



Raunds Town Council

Business Plan

Business Plan V3 2021-2025

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Amended	

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Overview of the Council

The population of Raunds is estimated at 9,165 (2019), and the electorate as at 1 August 2017 was 6,917. The town comprises two electoral wards; Raunds Saxon Ward consists of residences in the east and south of the town, whilst Raunds Windmill Ward contains those in the west and north. The town is situated within North Northamptonshire, and three members sit on that Council (out of a total of 78) represent Raunds, Stanwick and Hargrave.

The Town Council consists of 12 Councillors, elected for a four-year term with the next scheduled election due in May 2025. The Council operates with five principal committees – Finance & Policy; Planning, Environment, Leisure & Recreation (ELR); Events and Personnel. The Full Council meets on the second Tuesday of every month; committee meetings are held regularly throughout the year. All meetings are held in the Council Chamber at The Town Hall, unless restrictions apply in which case they may be held in the Saxon Hall, and commence at 7.30 pm, unless otherwise advised. All meetings are open to the public.

In addition, the Council has a number of working parties to look at specific projects.

The positions of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, together with the membership of the various committees, are decided each year at the Annual Meeting held in May. The Council also hosts an Annual Assembly each spring, to which all townspeople are invited.

The Council owns and operates the Town Hall which provides office space for the Council's administration. Surplus office space is leased to a number of local businesses, The Town Hall is also licensed as a wedding venue. In addition to The Town Hall, the Council owns and manages the Saxon Hall, which is an ideal venue for parties, weddings, other social events, fitness classes and corporate meetings. This facility is regularly used by a number of community groups. In 2020/21, Saxon Hall underwent a comprehensive refurbishment funded by Section 106 developer contributions and accumulated reserves.

Other assets include Raunds Cemetery Chapel and a number of outdoor spaces. Apart from the Council's share of council tax (the precept), other income includes that from the letting of office space at The Town Hall and for bookings at Saxon Hall.

The Council employs 7 staff. Those based at the Town Hall comprise of the Town Clerk, two Assistants to the Clerk and an Administrative Assistant. The Operations Manager and remaining staff are generally based at Saxon Hall.

Up until 2017, population growth had been reasonably modest. However, planning permissions for over 1,000 new homes have been granted, and those dwellings are currently being built and occupied. Accordingly, the population in Raunds is expected to rise in the coming years. There is also significant industrial development at Warth Park, which is located on the north-west outskirts of the town. This rapid rate of expansion is an ongoing key challenge to the Council. The Council actively encourages the participation of residents and the business community in the shaping of the town in the future.

What is the Town Council Business Plan?

The business plan aims to give residents a clear understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve over the next four years and how it will achieve it. The business plan will provide a framework for the Council to operate within and enables progress against the plan to be clearly monitored. The plan pulls together the actions and objectives from a number of documents and plans, including the original "Vision for Raunds Community Plan", the "Vision for Raunds 2", and "The Neighbourhood Plan".

The business plan ensures that Raunds is best placed to manage and benefit from the rapid growth that will be seen in the town in the coming years.

Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives

The Town Council's mission statement is:

"To improve the quality of life in Raunds by making it a great community in which to live, work, invest, visit and enjoy".

The Town Council's Strategic Objectives are:

- To provide a strong and independent voice for Raunds.
- To preserve and enhance the traditions, character and identity of Raunds.
- To promote Raunds as a clean, green, safe, welcoming and prosperous town for all.
- To provide high standard facilities.
- To work in partnership with others to improve the health, education and well-being of residents.
- To ensure the Council complies with its legal obligations and best practice, and provides residents with value for money
- To promote and nurture community cohesion, including raising awareness of and tackling social isolation

The strategic objectives are broken down into **operational objectives**, which clearly identify the work streams that the Council will be working towards within the lifetime of this business plan.

Operational Objectives

These objectives are drawn from the Vision for Raunds, Vision for Raunds 2, Neighbourhood Plan and Council policy. These objectives have been drawn up with the National Well-being Index in mind, see Appendix A.

To provide a strong and independent voice for Raunds

- a) Review the Neighbourhood Plan, which was originally adopted in 2017, with a target review date of June 2023.
- b) Respond to all consultations that affect the town and its residents within prescribed timescales (examples include Planning Applications, Planning Policy, and Policing)
- c) Lobby other tiers of government and partner organisations on issues that affect Raunds by lobbying our MP and unitary Councillors
- d) Continue to demonstrate excellent standards of governance by maintaining the gold standard in the Local Council Award Scheme, first achieved in March 2017.
- e) Ensure that staff and Councillors are well trained and effective through the use of annual staff appraisals and training and development programs for both staff and Councillors.
- f) Ensure effective communications with the town through the implementation of the Council's communication strategy. This includes the Annual Report, events postcard, the Town Spotlight, and other information flyers, which are all delivered through every letterbox.

To preserve and enhance the traditions, character and identity of Raunds

- a) Raise the profile of the office of Mayor by ensuring that 100% of events attended by him or her are recorded on the Council website and social media.
- b) Maintain the number of events held in the town to ensure that a minimum of four Council events are held each year (in addition to Mayoral civic fundraising events)
- c) Promote links to Stanwick Lakes by ensuring appropriate signage is maintained and updated at each end of Meadow Lane.
- d) Update the adopted Neighbourhood Plan to include an appropriate list of protected local heritage sites.
- e) Work with partners to reprint the Heritage Sites leaflet as appropriate.

