praise. It is a positive statement about a service provided by or on behalf of the Council, or about the helpfulness, attitude, or approach of a member of staff.

5.0 When the Complaints Procedure is Not Appropriate

5.1 The council's complaints procedure will not be used in respect of the following types of complaint:

5.2 Financial irregularity

5.2.1 The Parish Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) will provide an explanation of the item.

5.2.2 If the complainant is not satisfied, the Parish Clerk will advise the complainant of their statutory right to object to the Council's audit of accounts pursuant to Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. On any matter, it may be necessary for the Parish Clerk to consult the auditor.

5.3 Criminal activity

5.3.1 The Parish Clerk should refer the complainant to the police.

5.4 Member conduct

5.4.1 In the event of a complaint relating to a Member's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, the complainant will be advised to make their complaint to the Monitoring Officer at Bracknell Forest Council.

5.5 Employee conduct

5.5.1 A complaint relating to the conduct of an employee will be dealt with via the council's Disciplinary Policy by the Parish Clerk, or, if the Parish Clerk is implicated, through the Chairman of the council.

5.5.2 Complaints that an employee may have about a colleague will be dealt with in accordance with the council's Grievance Policy. Complaints that an employee may have about a Member will be referred to the Parish Clerk or, if the Parish Clerk is implicated, through the Chairman of the council.

6.0 Time limit for making a complaint

6.1 ~~Our~~The council's aim is to put things right if they go wrong as quickly as possible, so it is important to recognise there is a six-month time limit (from the date of the incident giving cause for the complaint) for making a complaint. However, the time limit may be extended if it is still possible to consider the complaint effectively and efficiently or if there are other circumstances which may enable resolution of the complaint.

7.0 Confidentiality

7.1 The council will take care to maintain confidentiality where circumstances demand, e.g. where matters concern sensitive information or where third parties are concerned.

7.2 The name, address and other details of any complainant will remain confidential and only shared with those investigating any complaint. The council will not disclose your details to any party outside of the council without the consent of the complainant.

8.0 Unreasonable or vexatious complaints

8.1 There will be circumstances when a complainant persists in wishing to proceed when the complaint clearly has no reasonable basis, or where the council has already taken reasonable action in response, or some other action has been taken.

8.2 The Parish Clerk may, in such circumstances, decide that no further action can usefully be taken in response to the complainant and will inform the complainant to this effect, making it clear that only new and substantive issues will merit a response. If such a step is taken, it will be reported to the Chairman of the council.

9.0 Anonymous complaints

9.1 Anonymous complaints will be reviewed by the Parish Clerk and may be dismissed at their discretion.

10.0 How to make contact

10.1 A customer can make a complaint, compliment, or comment either in person or by:

- Telephone 01344 457777
- Email: clerk@warfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk
- In person at the Parish Office, 7 County Lane, Warfield, RG42 3JP
- In writing to The Parish Clerk at the Parish Council offices (address as above)

Where possible, complaints should be made in writing to the Parish Clerk.

11.0 The Complaints Procedure

11.1 Unfortunately things do not always go as planned or people feel upset or aggrieved by an action taken. It is for these reasons that the Parish Council operates a complaints procedure, to ensure that we always serve our customers fairly, courteously, professionally and in a non-discriminatory way. ~~Our~~ The council's aim is to put things right if they go wrong as quickly as possible. All staff are trained to deal with routine difficulties as they arise.

11.2 ~~Our~~The process consists of three stages, which will follow these steps:

Step 1 Recording your complaint: the person receiving your complaint will record it. This enables us to monitor the number and type of complaints which assists us in ~~improving our the council's services.~~

Step 2 Acknowledging your complaint: whenever possible your complaint will be dealt with at the first point of contact. If this is not possible your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days and you will be given the details of the person looking into the matter.

