



**MABLETHORPE & SUTTON TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Business Plan 2015 – 2018**

Reviewed by the Administration Committee 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
Adopted by Resolution of  
Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council  
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***Version 2.1***

## **Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
1. What is a Town Council Business Plan?	1
2. Why has the Town Council Produced a Business Plan?	1
3. Community Involvement in the Business Plan Process	1
4. Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council- An Overview	2 / 3
5. Town Council Staff and Management	4 / 5
6. Town Council Vision and Aims	5
7. Key Objectives	5 / 6
8. Core Values	7
9. Review of Key Targets and Achievements 2015 / 2016	8
10. Key Targets: 2016 / 2017	9
2017 / 2018	10
11. Financial Budgets and Forecasts 2014/15 to 2017/18	11

## **Appendices**

- A. Town Council Contact Details
- B. Town Council Structure Template
- C. Asset Register 2016

## 1. WHAT IS A TOWN COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN?

A Town Council Business Plan is a statement of the Town Council's vision for the parish of Mablethorpe, Trusthorpe and Sutton on Sea, its purpose, values, objectives and key priorities. It is a document that sets out what Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council (M&STC) Council can achieve, either directly or by trying to increase its influence on the relevant delivery body, such as the District or County Council.

The purpose of having an agreed strategy for the Town Council to work within, will enable it to operate in a more consistent and coordinated way. It will help the Town Council to forecast and complete its budgets annually in December and manage the public 'purse' into the future.

This document will help the local community to have a better and clear understanding of what the Town Council does and also clarify what it doesn't do.

This is a '*live*' document which will be updated regularly and reported against, enabling the Town Council to track and monitor its progress against key priorities.

This document will be published on the Town Council's website and residents will be able to monitor progress.

## 2. WHY HAS THE TOWN COUNCIL PRODUCED A BUSINESS PLAN?

Following the successful application and achieving the 'Quality' award status in the Local Council Award Scheme, the Town Council has resolved to achieve the Quality Gold' award within the 2016/17 administration period.

The strategy contained within this business plan provides an effective framework for the Town Council to follow, enabling consistent, effective and coordinated service delivery.

The development of the Business Plan over the next four years will be based on community engagement and involvement enabling the Town Council to become more confident, proactive and demonstrate effective first tier governance and practical and effective decision-making.

The Business Plan also aims to demonstrate commitment to the local community and give a improved understanding of what services the Town Council delivers and could deliver in the future following devolvement of services from the District and County Council's.

## 3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE BUSINESS PLAN PROCESS

To ensure that the Business Plan truly represents the best interests of the Parish, the Town Council developed an effective community engagement policy, assisted in the development of a local plan and is currently compiling a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO).

The Town Council has recently adopted a social media policy and launched a Facebook page and twitter account. Further community consultation will take place as necessary, and an annual satisfaction survey will be undertaken with results publicised by a wide range of mediums (i.e. press, Facebook, twitter, web-site, notice boards etc.) Residents are encouraged to contact the Town Council to pass on views and comments, both negative and positive.

If you require further information to help you to understand what we are trying to achieve, please contact the Town Clerk's office or any elected Member, contact details attached (**Appendix A**).

It is the intention of the Town Council to review the Business Plan at regular intervals, every 6 months to monitor and set budgets and annually to publish progress reports and make any changes and list updates considered necessary as a result.

#### 4. MABLETHORPE & SUTTON TOWN COUNCIL- AN OVERVIEW

**Mablethorpe & Sutton Town Council** (M&STC) was established in 1974 following national unitary reorganisation and is the tier of Local Government closest to the community.

The Town Council has an important role to play in promoting the Parish, representing its interests and supporting the work of different groups and organisations in the community.

**East Lindsey District Council** (ELDC) is the second tier of Local Government and is responsible for services including:

- Planning
- Car Parks
- Housing (via Management Company)
- Street Cleaning & Grounds Maintenance
- Environmental Health

**Lincolnshire County Council** (LCC) is the third tier of Local Government and is responsible for services including:

- Highways (relating to both roads and pavements)
- Education
- Health and Social Services
- Public Rights of Way
- Libraries.

The Town Clerk's office receives queries relating to any of the three tiers of local government and takes any action required.

