



# **PERSHORE TOWN COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN 2023 – 2027**

## **Introduction**

The Town Council revised its arrangements in July 2023, for a Business Plan originally presented in October 2015. This revised document updates residents on progress with the various priorities as contained in the plan.

The plan is helping to guide the Town Council when setting its budget and to monitor the performance of the council.

This is the fourth review of the Town Council business plan and will continue to be updated as the Town Council meets its priorities and takes on ambitious new projects.

***PERSHORE TOWN COUNCIL is a  
“quality council, promoting a sustainable Pershore through  
achievement, innovation and influence”***

### **The Town Council owns and manages:-**

- Riverside land at King George's Field and Avon Meadows
- Picnic area and car park at Avon Meadows
- Grassed play area at Cherry Orchard
- Allotments in Defford Road and the Station Road Persimmon estate
- Pershore Cemetery and adjacent car park
- Town Hall, Visitor Information Centre and walkway
- Pershore Library building
- Land off Holloway – available to walkers for picnics and a rest area
- White Railings moorings (leased to Avon Navigation Trust)

### **The Town Council controls and manages:-**

- St Andrews Gardens

### **The Town Council provides:-**

- Street lighting in residential areas
- Bus Shelters
- Vehicle Activated signs
- Town Clock on the Town Hall
- Benches and litter bins
- Flower tubs, hanging baskets and floral displays
- Christmas lights
- Grants to local organisations including helping to fund Pershore Carnival, Pershore Plum Fayre, Pershore Jazz and Midsummer Brass.

- A grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau, reviewed annually
- Rooms in the Town Hall and the Library for hire to local groups in and around the town
- Exchanges, through the Twinning and Tourism Committee, to our twin towns
- The Visitor Information Centre situated in the Town Hall
- The land for the Riverside Youth Centre on a lease
- The land for the Leisure Centre on a lease
- The land for the Football Club on a lease
- Free accommodation for the Heritage Centre

## **Progress on priorities for 2011 – 2015 – 2019 – 2023 update**

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| • Purchase the library and refurbish it, planning for the financial impact | <b>achieved</b>          |
| • Reduce the burden on the Clerk, to review when new Clerk in post         | <b>in progress</b>       |
| • Promote the Northern Link over the railway                               | <b>achieved</b>          |
| • Take decisions on the Cemetery Field and Chapel                          | <b>achieved</b>          |
| • Promote Neighbourhood Plan   | <b>Town Plan adopted</b> |
| • Promote the Racecourse Road/Station link                                 | <b>in progress</b>       |
| • Cemetery Car Park  | <b>achieved</b>          |

## **Priorities identified for 2023 – 2027**

### Short Term (12 Months)

- Establish a long term staffing structure
- Audit the Town Plan Action Plan
- Improve Town Council Communications
- Increase the Visitor Information Centre offering in Pershore
- Focus on protecting the Environment

### Longer Term (up to 4 years)

- Preserve Pershore Library
- Focus on the River and Wetlands
- Lobby for a 20mph Town
- Assess Pershore Town Council assets
- Improve the appearance of the Town
- Impact Assessment – understanding the impact of new development
- Improve transport links
- Increase Youth Engagement
- Better collaboration with the Police
- Highlight Social Mobility issues

## **Projects for 2023-2024**

*Not in order of priority*

### **Establish a long term staffing structure**

Permanent recruitment of a Town Clerk and permanent roles offered to the acting Assistant to the Town Clerk and Administration assistant – November 2023

Cemetery Grounds Operative appointed – October 2023

Employ a Committees Clerk – April 2023

Reform a Staffing Committee – November 2023

## **Audit the Town Plan Action Plan**

*No actions taken as at November 2023*

### **Improve Town Council Communications**

Communication Strategy drafted – August 2023

Social Media in the form of Facebook and WhatsApp in use from October 2023

Newsletter distribution to change to online offering with articles in the Pershore Times on a monthly basis - January 2024

### **Increase the Visitor Information Centre offering in Pershore**

Visitor Information Centre permanently situated at the Town Hall – August 2023

Funding received from the Pershore Placeboard to fund a fixed term Visitor Information Assistant for the calendar year 2024 to enable more opening hours and a Visit Pershore social Media presence – November 2023

Capital funding received from the Placeboard to enable an update to the equipment needed to run a successful Visitor Information Centre – November 2023

Recruitment of VIC assistant hoped to be in December 2023.

