



## **KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Bob Whiley Community Centre, Shop Road  
Knowsley Village, Merseyside L34 0HD  
Tel: 0151 548 4545  
Email: jane.thomas@knowsley.gov.uk

Dated this Day of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**To the Members of the Finance and General Purposes  
Committee**

---

**YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND a meeting of  
the Finance and General Purposes Committee, to be held on  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025, in the Community Pavilion, Pool Hey,  
Stockbridge Village, Committee Room, commencing at 5.00 p.m.**

### **Committee Members**

Cllr D Baum, Cllr M Burke, Cllr B Donnelly,  
Cllr J Donnelly, Cllr L O'Keeffe,  
Cllr N Joseph, Cllr L Tomlinson

  
Jane Thomas  
Clerk of the Council

### **AGENDA**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL  
YEAR 2025/2026**

To receive nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Committee for the  
Municipal Year 2025/2026.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE  
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/2026**

To receive nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for  
the Municipal Year 2025/2026.

### **3. APOLOGIES**

### **4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

In accordance with Standing Orders 1.19.1,1.19.2, members are invited to indicate any interests they may have in relation to items on the agenda for the meeting.

### **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON**

To **RECEIVE** announcements from the Chairperson of the Committee. -  
Information Only

### **6. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CLERK OF THE COUNCIL**

To **RECEIVE** announcements from the Clerk of the Council - **Information Only**

### **7. FRIENDS OF KNOWSLEY VILLAGE REC & GREEN SPACES**

To receive and **CONSIDER** feedback and further information from KMBC representative, following queries raised by Members at the previous meeting on the 8 April 2025. **Pages 1 – 2**

### **8. LITTLEWOODS OF STOCKBRIDGE**

To **CONSIDER** a verbal report from the Chair of the Committee regarding recent incidents of vandalism to benches within the Littlewoods Woodland area.

### **9. MILL LANE PLAYING AREA**

To **CONSIDER** report from the Clerk of the Council informing members of recent safety concern raised by a resident regarding play equipment Mill Lane Playing Area. **(RoSPA Inspection Report (March 2025) Enclosed) Pages 3 – 4**

### **10. TO ESTABLISH A REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE BETWEEN THE TOWN COUNCIL AND STOCKBRIDGE ABC**

To **CONSIDER AND APPROVE** the report outlining a proposal to establish a regular meeting schedule between the Town Council and Stockbridge ABC. **Page 5**

### **11. CORRESPONDENCE FROM FACILITY USER GROUP**

To **CONSIDER** a written request received from a representative from one of our user groups. **Pages 6 – 9**

**12. COMMUNITY PAVILION STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT**

To **CONSIDER AND AGREE** the report provided by ACR outlining the findings of the recent structural appraisal carried out at the Community Pavilion, specifically focusing on the condition and integrity of the flat roof. Members are asked to review the assessment and determine any necessary actions or next steps based on the recommendations presented. *(Non-Intrusive Visual Structural Report Enclosed)*  
**Pages 10 - 11**

**13. INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2024**

To **CONSIDER AND AGREE** the Town Councils Investment Strategy Policy for 2025/26. **Pages 12 - 14**

**14. TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

To **CONSIDER AND AGREE** the investment of surplus funds for 2025/26.  
**Pages 15 - 16**



## KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting : 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

### FRIENDS OF KNOWSLEY VILLAGE REC & GREEN SPACES – FOLLOW UP REPORT

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with a follow-up report regarding the ongoing partnership with the Friends of Knowsley Village Rec & Green Spaces. This report specifically addresses the commitment made at the previous meeting on 8th April 2025, wherein Members requested further information from Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (KMBC) in relation to funding and implementation of the masterplan.

- 1.1 Phil Hurst, representing KMBC's Environmental Sustainability Team, will be in attendance to respond to the queries raised by Members and to provide clarification on the Borough's support for the future development of the Recreation Ground.
- 1.2 Members will be invited to review the information provided and consider whether to continue and further strengthen the current partnership arrangements.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- 2.1 **NOTE** verbal update from the KMBC representative addressing matters raised at the meeting on 8th April 2025.
- 2.2 Review and discuss the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed projects for the Recreation Ground, in light of the new information provided.
- 2.4 **ENDORSE** further exploration of funding opportunities in collaboration with KMBC and community stakeholders to ensure the long-term masterplan.