The Town Council has adopted the requirements detailed in the Freedom of Information Act and members of the public can request sight of Council documentation (excluding confidential items). Most documents are readily available on the Town Council's website, however printed 'hard copies' may also be obtained (for a fee) from the Town Clerk's office.

The Town Council also is also registered for the purposes of Data Protection with the Information Commission and have an adopted Data Protection Policy. This along with all adopted policies is available to view on the Town Council website.

M&STC has nineteen elected Members (Councillors) across seven wards, who act together as a Corporate Body when making decisions.

The Chairman of the Council is elected annually at the Annual Council Meeting in May. Councillors can claim an annual allowance (currently £390.00), paid monthly in arrears, some Cllrs do not claim this allowance and some claim and donate back to charities and organisations within the Parish. All Councillors are committed to improving the facilities and services within the Parish and maintaining it as an attractive and sustainable place in which to live, conduct business and visit.

The last 'ordinary' elections were held in May 2015 and future elections are scheduled to be held in May 2019 and May 2023 respectively.

The full Council meets on a monthly basis in the Community Room, Mablethorpe Library & CAP. All meetings are open to the public with a period of time set aside for members of the public to ask questions of the Council prior to the commencement of each full Council meeting. Public speaking time may be extended at discretion of the Chairman.

Councillors hold surgeries at the Coastal Centre, Victoria Road, Mablethorpe on Tuesday mornings and at the Meridale Centre, High Street, Sutton on Sea on Friday's. At each surgery, members of the public can raise general matters of concern in complete confidence with elected Members or the Town Clerk.

The Town Council encourages and accepts representation from groups, organisations or individuals for items to be discussed at either Committee or Council meetings. For inclusion at these meetings, written details MUST be received at the Town Clerk at least **SEVEN working days prior** to the meeting date. Any item received later than seven days will not be discussed until the following council meeting.

Members of the public may record or use other digital communications throughout the meeting and the Town Council has an adopted policy for further guidance. It is noted that any such recording must be carried out in a discreet manner so as not to disrupt the proceedings and to protect attendees who do not wish to be filmed or recorded.

The work of the Town Council was managed by 4 Substantive Committees during the 2015/16 Administration period along with a number of Working Groups and Sub Committees established for specific projects.

### **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE:**

This Committee deals with the internal workings of the Council such as finance, budget control and staffing matters, also overseeing (through a sub-group) the Council's grant policy. The Administration Committee met 5 times and the grants committee (sub group) met three times during the 2015/16 administration period.

### **COMMUNITY AMENITIES COMMITTEE:**

This Committee looks at external functions of the Council, such as the cemetery, allotments, St. Mary's Park, illuminations, Christmas decorations, publicity for the area (Town Guide), CCTV and the trialed 'street warden' scheme.

The Committee met seven times during the year and considered switch on festivals for 2015, In Bloom, Harris Boulevard, allotment issues, bus shelters, street lighting, beach chalets, floral displays, litter bins, planters, street furniture and charges for functions.

The Community Amenities Sub Committee also met to begin the process of updating and amending the parish Emergency Plan. The Community Amenities Committee met 8 times during the 2015/16 administration period.

### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:**

The Personnel Committee reviews and implements all actions and personnel procedures, acts as the first contact for all employee/employer matters and advises the full council accordingly, acting on instructions when called upon. The Personnel Committee met three times during the 2015/16 administration.

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

The Planning Committee usually meets at 3 weekly intervals (in order to achieve ELDC consultation deadlines) and has delegated authority from full council to respond to consultation requests. They look at all planning applications submitted to the District Council for the parish, and forward observations to the Planning Authority who make the final decision.

Each planning application is considered on its own merits, having regard to local and national planning policies and in each case, the committee has to decide whether to support, oppose or withhold comment. The Committee also considers street collection licences, road closures, new street naming requests and county highway matters, as well as other planning issues including the Local Development Framework and Shoreline Management Plan, and changes to the Planning system through the Localism Act. The planning Committee met 11 times during the 2015/16 administration period.

## **MEETINGS- GENERAL INFORMATION**

For the 2016/17 administration period, a new structure has been agreed with the deletion of the Community Amenities Committee (**Appendix B**). This has also seen a reduction in duplication of agenda items and discussions and will assist with the overall time management and service delivery by the Authority.