Step 3 Responding to your complaint: the person responsible for responding to your complaint will contact you to agree the best way to deal with your complaint. ~~Our~~ The council's aim is to give you a full response within 14 working days. If for any reason we cannot do this, we will let you know when you can expect to receive a response. In any event we would endeavour to respond within 21 working days.

Step 4 Room for error: if we have made a mistake we will apologise and try to put things right. We will explain what actions we intend to take as a result of your complaint.

Step 5 Your right to respond: on receipt of a response, you have up to 21 working days in which to decide whether to accept or reject the actions/ recommendations we have stated to resolve your complaint.

11.3 Stage 1

11.3.1 Many complaints can be dealt with quickly and satisfactorily at stage 1. In the first instance, please contact the Parish Clerk, tell them your complaint and in most cases the complaint can be dealt with to the satisfaction of all parties.

11.4 Stage 2

11.4.1 If you are not happy with the outcome or response at stage 1, you can request a review by the Parish Clerk and the appropriate chair of the relevant supervisory committee or (depending on the nature of the complaint) the Chairman of the council. There will be a thorough review and where necessary further investigation of your case following the deadlines in the guidance and timescale outlined above.

11.5 Stage 3

- 11.5.1 If you are still not satisfied with the response from the outcome at stage 2, you should contact The Parish Clerk who will arrange for the complaint to be dealt with by a panel of three members drawn from the council. Any member involved at stage 2 may not participate as a panel member.
- 11.5.2 The Complainant will be invited to attend a meeting and to submit copies (at least 7 clear working days in advance) of any correspondence or details that they wish the panel to be informed of. The Council will provide the Complainant with copies of any documentation which it wishes to rely on at the meeting (at least 7 clear working days in advance of the meeting).
- 11.5.3 The Complainant may be accompanied by or represented by one other person at the meeting if they wish.
- 11.5.4 The panel may not be able to reach a decision at this meeting as more information may be required to make a fully informed decision. The Complainant will be advised of this, along with details of how the matter will be further considered.
- 11.5.5 The decision of the Committee will be confirmed in writing to the complainant within seven working days of the decision being reached.

11.6 Stage 3 completes the parish council's complaints procedure.

12.0 How will we put things right?

12.1 If we have made a mistake we will apologise and tell you what action we will take to ensure the same situation does not arise again for you or other customers.

13.0 Comments

13.1 If you wish to make a comment, either positive or negative in relation to a policy decision, practice, or service, this will be recorded, and your comment acknowledged. When **the council** ~~we~~ review ~~our~~ policies, we take into consideration any comments made about a policy.

14.0 Compliments

14.1 If you wish to express a compliment this will be recorded and shared with the councillor or member of staff it relates to. All compliment statistics will be reported to the council and the information gathered ~~from them will assist in improving our service to all our customers~~ will be used to further improve the council's services.

15.0 Freedom of information requests

15.1 If your complaint makes any requests for provision of documents or information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, then this act will be followed and the appropriate rules, regulations and schedule for the act will be followed (either instead of or as well as the complaints policy).

