

GROBY PARISH COUNCIL - PUBLIC INTEREST REPORT COMMITTEE



DETAILED ACTION PLAN in Response to the Public Interest Report

The Public Interest Report Committee has prepared this Action Plan in response to the recommendations provided in the Auditor’s Public Interest Report.

Ref Number	External Auditor’s Recommendation	Current Status <small>Red / Amber / Green</small>	Public Interest Report Committee’s Adopted Actions	Update as at 27.08.2024
R1	We recommend that the Council ensures that it complies fully with its obligations on publication of minutes and details of decisions taken under delegated authority	AMBER	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Publish decisions made by the Clerk under delegated authority at the outset of the Covid-19 emergency. 2) Place a statement on Council’s website explaining why meeting minutes from Committee’s who do not have delegated authority are not uploaded prior to May 2022. 3) Review and re-adoption of Publication Scheme. 4) Review Business Continuity Plan to ensure it covers delegated authority and specifically the ‘loss of Clerk’ situation; ensure that there is an explicit line of delegation relevant to Groby Parish Council. 5) Consider adoption of an additional ‘Scheme of Delegation’ policy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Action completed on 22.01.2024 2) Action completed on 22.01.2024 3) The Publication Scheme which is already adopted by Groby Parish Council is the ICO Model Scheme (23/10/2015) and this has not changed. The Clerk has undertaken a review, and this will be placed on Council’s October agenda 4) Completed - reviewed & adopted 20.05.2024. 5) At the Council meeting held on 8th July 2024 it was RESOLVED to remove Action (5) due to policies already being in place which detail areas of delegation. These include Committee Terms of Reference; Financial Regulations and the Business Continuity Plan

<p>R2</p>	<p>We recommend that the Council ensures that it consistently complies with the specified period for circulation of the draft AGAR to members before approval of the AGAR.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>	<p>1) Clerk to write an operational procedure which details the circulation of the draft Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) to members prior to the meeting at which the AGAR is approved. This will form part of hand-over documents in the event of a new Clerk or should the situation of the loss of Clerk arise.</p>	<p>1) Completed June 2024</p> <p>At the Council meeting held on 8th July 2024 it was RESOLVED to change the status of Recommendation R2 to Green.</p>
<p>R3</p>	<p>We recommend that the Council ensures that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All decisions are made by the Council, a Committee acting with delegated authority or an officer acting with delegated authority; and In the event of identification of failure to secure the required authority of the Council, a Committee or an officer, prompt retrospective approval is sought. 	<p>GREEN</p>	<p>Place on a future Council agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Retrospective approval of appointment of consultant, AVG Solutions, as Data Protection Officer for the period 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021. Retrospective approval of appointment of consultant, Mr AV Greenwood, as Temporary Clerk/RFO for the period 27th July to 17th August 2020. Retrospective approval of all Council resolutions made between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of resignation of Alixe Taylor and appointment of Mr AV Greenwood as Temporary Clerk/RFO: 17th June – 27th July 2020 Start and end dates of the AVG contract as Temporary Clerk/RFO Date of completion of AVG contract and ratification of the appointment of Sue Hackett as Temporary Parish Clerk/RFO on 14th September 2020: 17th August – 14th September 2020. <p>This includes resolutions made at the following meetings: Parish Council Meeting on 6th July 2020, Extraordinary Meeting of Council on 27th August 2020 and Parish Council Meeting on 14th September 2020.</p> 	<p>With respect to Actions 1), 2), and 3) legal advice on the retrospective ratification of Council resolutions was sought.</p> <p>Further to Council being advised that there was no legislation that permits retrospective ratification, at the Council meeting held on 8th July 2024 it was RESOLVED that no further action was required in relation to Actions 1), 2) and 3).</p> <p>It was further RESOLVED to change the status of Recommendation R3 to Green.</p>

			<p>4) Ensure the Business Continuity Plan is reviewed annually.</p> <p>5) Review Training & Development policy.</p>	<p>4) Reviewed & adopted 20.05.2024.</p> <p>5) Reviewed & adopted 04.12.2023</p>
R4	<p>We recommend that the Council ensures that it follows appropriate processes for considering any compromise agreements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking, considering and acting on appropriate legal advice; and • ensuring appropriate decisions by the Council, a Committee with delegated authority or an officer with delegated authority. 	AMBER	<p>1) Write and adopt a protocol for the obtaining of legal / specialist advice in relation to any staffing matters</p>	<p>1) This action is still outstanding. A protocol has been drafted and is due to be reviewed at the next Staffing Committee meeting.</p>
R5	<p>We recommend that the Council provides training to members on their responsibilities in declaring interests and the action required in response to declared interests</p>	AMBER	<p>1) Review and update Council's Training & Development Policy</p> <p>2) Continue to provide information regarding available training courses</p>	<p>1) Reviewed & adopted 04.12.2023.</p> <p>2) Information is circulated to councillors as and when received.</p> <p>Action R5 has been completed, however due to an inaccuracy on the 8th July 2024 Council agenda changing the status to Green could not be resolved and this will be put on October's agenda.</p>

R6

We recommend that the Council:

- expedite the transfer of the legal title to the land to Groby CIC; and
- ensure that it maintains accurate records of its interest in Groby CIC.

RED

- 1) Continue to liaise with Council's solicitor to ensure the transfer of land is completed.
- 2) Engage the services of a specialist legal advisor to conduct an external, independent review of Council's records in relation to the purchase of land off Newtown Linford Lane, the formation of Groby CIC, the financial investment provided by Groby Parish Council and Council's interest in Groby CIC. The Clerk to obtain 3 quotations for the Council Meeting scheduled for 17th July 2023.

- 1) The transfer of land from Groby Parish Council to Groby CIC is still ongoing due to objections received by HM Land Registry. At the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 12th August 2024, Council resolved for a new TR1 to be executed, and this has now been lodged with HM Land Registry.
- 2) Council engaged the services of Knights plc who have now reviewed all information sent to them and produced a report for the Council's consideration. An initial meeting with CIC directors has been held to discuss next steps. A Public Interest Committee meeting will be scheduled in the next few weeks to progress matters.