#### 3. REPORT

At the meeting held on 8th April 2025, Members received a verbal report from the Friends of Knowsley Village Rec & Green Spaces, outlining recent activities and ambitions for 2025/26. Two representatives from KMBC were also in attendance and provided an overview of the Borough's Green Spaces Action Plan, with attention drawn to proposals on page 37 concerning Knowsley Village.

- 3.1 During the discussion, Members posed several questions regarding project funding, implementation of the masterplan. Phil Hurst from KMBC agreed to investigate and report back to the Committee at the next available opportunity.

# Item 7

- 3.2 The meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025 provides an opportunity for Members to receive that follow-up information, evaluate the partnership's direction, and determine next steps for joint working and community-led green space improvements.

**Jane Thomas – Clerk of the Council**

# Item 9

## KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Report of the Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer

### Mill Lane Playing Area

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of a recent safety concern raised by a resident regarding play equipment at Mill Lane Playing Area and to request guidance on next steps, particularly in relation to the wider condition of equipment on site and ongoing discussions with KMBC.

**RoSPA Inspection Report (March 2025) (Enclosed)**

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the age and condition of the equipment, Members are asked to **CONSIDER AND AGREE** one of the following:

- a) Whether to **undertake interim cosmetic and safety maintenance**, e.g. repainting and minor repairs as per RoSPA's recommendations
- b) Whether to **begin scoping options with KMBC** for replacing the aging equipment as part of a longer-term improvement project
- c) Remove all equipment

#### 3. REPORT

3.1 The Town Council received a call from a local resident whose daughter cut her hands while using the monkey bars at Mill Lane Playing Area. The child reportedly slipped while holding the bars and sustained injuries, allegedly due to the condition of the equipment. The resident was informed by a third party that the play equipment had been "condemned" following a previous inspection.

3.2 Following the call, I contacted Steve Jones, Parks and Cemeteries Operations and Development Manager (KMBC), who attended the site and confirmed the monkey bars were not dangerous. He noted that the paint was flaking and could possibly have caused the injury, but there was no structural risk warranting immediate removal.

3.3 **RoSPA Inspection Summary (March 2025) (Enclosed)** An annual RoSPA inspection (Safety Inspection) was carried out on 14 March 2025. Key points from the report include:

- **Overhead Ladder (Monkey Bars):**
  - Compliant with safety standards (EN 1176-1:2017+A1:2023)

# Item 9

- Risk rating: **Medium**, due to surface condition and loose fixings
- Recommendations: Repainting, surface checks, and monitoring for ground movement
- **Not condemned or recommended for removal**
- **Other Items on Site (e.g. Swing, Rocker):**
  - Several items noted as having worn paintwork, rust, chain and bush wear
  - Risk levels range from low to medium
  - Maintenance required but **no immediate safety closures recommended**

## 3.4 **Conclusion and Recommendations:**

- a) The equipment is **not condemned** according to the official RoSPA report.
- b) The injury may be attributed to the **flaking paint** or general wear, both of which have been flagged for maintenance but not deemed high risk.
- c) It is recommended that the **overhead ladder be prioritised for repainting and secure anchoring**, in line with RoSPA's suggestions.
- d) The site should continue to be **monitored regularly** until remedial works are completed.

**Jane Thomas - Clerk of the Council**

# Item 10

## KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting: 18 June 2025

### TO ESTABLISH A REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE BETWEEN THE TOWN COUNCIL AND STOCKBRIDGE ABC.

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report outlines a proposal to establish a regular meeting schedule between the Town Council and Stockbridge ABC. The aim is to strengthen collaboration, improve communication, and ensure alignment on shared community priorities and initiatives.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended:

- a) APPROVE establishment of regular quarterly meetings
- b) APPOINT Nominate attendees

#### 3. REPORT

3.1 Stockbridge ABC plays a significant role in supporting community development, youth engagement, and local initiatives. While ad-hoc coordination has occurred in the past, the lack of a structured communication framework can lead to missed opportunities, misalignment, and delayed progress on joint efforts.