### **Focus on protecting the Environment**

Recruit a Tree Warden – November 2023

Develop a Local Nature Recover Plan in conjunction with the Tree Warden – December 2023

Review the Environmental Policy and create an environmental action plan – December 2023

Investigate Biodiversity Net Gain in conjunction with local development - ongoing

### **New Biodiversity and Climate Emergency working groups set up 2020, below objectives subject to change in line with the new environmental action plan.**

#### **Climate Emergency targets**

2020 - 2023

Change all electricity and gas supply to “green” provider	achieved
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Publicise widely the action of the Council	on going
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Consider ways of reducing plastic waste and increase recycling	on going
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Determine the carbon footprint of Pershore	achieved
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Investigate ways of improving Pershore’s carbon footprint	on going
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Graze land rather than mow where possible	achieved
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Audit Council property to see where improvements can be made	on going
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2023 – 2025

Create wildflower/pollinator meadows to use as carbon sinks	on going
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By 2030

Achieve zero net carbon for Pershore	on going
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#### **Biodiversity targets**

Short term

Investigate ways to improve biodiversity on all Council owned land (hedge planted around Holloway land in 2022).	on going
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Identify other areas in Pershore where biodiversity could be increased	on going
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Minimise and eliminate where possible Council use of herbicides and pesticides	achieved
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Work with local churches and groups to enhance biodiversity in Churchyards	on going
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Work with schools and the Youth Council to promote biodiversity	on going
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Minimise the mowing of Town Council land where practical	achieved
Medium	
Investigate ways to enhance biodiversity in contracted floral displays	on going
Long Term	
Seek to promote ways residents can enhance biodiversity in their gardens	on going
Ongoing	
Support Avon Meadows wetlands and their Management Plan	
Work with experts to support pollinators and other beneficial insects	ongoing

## SUMMARY OF PERSHORE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2021/22 to 2023/24

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Staff Salaries	152,706	164,185	175,261
Civic Expenses	5,550	7,500	7,500
Administration	20,469	21,090	17,700
Town Hall running costs	39,290	45,025	33,200
Library Running costs	38,350	43,000	41,000
Library loan repayment (repaid 2022)	54,524	54,524	Nil
Cemetery Running costs	50,284	52,284	51,284
Grounds Maintenance	31,100	32,271	19,220
Tourism (inc Floral displays and Christmas lights)	31,500	34,203	37,419
Grants	4,000	4,000	4,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>427,773</b>	<b>458,082</b>	<b>387,084</b>
Income	175,865	186,015	131,115
Per reserves	9,196	6,000	
Precept	223,895	247,250	254,975
Wychavon Grant	18,817	18,817	18,817

The budget is carefully monitored by the Finance and Property Committee as well as Town Council with schedules of payments going to every Town Council meeting for approval and published on the Town Council website.

The Town Council produces an Annual Report which is available at the Town Hall, in the Library and on the Town Council's website. This gives an overview of achievements and the financial resources of the Council for residents. A summary of the report appears in the Summer Town

Council newsletter every year and the audited accounts are available upon request. A summary of the accounts is posted in the Town Council notice board by 30<sup>th</sup> September each year once signed off by the External Auditor.

## **COMMITTEES OF PERSHORE TOWN COUNCIL 2023/24**

### **Planning Committee:-**

- a) Respond to planning consultations received from the local Planning Authority on the Council's behalf, subject to making recommendations to the Town Council on applications of strategic importance or of a sensitive nature.
- b) Urgent, non contentious applications may be delegated to three members of the committee but such decisions to be reported at the next available planning committee meeting together with the names of the members making that decision.
- c) Respond to notifications regarding planning appeals.
- d) Advise all councillors of approaches by developers and invite all to attend any meetings held with such developers

### **Amenities and Environment Committee**

- a) To maintain and improve Street Lighting and to negotiate, where appropriate, adoption of lighting points by the County Council.
- b) Monitoring, promotion and encouragement of public transport services for the benefit of Pershore.
- c) Provision of waiting shelters, public seats, litter bins, notice boards, signs, planters and other items of street furniture.
- d) Maintenance of the Town Clock, War Memorials and other such structures.
- e) Oversee Christmas lighting arrangements
- f) To respond on behalf of the Council to any Highway, Parking or speeding restriction proposals of the County Council and to make suggestions regarding such matters as the committee may consider appropriate.
- g) Oversee activities of the Council's footpath officer to respond to any proposals of the County Council regarding the Public Rights of Way network in the area, to suggest any improvements / rationalisation the committee may consider appropriate and to liaise as necessary with local rambling clubs over such matters.
- h) Consider and make recommendations on any environmental issues affecting the town or surrounding area.
- i) To maintain and develop the Council's recreation grounds, gardens, allotments and play areas including the provision of play equipment / seats / bins / moorings/ plants etc.
- j) To inspect and secure the maintenance of the Council's allotment gardens, to recommend to the Council the annual rentals and to consider improvements.