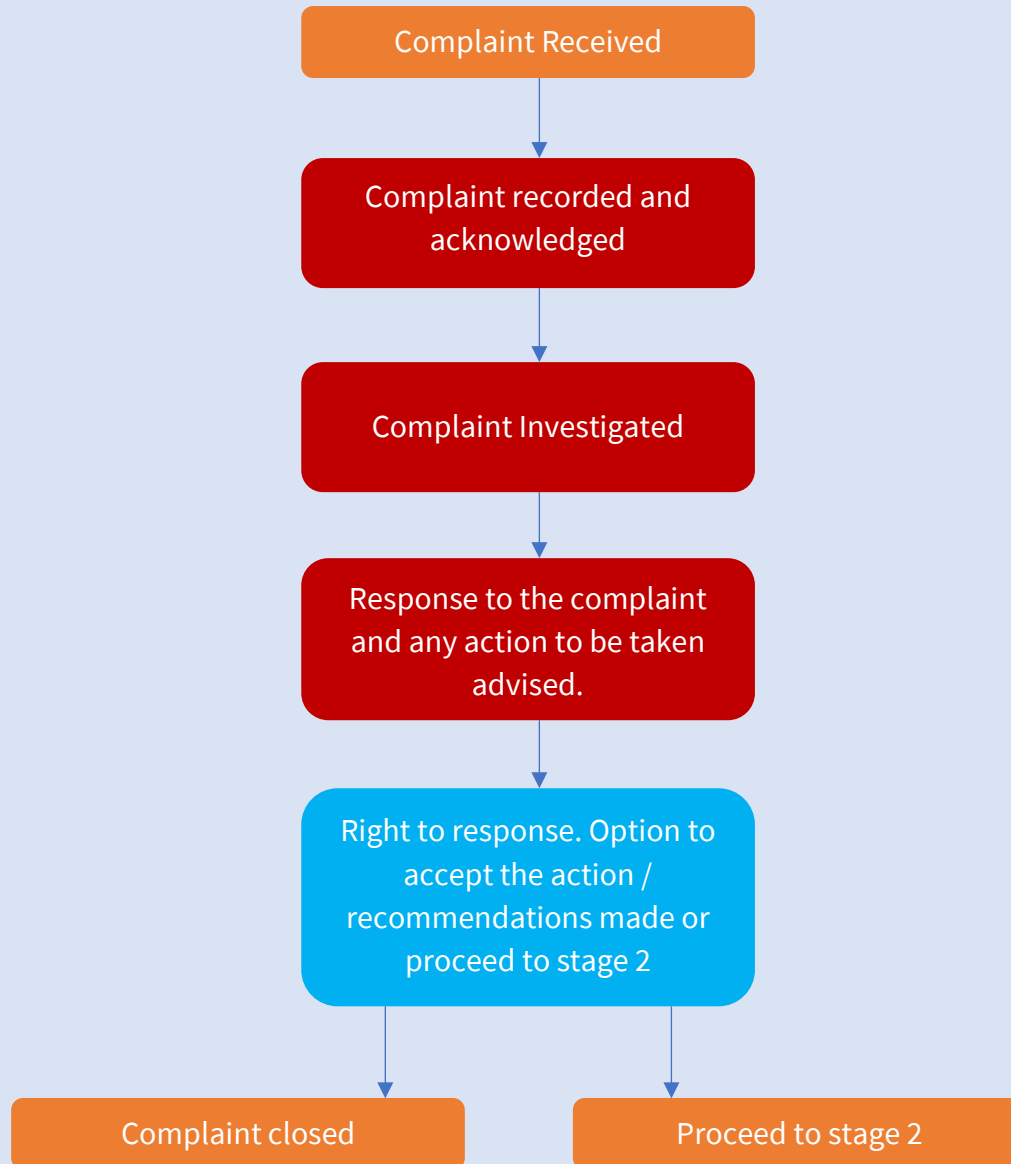
16.0 Evaluation and monitoring

- 16.1 The council will ensure that full records are kept of the nature and treatment of every complaint, comment and compliment considered under this procedure. Particular attention will be paid to the lessons learnt, nature of complaints and trends, the timeliness of responses and resolutions.

