

COUNCIL NAME	Halstead Town Council
DATE OF APPLICATION	12 February 2025
AWARD LEVEL	Gold

Please read through the scheme guide before completing this form as it includes essential information in support of the evidence required. If you are unsure of the criteria requirements or need further information, then please check with your local county association or contact NALC at LocalCouncilAwardScheme@nalc.gov.uk

Completed sections required for each award level:

- If you are applying for Bronze level complete the Bronze criteria section
- If you are applying for Silver complete the Bronze and Silver criteria sections
- If you are applying for Gold complete the Bronze, Silver and Gold criteria sections

The exception to the above is if you have achieved an award within the last 12 months, then the section for that level award (and the preceding one) need not be completed.

All relevant sections of the form must be completed with evidence provided for the level that you are applying for. Otherwise, this could result in a delay to your application.

Application Tips

- Check all relevant documents are attached with your submission and hyperlinks provided are working correctly.
- Hyperlinks to the council's website must be to the exact evidence required. If this is not possible then include details of how the evidence can be found (i.e. menu, sub-menu etc).
- All published policies and documents must be tailored/personalised to the council.
- Check policies and procedures are not overdue for review. It is best practice to include a review date on all relevant documents and for Silver/Gold award levels the next review date must be included.
- If you are providing minutes as evidence, it is important you include the specific minute reference.
- For the Silver and Gold award levels, a more in-depth assessment will be undertaken of the evidence provided for the preceding award levels. For Gold in particular, the assessment panel will be looking for evidence of best practise throughout the application.
- A column has been provided on this form for any supporting comments you may have.

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BRONZE RESOLUTION

Please provide hyperlink to minutes:

The Council must confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for the Bronze award (See Guide for wording)

Please provide a direct hyperlink for evidence that is published on the council's website. For all other evidence please specify attachment provided.

Criteria	Hyperlink or Attachment	Supporting Comments (if any)
1. Standing Orders	Standing Orders (halsteadtowncouncil.org.uk)	These will be updated in February 2025. At this point we feel only a date change is needed as the orders are still fit for purpose
2. Financial Regulations	Financial-regulations-2024.pdf (halsteadtowncouncil.org.uk)	
3. Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	Code-of-Conduct-2024.pdf Your Councillors - Halstead Town Council	
4. Accessibility statement	Accessibility - Halstead Town Council	
5. Publication scheme	Publication-scheme-2024.pdf	
6. Complaints procedure	Complaints-procedure-2022.pdf	
7. Privacy notice	GDPR Privacy Policy	

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8. Last annual return	Annual-Internal-Audit-2023-2024.pdf	
9. Transparent information about council payments	Financial Details - Halstead Town Council	
10. Calendar of all meetings <u>including</u> the next annual meeting of electors	Town Council Meeting Dates 2025 -2026 - Halstead Town Council	
11. Minutes for at least <u>one year</u> of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee/sub-committee meetings	Minutes Archives - Halstead Town Council	
12. Current agendas	Agendas Archives - Halstead Town Council	
13. The Budget and Precept information for the current or next financial year	2025-26-Budget-and-Long-Term-Financial-Plan.pdf	
14. Biodiversity policy	Biodiversity-policy-2024.pdf	
15. Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code	Your Councillors - Halstead Town Council	
16. Action plan for the current year	Action-Plan-updated-2025.pdf	
17. Evidence of consulting the community	Halstead-Town-Council-newsletter-issue-5-January-2025.pdf DRAFT Minutes of Annual Town Meeting 29 April 2024 - Halstead Town Council Halstead Town Council	Annual Town meeting 2024 took the form of a consultation with local charities who were able to present at the meeting. This has now developed into a group to coordinate charitable and voluntary activities. Grants awarded to local charities each year. Successful consultation over introducing parking restrictions during working hours on weekdays on Trinity Street – restrictions introduced.