### **Finance and Property Committee**

- a) To consider the annual draft Precept and Investment budget prepared by the Town Clerk and to make appropriate recommendations to the Town Council.
- b) To receive regular bi-monthly reviews of expenditure and income during the year and monitor the Council's expenditure.
- c) To monitor the Council's investments and make recommendations to the Council on any revisions considered necessary.

- d) To consider grant applications received each year and to allocate available finance between applicants as appropriate.
- e) To purchase and maintain the Council's machinery, plant and equipment sufficient to fulfil the Council's responsibilities.
- f) To oversee the use, maintenance and refurbishment of the Council's offices and other premises.
- g) To oversee the hire of the Council's facilities

### **Cemetery Committee**

- a) To manage the Pershore Cemetery, all burials and burying of cremated remains and grant exclusive rights of burial.
- b) To charge such fees for cemetery services as the Cemetery Committee considers appropriate
- c) To present a budget for approval to the Town Council in October of each year.
- d) To have delegated authority to spend within the approved budget in line with the delegated authority of the Town Clerk

### **Town Hall Management Group**

The Town Hall Management Group reports to the Town Council. It consists of the Mayor (who will Chair the group), Deputy Mayor and the immediate Past Mayor (all ex officio) together with two other elected members. The Group shall consider the following areas -

- a) To provide support to the Town Clerk in managing the Council's affairs, particularly Facilities Management, Health and Safety, and sensitive personnel issues such as the appointment of Council employees.
- b) The Mayor and immediate past Mayor to carry out annual formal performance appraisals of the Town Clerk, to include suggested staff development, and report to the Town Council.
- c) Three members of the Management Group, in accordance with the Town Council Grievance Policy, to consider any grievance lodged against the Town Clerk by a staff member.
- d) To consider formal complaints about the work of the Council and complaints about the Town Council in accordance with the Town Council Complaints Policy.
- e) To provide a written report of meetings (other than grievances in the course of investigation) to the next meeting of Council options for debate and/or recommendations on these matters. Recommendations to be specifically included in the agenda.

The Group shall meet on a regular basis and shall perform its functions as a Group. Meetings to be convened by the Town Clerk either initiated by the Clerk or the Mayor.

Election to the Management Group shall take place (at the Annual Meeting) by a show of hands. Candidates for election should declare their candidature in writing to the Clerk, together with names of a proposer and seconder, details of which should appear on the agenda. Candidates may wish to write a statement of up to 300 words in support of their candidature and submitted as reports for the meeting.

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND ITS COMMITTEES 2022 - 2023

Cllr M Adams Cllr D Boatright Cllr P Brookbank Cllr B Burdon Cllr M Chapman Pincher Cllr S Gibbons Cllr R Grantham Cllr J Hemming Cllr A Lavelle Cllr J Palfrey Cllr C Parsons MBE Cllr J Rees Cllr C Tucker Cllr V Wood Cllr T Wright-Jones
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<u>Planning Committee</u>	<u>Amenities and Environment Committee</u>	<u>Finance and Property Committee:</u>	<u>Cemetery Committee</u>
Cllr D Boatright Cllr B Burdon Cllr S Gibbons Cllr R Grantham Cllr C Parsons MBE Cllr C Tucker Cllr Wood Cllr Wright-Jones	Cllr M Adams Cllr P Brookbank Cllr B Burdon Cllr M Chapman Pincher Cllr S Gibbons Cllr R Grantham Cllr J Palfrey Cllr J Rees Cllr C Tucker Cllr V Wood	Cllr M Adams Cllr P Brookbank Cllr B Burdon Cllr M Chapman Pincher Cllr R Grantham Cllr J Hemming Cllr A Lavelle Cllr J Rees Cllr C Tucker Cllr V Wood	Cllr P Brookbank Cllr M Chapman Pincher Cllr S Gibbons Cllr R Grantham Cllr J Hemming Cllr J Palfrey Cllr C Parsons MBE Cllr T Wright-Jones

### Management Group

Cllr R Grantham  
Cllr M Chapman Pincher

### **Advisory Committee with no delegated authority – membership includes non councillors**

#### Twinning and Tourism Committee – councillor membership

Cllr D Boatright  
Cllr A Lavelle  
Cllr J Palfrey  
Cllr V Wood