Minutes of Substantive Committee and Town Council meetings are published on the Town Council website (excluding Personnel minutes).

Councillors are elected to committees and working groups at each Annual Council Meeting in May and a membership list is compiled and published on-line, along with Councillor profiles and contact details.

Working groups may be formed to deal with issues as they emerge and may include members of the public or members of other statutory bodies. The Town Council has 12 working groups who report back to various committees.

The Town Council achieved the Quality Award in 2015 and will be applying for Quality Gold accreditation in the 2016/17 administration period.

The Town Council currently has two grant awarding policies, general grants and event grants. Under schemes, self-help, charities, organisations and clubs within the parish are able to apply for funding (under section 137 of the LGA 1972).

The Town Council has an adopted Complaints procedure which is published on the Town Council website.

The Parish has a population of 12,531 (2011 census).

### **5. TOWN COUNCIL STAFF AND MANAGEMENT**

The Town Clerk is a qualified officer, appointed by the Town Council and is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and Burial Clerk. The Town Clerk carries out all the functions required by law as the Town Council's Proper Officer. The Town Clerk also issues all statutory notifications and documentation.

The Town Council also employs an Assistant to the Town Clerk who undertakes general administration and statutory duties and deputises in the Town Clerk's absence. Contracts of employment, job descriptions and work specifications are issued to all employees.

Both the Town Clerk and Town Clerk's Assistant hold the Certificate in Council Administration (CiLCA). The Town Clerk is currently studying to achieve the Level 4 Community Governance qualification in conjunction with the SLCC and University of Gloucestershire and the revised CiLCA 2015 certificate.

#### **Management Systems**

The Town Council operates under adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which are reviewed annually or as legislation dictates. All key documents are published on the Town Council website.

Specifications and maintenance schedules are in place for all contracted works and properties in the Town Council portfolio. A copy of the Town Council asset register is attached (**Appendix C**).

The Town Council uses the RBS Rialtas Alpha accounting software and produces financial reports monthly and quarterly with an analytical percentage report. The payroll process is undertaken by the Town Clerk using Iris Business software.

Health and Safety, risk assessments and fire risk assessments are undertaken by the Town Clerk and/or nominated responsible person with specific advice obtained from industry specialists and the Lincolnshire County Association (LALC) with annual checks in relation to:

- Health and Safety Policy and Practice (COSHH)
- Risk Assessments & Manual Handling
- Insurance Provision
- Financial Monitoring
- Effective Budgeting
- Property Review
- Stock Condition Survey
- Headstone 'Topple Testing'

## 6. TOWN COUNCIL VISION AND AIMS

The Town Council's vision for the parish is to ensure that it works effectively and efficiently in order to achieve:

***A successful, vibrant, attractive Parish, where people want to live, work, study and visit and build a sustainable and pleasant area for future generations.***

### **KEY POINTS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Town Council aims to improve the quality of life for the residents of the Parish by ensuring that Parish is a desirable, thriving and sustainable place in which to live. It does this in a number of ways:-

- It provides a democratic, transparent and representational voice for the community.
- Where services are provided directly, it is aimed to manage them to a good quality standard, in an efficient, effective and responsive way, at an affordable and 'best value' cost.
- Where services are provided by others, the Town Council endeavours to ensure that they are dealt with effectively and in accordance with the wishes of the community.
- It works with its residents, local authorities and other service providers, businesses and community organisations with the aim of strengthening partnerships, promoting communication, achieving a safe, healthy, prosperous and sustainable community.

## 7. KEY OBJECTIVES

### **To Strengthen Partnerships**

By working proactively to strengthen and improve working relationships with Partners; Statutory Bodies, Organisations, Local Business, Voluntary and Multi Faith Groups.

Through proactive networking and Town Council representation on external bodies it is envisaged that partners will approach the Town Council with clear, well thought out constructive ideas which will benefit all sections of the community by way of joint partnership working.

## **To Promote Communication at All Levels**

By publicising the work of the Town Council through its website newsletters, notice boards and Social Media.