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	Climate Action Year 2024 - Halstead Town Council	Consultation on Climate change and renewable energy in January 2024
18. Publicity advertising council activities	Events Archives - Halstead Town Council	Posters on council noticeboards as well as information on Council website and council facebook page
19. Evidence of participating in town and country planning	Minutes Archives - Halstead Town Council	All planning sent for the notice of HTC brought to Full Council every month, recorded in minutes.
20. Evidence of publicising elections and vacancies on the council	2023 - Page 11 of 16 - Halstead Town Council	
21. Risk management policy	Risk Management Policy	This policy will be reviewed at the February meeting of HTC, but no changes are recommended apart from the date.
22. Register of assets	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pJ7tqCRetU2SL6gsX0f7gfUQxYRUQgF/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=103022918786363041938&rtpof=true&sd=true	
23. Up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BCc1hkavcrRS5gMc10EfFuOzFN6y3Xk/view?usp=drive_link https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WnMjvViTX0IFL00XV8oIC8Q9HJ1L NV /view?usp=drive_link	
24. Evidence of considering the impact of the council's functions and decisions on crime and disorder in local area	Halstead-Town-Council-newsletter-	1.HTC has encouraged contact with the police since the Police station in Halstead was closed in 2017

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	issue-4-August-2024.pdf Essex Police Newsletters - Halstead Town Council Essex Police Inspector Tour of Halstead - Halstead Town Council	2. It funds voluntary Specials who patrol as often as they can, and attend events in the town. 3. It offers the use of the Council offices for a Beat surgery every 2 months. 4. it invites the police officer responsible for the community to attend Council meetings 5. The Inspector for the area holds meetings at least once a year on Town council premises 6. 2 councillors are appointed regularly to liaise with the police
25. Disciplinary and Grievance procedures	Disciplinary-procedure-2024.pdf Grievance-procedure-2024.pdf	
26. A policy for training and development of staff and councillors	Training-and-development-policy-2024.pdf	
27. A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year	https://docs.google.com/document/d/10TMwBL9ZMI70mZ7-7Bvm10fbm_3Pz6V-/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=103022918786363041938&rtpof=true&sd=true	
28. A current clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year	✓	
29. Signed up to the Civility & Respect Pledge and a Dignity at Work policy	Minutes of the Town Council Meeting 26 September 2022 - Halstead Town Council	Minute 96

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SILVER RESOLUTION

Please provide hyperlink to minutes:

The Council must confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for the Silver award (See Guide for wording)

Please provide a direct hyperlink for evidence that is published on the council's website. For all other evidence please specify attachment provided.

Criteria	Hyperlink or Attachment	Supporting Comments (if any)
1. Health and Safety policy	Health-and-Safety-policy-2024.pdf	
2. Policy on Equality	Equality-and-Diversity-policy-2022.pdf	
3. Co-option policy	Co-option-policy-2025.pdf	We have not felt the need for a co-option policy. In the past 20 years, we have not had an occasion when co-option would be needed. There are always enough people who want to stand. But we have recently adopted a policy, just in case.
4. Community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community	Community-engagement-strategy-2023 .pdf	
5. Councillor profiles	Your Councillors - Halstead Town Council	
6. Grant awarding policy	Grant-awarding-policy-2024.pdf	
7. Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish	DRAFT Minutes of Annual Town	At the latest Annual Town meeting in April 2024, local charities and voluntary

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or Town Meeting	Meeting 29 April 2024 - Halstead Town Council	organisations were invited to attend, to speak about their aims and achievements and to interact with others. Following this a group has been formed to coordinate contact and collaboration between such organisations, and more will be invited to the Annual Town meeting in 2025.
8. Action plan and related Budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review	Action-Plan-updated-2025.pdf	Our current 3-year Budget and Precept long-term plan includes the Earmarked reserves currently held, which will be added to at the end of the financial year. The current situation is displayed in the Income and expenditure report for January 2025, which show a surplus of £44k, 9 months into the year. This will be allocated to earmarked reserves, and to the projects outlined in the Action Plan.
9. Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins	Clerk's Annual Report 23-24 Events Calendar - Halstead Town Council News Archives - Halstead Town Council Events Archives - Halstead Town Council Information - Halstead Town Council	
10. Evidence of helping the community plan for its future	Minutes of Town Council Meeting 12 August 2024 - Halstead Town Council	Minute 050. Consideration of sites proposed for development under the Local Plan. In addition, all planning applications for Halstead come before the council, and are carefully considered for their contribution to the community or possible detriment.
11. Evidence of encouraging public engagement in local democracy	Information - Halstead Town Council	1. Electors are always encouraged to attend any Full council meeting and may speak at Public question time. A response is always given to these questions, either at the