3.2 It is recommended that regular meetings take place after speaking to Stockbridge ABC they have suggested holding quarterly meetings on a Monday. This can always be reviewed and adjusted based on feedback and effectiveness of the meetings.

To ensure meetings are productive and focused, members are recommended to nominate representatives to attend on the before of Knowsley Town Council.

Jane Thomas – Clerk of the Council

# Item 11

## KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting: 18 June 2025

### CORRESPONDENCE FROM FACILITY USER GROUP

#### 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To bring to Members' attention a letter received from one of our facility user groups requesting the introduction of a formal concession policy for the hire of the Town Councils facilities. This report seeks Members' agreement in principle to develop and adopt such a policy to ensure fairness and accessibility for voluntary and not-for-profit groups.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- a) **NOTE** the contents of the letter received from the community organisation.
- b) **AGREE** to explore the development of a concession policy for voluntary and not-for-profit community groups.
- c) **REQUEST** the Clerk to draft a proposed concession policy for consideration at a future meeting, taking into account financial implications, eligibility criteria, and community needs.

#### 3. REPORT

- 3.1 A written request has been received from a representative from a facility user group highlighting concerns regarding the inconsistency of fees and concessions currently applied to the hire of community spaces. See **Appendix 1** for copy of letter

The letter outlines that:

- a) Grassroots and not-for-profit groups, which play a key role in supporting community health, inclusion, and cohesion, often face financial constraints.
- b) Access to council-managed facilities is essential for these groups to deliver their services.
- c) There is currently a lack of clarity and consistency in how concessions are applied, which may create unintentional barriers or inequalities.
- d) The organisation is requesting that the Council review the existing pricing structure and introduce a clear and consistent concession policy.

# Item 11

## 3.2 Consideration

- **Equity and Access:** A formalised policy could ensure that all voluntary and not-for-profit groups are treated equitably when accessing community spaces.
- **Transparency:** A defined structure would improve transparency for both council officers and community users, reducing the potential for misunderstanding or perceived unfairness.
- **Support for Local Initiatives:** A concession policy aligns with the Council's commitment to supporting local community development and inclusive participation.
- **Resource Implications:** Any changes to pricing structures should consider the financial implications for council budgets and ensure sustainability.

Jane Thomas – Clerk of the Town Council

**Thomas, Jane**

---

**From:**  
**Sent:**  
**To:**  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:**

ity Groups

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization. Exercise caution when clicking links, opening attachments or taking further action, before validating its authenticity.

Secured by Check Point

Dear Members of the Town Council Committee,

I hope this message finds you well.

I am writing on behalf of our community organisation to raise a concern regarding the current fees charged for the hire of local community facilities. As someone who works closely with a range of grassroots groups across our communities, I want to highlight the need for a fair and consistent approach to concessions for voluntary and not-for-profit community groups.

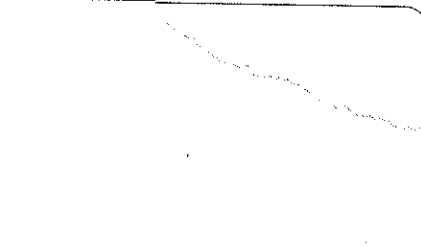
These groups, often operating on limited budgets, play a vital role in promoting health, wellbeing, inclusion, and social connection in our communities. The spaces managed by the council are essential to the delivery of these services. However, we have observed some inconsistency in the fees and concessions applied, which may inadvertently disadvantage certain groups or create barriers to access.

We respectfully request that the council review the current pricing structure with a view to ensuring fairness and transparency across all community organisations. A clear concession policy that supports grassroots and charitable groups equally would help ensure that all communities benefit from affordable access to local facilities.

We would be happy to engage in a constructive conversation to explore how this can be achieved and share insights from our work in the community.

Thank you for your time and continued support of local initiatives. I look forward to your response.