Giving the public the opportunity to ask questions at all of its public meetings and actively encouraging public feedback and positive ideas for development. Also including community representation through questionnaires and by any approved method which relevant to subjects being considered.

Town Councillors are involved with the majority of events in the Parish and try to attend as many local events as possible so that we can outline and promote the activities of the Council.

The Town Council is keen to raise its profile and to secure, as far as possible, services which may, without intervention, be lost to the Parish.

The Town Council has the advantage of being elected by the local community and working for residents in the Parish. All Councillors live within the community and therefore better informed of the issues and problems which may cause concern to local residents.

The Town Council is constant, enduring, open and encourages public participation and by working collaboratively can assist our community through economies of scale and through shared expertise and networking.

## **To Manage the Council's Resources prudently and effectively**

By have excellent financial Control, adopted legal procedures and quality robust internal and external auditing systems to ensure that resources are spent on the needs of the community.

Focusing resources on what matters to the Parish and the community, attaining maximum benefit from effective and robust management of the Council's assets.

## **To Promote a Sustainable Community.**

By acknowledging the diversity of the Parish and seek to maintain this through active engagement in the ongoing reviews of the NDO.

Encouraging ways in which the community can improve the environment and promote building resilience for the future, this includes being proactive in emergency planning and flood awareness.

Work to encourage balancing the current needs of people, the economy and the environment without compromising the future. Being sensitive to our environment and contribute to a high quality of life.

To promote safety and inclusion, opportunities and good services for all, working with the business community to sustain economic vibrancy.

The Town Council wishes to provide an improved service for its community and will explore every opportunity to take responsibility for those services which may prove to be provided more reliably, efficiently and economically on a local basis

## **8. CORE VALUES (SEVEN NOLAN PRINCIPLES)**

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

In addition, the Town Council has also agreed to adopt the following additional values:

### **Persistence**

Working proactively to achieve positive outcomes and decisions.

### **Communication**

Giving the public the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the Council, and actively publicising the work of the Town Council.

### **Strong Financial Management**

Ensuring that the Town Council's resources are managed effectively and efficiently.

### **Training**

Commitment by Councillors and staff members to undertake relevant training.

### **Working Effectively as a Corporate Body**

Respecting decisions made and abiding by such resolutions.

## 9. REVIEW OF KEY TARGETS & ACHIEVEMENTS 2015 / 2016

No.	Item	Met	Partially met	Not met
1	Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	✓		
2	Review and implementation of robust policies and documentation.	✓		
3	Undertake stock condition and asbestos survey review of all Town Council owned properties	✓		
4	Encourage staff and elected Members to undertake specific Council related training	✓		
5	Undertake exhaustive budget monitoring and ensure sound financial planning for 2016/17 and future years	✓		
6	Undertake site review and implement maintenance of 'dangerous' trees (St Mary's Churchyard)	✓		
7	Explore and achieve LNR status for Acre Gap site		✓	
8	Obtain 'Fields in Trust' status for St Mary's Conservation area	✓		
9	Expand markets service delivery to Sutton on Sea	✓		
10	Undertake headstone 'topple test' Trusthorpe Cemetery	✓		
11	Review ELDC transformation project and engage with the community in alternative service delivery options (4 year plan)		✓	
12	Undertake promotion of democracy (in respect of ordinary elections).	✓		
13	Produce 2015/16 visitor guide for the Parish to promote tourism and business.	✓		
14	Review Grants Policy to cover 'loss to the community' due to retraction of LCC & ELDC grant funding in 2016 /17.	✓		
15	Continue work to deliver NDO within the Parish (3 year plan)		✓	
16	Continue to pursue Asset transfer of Mablethorpe Community Hall (from ELDC)		✓	
17	Continue to work towards achieving Quality Gold Award		✓	