DRAFT

Complaints Process

STAGE 1



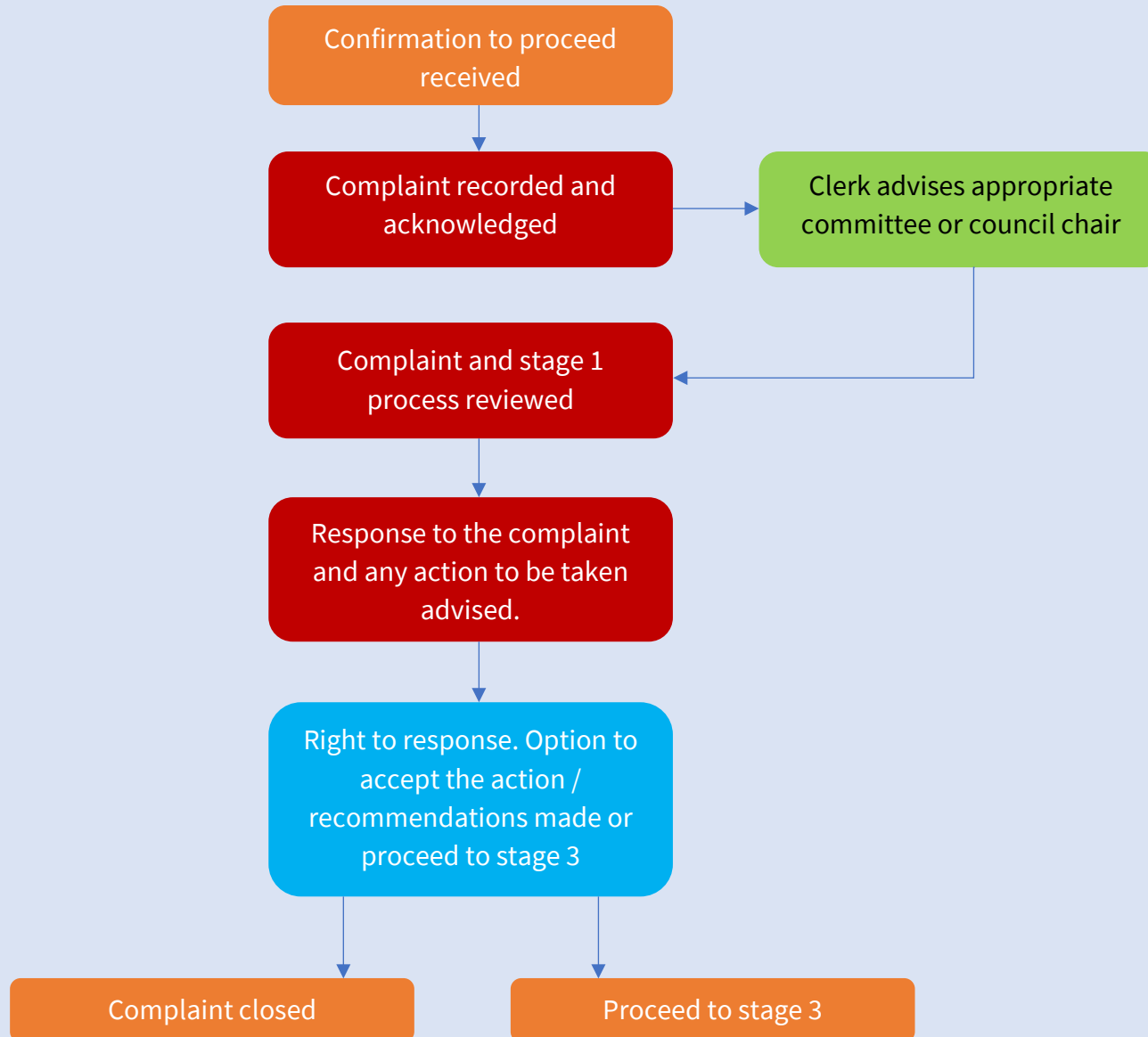
Within 5 working days

Usually within working days
14 working days

Within 21 working days
of issue of response. If

Complaints Process

STAGE 2



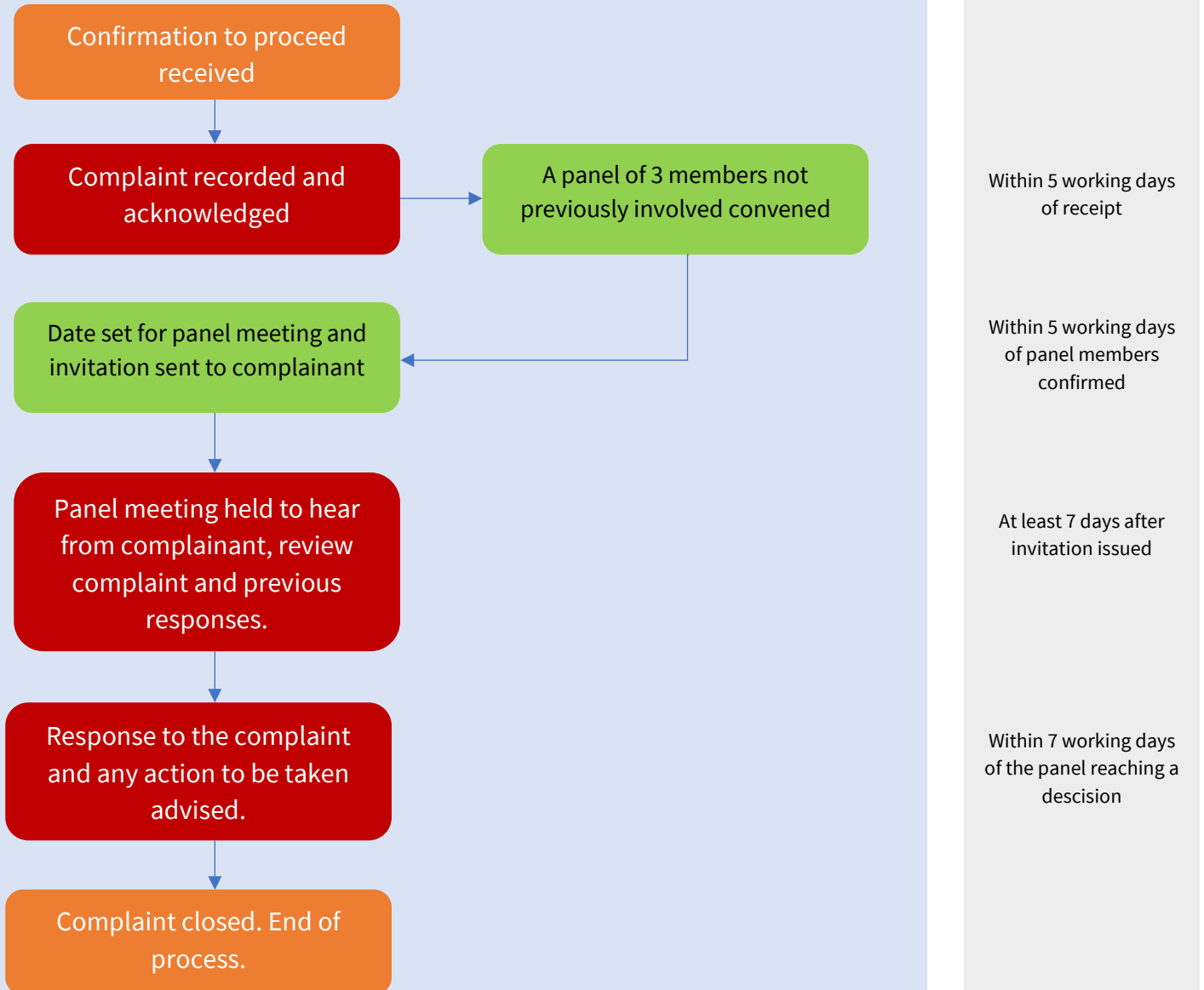
Within 5 working days of receipt

Usually within working days 14 working days

Within 21 working days of issue of response.

Complaints Process

STAGE 3



FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

1.0 Future agenda items

In addition to the standard agenda items the following items will be on the coming meeting agendas

Policy Development Framework

2.0 Next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be on Tuesday 16 February 2021 at 7.45pm. This meeting will be conducted via Zoom.