Warm regards



Sent from my iPhone

# Item 12

## **KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Report of the Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer

### **COMMUNITY PAVILION STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform Members of the findings and recommendations arising from the structural appraisal of the punch bags mounted on the flat roof structure and to seek a decision on the preferred course of action.

*(Non-Intrusive Visual Structural report enclosed)*

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to:

- a) **NOTE** the findings of the structural appraisal conducted by ACR
- b) **CONSIDER AND APPROVE** one of the following options:
  - Option 1:** Proceed with the full removal of the punch bags from the flat roof structure.
  - Option 2:** Proceed with a structural reinforcement plan, starting with an intrusive survey to assess feasibility and develop full structural calculations.
- c) **APPROVE** allocation of funds, if required, for the chosen option and subsequent works.

#### **3. REPORT**

- 3.1 On 20th May 2025, ACR Structural Engineers conducted a structural appraisal of the punch bags currently fixed to the flat roof of the Community Pavilion. Concerns had been raised regarding the adequacy of the roof structure to support the weight and dynamic loads of the equipment.

#### **4. STRUCTURAL APPRAISAL SUMMARY**

- 4.1 The assessment confirmed that the existing timber roof beams are not currently sufficient to support the loads imposed by the punch bags, particularly during active use. ACR provided two potential options to address the issue:

# Item 12

## Option 1: Full Removal

- **Action:** Remove all punch bags from the flat roof area.
- **Implication:** This eliminates the structural load and any associated risk but may impact the current use and functionality of the space.

## Option 2: Structural Reinforcement

- **Action:** Strengthen the roof beams by introducing a centrally positioned steel column to reduce the effective span of the timber beams.
- **Additional Requirements:**
  - Beams will need to be braced to each other to adequately distribute horizontal loads during equipment use.
  - An **intrusive survey** of the roof structure and floor slab is required to determine the feasibility and enable full structural calculations.
- **Implication:** Retains punch bags on-site but involves significant investigation, potential cost, and temporary disruption.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

**Option 2** will likely incur higher costs due to the need for an intrusive survey, engineering design, and structural works. Cost estimates are to be confirmed pending survey results.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The safety and integrity of the roof structure must be prioritised. A clear decision is now required to determine the future use of the punch bags and the supporting structure.

**Jane Thomas – Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer**

## KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Report of the Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer

### INVESTMENT STRATEGY POLICY

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT.**

1.1 Investment of surplus funds by local authorities is governed by Section 15(a)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Guidance issued by the Secretary of State under that Act.

1.2 Members are requested to consider the implementation of an Investment Strategy Policy which sets out the policy for managing the investment and giving priority to the liquidity and security.

1.3 Additionally, members are requested to consider adopting a maximum investment limit of £85,000 per financial institution. This limit aligns with the protection provided under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS), ensuring that investments are safeguarded.

#### **2 BACKGROUND.**

2.1 Investments below £10,000 are not subject to the guidance but for investments between £10,000 and £100,000 the guidance should apply.

a) Where a Town or Parish Council expects its investments, at any time during a financial year to exceed £100,000 the Guidance should apply in relation to that year.

b) Where a Town or Parish Council expects its investments at any time during a financial year, to exceed £10,000 but not £100,000 it should decide on the extent, if any to which is reasonable to have regard to the Guidance in relation to that year.

2.2 Knowsley Town Council expects its investments during the 2025/26 financial year to exceed £100,000 and therefore it is recommended to apply the guidance as set out below.

#### **3 OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The Council will invest prudently any surplus funds it holds, on behalf of the community. Priority will be given to the security and liquidity of its reserves.

# Item 13

- 3.2 The Council will seek the highest rate of return, consistent with the proper levels of security and liquidity.
- 3.3 The Council will withdraw monies first from the least secure or higher rated investment funds / banks.

## **4 SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS**

- 4.1 The Council will invest its reserves in specified investments which are defined by the Guidance as investments that are:
- Denominated in sterling and any payments or repayments in respect of the investments are payable only in sterling.
  - That have a period of maturity of no more than 24 months.
  - Not defined as capital expenditure (essentially this precludes investment in shares or loan capital of any corporate body).
  - Made with a body or in an investment scheme which has been awarded a high credit quality (see below) or is made with the UK Government or Local Authority.
- 4.2 The Council will only invest in Specified Investments as defined above.
- 4.3 For the avoidance of doubt, the Council will invest balances which are surplus in the short-term deposits with one or more of the UK Government, UK and / or building societies or other local authorities, provided that the credit rating of such institution satisfies the minimum credit rating specified below.
- 4.4 Decisions on investments within this strategy will be made by Full Council.