To promote Raunds as a clean, green, safe, welcoming and prosperous town for everyone

- a) Seek to promote a prosperous local economy that will encourage local employment through policies within the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and any subsequent revisions.
- b) Support local businesses through its website, social media platforms and Raunds Town App.
- c) Actively promote Raunds Town Council “Shopfront Grant Scheme”
- d) Ensure the Mayor, Councillors and the Council promote “Brand Raunds” at every opportunity
- e) Maintain and update the “Welcome information pack” for new residents and continue to improve the online information available.
- f) Ensure that regular groups, classes and clubs that meet at Council-owned premises are promoted through the Town Council website, social media, notice boards and the Raunds Town App.
- g) Promote the reduction of dog fouling in the town and participation of the Green Dog Club and dog park.
- h) Promote the reduction of littering in the Town through installation of further litter bins and encouraging participation in the bi-annual Town Council Litter Picks.
- i) Work to promote the assimilation of all new developments into the community of Raunds.
- j) Actively promote the green agenda in everything that we do, for example providing electric car charging points and bicycle racks.
- k) Use the most energy efficient methods and products when maintaining and updating property and facilities.
- l) Work with the schools and promote cohesion.

To provide high standard facilities

- a) Ensure s106 monies received are spent within the prescribed timescale on appropriate projects.
- b) Continue to refurbish all leisure areas when required.
- c) Ensure all Council property and facilities are maintained to a modern high standard.
- d) Ensure all land held is used for a suitable purpose; the Council will only hold land that meets its purposes.
- e) Promote and support the activities of the various youth groups that exist within the town.
- f) Actively promote the council’s Friday and Saturday Markets.

To work in partnership with others to improve the health and wellbeing of residents

- a) Promote healthy lifestyles.
- b) Actively participate in the Joint Action Group (JAG), by appointing a representative and attending at least 75% of JAG meetings. The JAG is a collaboration of a body of local authorities, Police, and other parties with an interest in community safety.
- c) Actively participate in the Speedwatch campaign through promoting volunteers.
- d) Maintain constant communication with the Police and local PCSOs to identify and address local issues.
- e) Work with the relevant partners and organisations to reduce anti-social behavior (ASB) and the perception of ASB.
- f) Support the provision of library and children's services
- g) Support the Police, Fire, Ambulance, and First Responders, including funding the provision of defibrillators and free first aid training.
- h) Lobby for, and financially support through S106 agreements, better public transport links for Raunds.
- i) Work in partnerships with educational services.

To ensure the Council complies with its legal obligations and best practice, and provides residents with value for money

- a) Ensure the Council regularly reviews and updates all policies and procedures and strives to achieve best practice.
- b) Review progress against this Business Plan.
- c) Promote innovative uses of Council property and facilities to maximise revenues to supplement council tax income.
- d) Keep council tax increases to a minimum.
- e) Keep abreast of available funding streams and apply wherever possible, including ensuring that a list of costed projects is maintained in readiness for submission.
- f) Ensure all projects and other expenditure are delivered using the most cost effective solutions, going local where possible.
- g) Produce and publish Financial Accounts in a clear and concise format to enhance understanding and promote transparency.
- h) Produce, and stick to, accurate and realistic budgets, while maintaining a suitable general reserve.

To promote and nurture community cohesion, including raising awareness of and tackling social isolation

- a) Work to identify and tackle social isolation within Raunds, for example film afternoons, coffee afternoons, and isolation care packs.
- b) Work with, and provide funding for, local volunteer organisations and Churches to reach the most vulnerable and isolated within our community.
- c) Encourage community participation and attendance in local events, both Council organised and other.

APPENDIX A - Measures Included in National Well-Being Index.

	Measure
Personal well-being	Very high rating of satisfaction with their lives overall
	Very high rating of how worthwhile the things they do are
	Rated their happiness yesterday as very high / anxiety yesterday as very low
	Population mental well-being
Our relationships	Average rating of satisfaction with family life
	Average rating of satisfaction with social life
	Has a spouse, family member or friend to rely on if they have a serious problem
Health	Healthy life expectancy at birth (male/female)
	Reported a long term illness and a disability
	Somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their health
	Some evidence indicating depression or anxiety
What we do	Unemployment rate
	Somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their job
	Somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with their amount of leisure time
	Volunteered more than once in the last 12 months
	Engaged with/participated in arts or cultural activity at least 3 times in last year
	Adult participation in 30 mins of moderate intensity sport, once per week.
Where we live	Crimes against the person (per 1,000 adults)
	Felt fairly/very safe walking alone after dark (men/women)
	Accessed natural environment at least once a week in the last 12 months
	Agreed/agreed strongly they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood
	Households with good transport access to key services or work (2011 = 100)
	Fairly/very satisfied with their accommodation

Personal finance	Individuals in households with less than 60% of median income after housing costs
	Median wealth per household, including pension wealth
	Real median household income
	Somewhat, mostly or completely satisfied with the income of their household
	Report finding it quite or very difficult to get by financially
The economy	Real net national disposable income per head
	UK public sector net debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product
	Inflation rate (as measured by the Consumer Price Index)
Education and skills	Human capital - the value of individuals' skills, knowledge and competences in labour market
	Five or more GCSEs A* to C including English and Maths
	UK residents aged 16 to 64 with no qualifications
Governance	Voter turnout in UK General Elections
	Those who have trust in national Government
The natural environment	Total green house gas emissions (millions of tonnes)
	Protected areas in the UK (Millions hectares)
	Energy consumed within the UK from renewable sources
	Household waste that is recycled