No.	Item	Met	Partially met	Not met
1	Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and implementation of robust policies and documentation.	✓		
2	Implement Social Media Policy and implement Town Council Facebook and Twitter accounts.		✓	
3	Consider external influences/further devolution of powers / duties by Central Government.		✓	
4	Improve the Town Council's Corporate Image	✓		
5	Encourage staff and elected Members to undertake specific Council related training.		✓	
6	Undertake exhaustive budget monitoring and ensure sound financial planning for 2017/18 and future years.		✓	
7	To consider financial influences such as inflation, interest rates, salary increases, staffing changes and equipment replacement.		✓	
8	Continue with application process and achieve LNR status for Acre Gap site in partnership with LCC.		✓	
9	Consider reduction in funding from key hirers of Parish services and facilities.		✓	
10	Review markets service delivery to Sutton on Sea.		✓	
11	Undertake headstone 'topple test' Trusthorpe Cemetery (January 2017)			✓
12	Review ELDC transformation project and engage with the community in alternative service delivery options (3 year plan)		✓	
13	Undertake promotion of democracy (in respect of by-elections, as required).		✓	
14	Consider reduced income from the Boatshed and the cost of maintaining the site.	✓		
15	Plan and deliver celebration event of HM the Queen's 90 <sup>th</sup> birthday.	✓		
16	Consider effective budgeting for providing further Public Conveniences in the Parish to encourage tourism.		✓	
17	Consider effective budgeting for providing street lighting in the Parish to meet Town Council's duty to consider crime and disorder.		✓	
18	To consider and deliver events within the Town following the deletion of service delivery by MAP CIC (specialists markets and events)		✓	
19	Continue work to deliver NDO within the Parish (2 year plan)		✓	
20	Continue to pursue Asset transfer of Mablethorpe Community Hall (from ELDC)		✓	
21	Construct Terrorism Threat Protocol (Best Practice)		✓	
22	Achieve Quality Gold Award		✓	

No.	Item	Met	Partially met	Not met
1	Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.			✓
2	Review and implementation of robust policies and documentation.			✓
3	To consider external influences such as the further devolution of powers and duties by Central Government.			✓
4	Encourage staff and elected Members to undertake specific Council related training.			✓
5	Undertake constant review of Town Council practices, service delivery and conduct to ensure 'Quality / Quality Gold' standards are maintained			✓
6	Undertake exhaustive budget monitoring and ensure sound financial planning for 2018/19 and future years.			✓
7	To consider financial influences such as inflation, interest rates, salary increases, staffing changes and equipment replacement.			✓
8	Consider possible reduction in income from key hirers of Parish services and facilities.			✓
9	Undertake headstone 'topple test' Trusthorpe Cemetery.			✓
10	Review markets service delivery to Sutton on Sea. Review ELDC transformation project and engage with the community in alternative service delivery options (ongoing).			✓
11	ELDC transformation project and engage with the community in alternative service delivery options (ongoing).			✓
12	Undertake promotion of democracy (in respect of by elections).			✓
13	Remove the Boatshed by way of lease surrender to ELDC and the associated costs of maintaining the site.			✓
14	Consider effective budgeting for providing further Public Conveniences in the Parish to encourage tourism.			✓
15	To consider and deliver events within the Town following the deletion of service delivery by MAP CIC (specialists markets and events)			✓
16	Undertake Parish referendum and deliver NDO within the Parish.			✓
17	To undertake the 3 and 5 year electrical inspections and testing of buildings			✓
18	Consider possible capping of the precept.			✓
19	Consider 'Participatory Funding' as part of Grant Awarding Policies			
20				

**12. FINANCIAL BUDGETS AND FORECASTS**

 (reviewed 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016)

<b>Breakdown of Precepts</b>	<b>2017/18*</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Administration - Salaries and Associated Overheads		84,905	82,068	81,470
Public Property - Provision and Maintenance of Public Property, Allotments, Maintenance of Burial Grounds, CCTV		149,260	115,835	115,835
Publicity - Public Notices, Advertising, Conferences, Council Newsletter, Town Guides, Illuminations		9,850	4,900	4,700
Section 137 Expenditure & General Power of Competence - Locally Determined Issues, Grants		14,350	9,750	9,750
General - Mayoral Expenditure, Member Allowances, Legal Fees, Other		26,843	20,338	20,338
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>285,208</b>	<b>232,891</b>	<b>232,093</b>
<b>Less Income</b>		<b>38,045</b>	<b>58,095</b>	<b>66,457</b>
<b>Balance to be funded by Local Charge Payers</b>		<b>247,163</b>	<b>174,796</b>	<b>165,636</b>

\*REVIEW DATE: September 2016

**NOTES:**