## **5 ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF CREDIT RATINGS (RISKS)**

- 5.1 The required level of Credit Rating for UK Banks and Building Societies is "A" or above. Fitch Ratings Ltd or the bank is registered with the Financial Services Authority (FSCS) and the Council is otherwise satisfied as to its levels of capital and liquidity.

## **6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT.**

- 6.1 The Council does not use external advisers to offer information, advice or assistance relating to investments, nor does it regard there as being a need for its staff to be trained in investment management given the nature of its investments but will rely on information which is publicly available. The Council considers a Treasury Management Policy on an annual basis.
- 6.2 The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by reference to credit ratings. The Council should aim for ratings equivalent to the Fitch F1 rating for short – term investments.

# Item 13

## **7. INVESTMENT OF MONEY BORROWED IN ADVANCE OF NEED**

In the unlikely event of money being borrowed in advance of need, it will be invested in specified investments in accordance with this strategy.

## **8. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF REGULATIONS**

The Investment Strategy will be reviewed annually. The Annual Strategy for the coming financial year will be prepared and reviewed by Full Council.

The Council reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to the approval of the Full Council.

## **9. TRANSPARENCY**

The Strategy should be publicly available on the Council's website.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Members are requested to **NOTE AND AGREE** the Investment Strategy policy for the 2025-2026 financial year.
- b) **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it be formally approved.

**Jane Thomas - Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer**

# Item 14

## **KNOWSLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Report of the Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer

### **TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2025/2026**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT.**

Investment of surplus funds by local authorities is governed by the Local Government Act 2003 S 15(a)(a) and Guidance issued by the Secretary of State under that Act.

Members are also requested to consider investing a maximum of £85,000 per financial institution, which is the amount covered under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

The Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) of the Bank of England announced a change in policy to extend the protection afforded under the Scheme to "Small Local Authorities" (SMAs).

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

In accordance with the Councils Investment Strategy Policy Members will be aware that investments must meet the requirements of the policy.

#### **2. RESERVES**

Knowsley Town Council has projected total reserves of £351,179. Of this, £85,000 is held in a fixed-term deposit, leaving £266,179 available. From the remaining reserves, it is expected that £85,413 will be earmarked for specific purposes, resulting in unrestricted reserves for investment £180,766.

#### **3. DEPOSIT OPTIONS**

Knowsley Town Council have noted its reserves to generate additional income by placing monies into a fixed term deposit account. The current interest rates being offered to Local Councils is between 2.3% and 4.20%, this would of course generate additional income.

Based on banks who currently offer investments to Local Councils it is hoped that the Council will invest in the undermentioned organisations to a maximum of £85,000.00 per investment.

# Item 14

Financial Institution	Investment	Interest rate 12 months	Return on Investment.
NatWest	£10,766	3.20%	£345
Allica Bank	£85,000	4.15%	£3,528
Hampshire Trust	£85,000	4.20%	£3,570

Should Members agree to invest the overall sum of £180,766 the earmarked reserves of £52,143 will remain accessible in the Councils current bank provider's account.

#### 4. **RECOMMENDED FOR MEMBERS TO**

- a) **NOTE** report
- b) Make appropriate resolutions to invest the overall sum of £180,766.
- c) **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it be formally approved.

#### 5. **CONCLUSION**

Knowsley Town Council have managed to increase its reserves and is now in a relatively strong financial position some flexibility may be necessary due to the unrestricted rates that are being offered on a day by day basis

Using the powers under the Local Government Act 2003 s15 (1)(a) Members must consider the Councils Investment Strategy and resolve to invest as outlined above giving the Clerk as RFO the authority to obtain the best interest rates and accounts available at the time of reinvestment.

**Jane Thomas – Clerk of the Council and Responsible Financial Officer**