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		time, or later if it is a complex issue. 2. Office staff and the Town Clerk make themselves available to any resident who has an issue that needs to be heard.
12. Scheme of Delegation (where relevant)	Scheme-of-delegation-2023.pdf	
13. At least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election, <u>or</u> significant evidence of the council advertising vacancies	✓	All 12 councillors have stood for election for many decades.
14. Evidence of customer service with examples of managing/handling correspondence with the public		1.HTC takes responsibility for reporting all matters relating to Highways issues – pothole, drains, overgrown hedges, lighting – for members of the public who write in. 2.For those elderly residents who are unable to use digital communication methods, it will make Blue Badge applications on their behalf, almost always successfully
15. A current qualified clerk	✓	
16. A formal appraisal process for all staff	✓ Performance-Management-policy-2023.pdf	

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GOLD RESOLUTION

Please provide hyperlink to minutes:

The Council must confirm by resolution that all documentation and information is in place for the Gold award (See Guidance)

Please provide a direct hyperlink for evidence that is published on the council's website. For all other evidence please specify attachment provided.

Criteria	Hyperlink or Attachment
1. A business plan covering a financial forecast for at least <u>three</u> years linked to revenue and capital plans for the council and its community	2025-26-Budget-and-Long-Term-Financial-Plan.pdf
2. An annual report, online material, news bulletins and other council communications with evidence of:	Clerk's Annual Report 23-24
a) engaging with diverse groups in the community using a variety of methods	Information - Halstead Town Council The information included on the HTC website shows the links it has established with many local groups Attendance at Eastlight Community Housing events, and Dementia friendly Meetings. Partnership with Halstead in Bloom, Essex County Council, and Braintree District Council, representation on local charities, the Earls Colne and Halstead Educational Charity, the Sick and Needy group, Travel Aid for parents of Sick children. Involvement through councillors as Champions, with the local schools, the doctors' surgery, Open spaces, police and tourism. Responsibility for the local Courtaulds sportsground , donated to the council by the Courtauld family.

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b) community engagement influencing council activity and priorities	Min 24/148 Draft Minutes of Town Council Meeting 13 January 2025 - Halstead Town Council
c) A wide range of council activities, including innovative projects, that produce positive outcomes for the community	Halstead's Torchlight Procession & Carol Service - Halstead Town Council Halstead's Christmas Lights Switch-on - Halstead Town Council Horticultural Society Flower, Vegetable, Cookery & Craft Show - Halstead Town Council Essex Police Beat Surgeries, Halstead - Halstead Town Council Ramsey Road Community event Jam! Saturday, 28 September 2024 - Halstead Town Council Over 60's Fitness Classes - Halstead Town Council Halstead-Town-Council-newsletter-issue-3-February-2023.pdf
d) co-operating constructively with other organisations	Draft Minutes of Town Council Meeting 13 January 2025 - Halstead Town Council Halstead-Town-Council-newsletter-issue-2-February-2021.pdf
e) Active promotion of elections, including that at least two-thirds of its councillors stood for election	✓ Town Council Election Results - Halstead Town Council
The following criteria require <u>statements</u> only (of no more than 1 page). Statements must include a narrative and document references or hyperlinks as evidence to support the narrative.	
3. Ensures that the council delivers value for money	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FG86cP21R_JYHNB_j8PFqE8iMR9j7mrG/view?usp=sharing
4. Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o0fFcTghfKiKgKQTo3GxjFUelkEXIXZm/view?usp=sharing https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WtJoKwlbgdVAOrjRAjFwLBYaTtVQX_Rq/view?usp=sharing
5. Engages with the community on	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MlaC-_ebh-e7dP-M84f2hYgTJ-Coo05B/view?usp=sharing

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issues related to the environment and climate change	
6. Manages the performance of staff and the council as a corporate body to achieve its business plan	Code-of-Conduct-2024.pdf Member-and-officer-protocol-2024.pdf https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N22xfu2elDCPlQbnmDvOGkWzMUOIovZA/
7. Supports a culture of civility and respect in the council	CIVILITY-AND-RESPECT-PLEDGE.pdf