



# **Goostrey Parish Council**

## **Financial Regulations**

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and updated on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025.

## 1. GENERAL

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's governing documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
  - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
  - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
  - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
  - 'Proper practices' means those set out in The Practitioners' Guide
  - Practitioners' Guide refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
  - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
  - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly. The RFO;
  - acts under the policy direction of the council;
  - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
  - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;

- ensures the accounting records of the council are kept up to date;;
- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

1.6. The council must not delegate any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls;
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors.

1.7. In addition the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £2,000 and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

## 2. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

**The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**

The RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, a [Risk Management Policy](#) covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

When considering any new activity, the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.

**At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**

**The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**

- ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
- ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
- prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
- allow the reconstitution of any lost records;

- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
  - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.1. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, the RFO will present bank reconciliations and bank statements (or similar document) for all bank accounts, to the Finance Committee for verification at the Finance Committee meeting. This will be in addition to the regular bank reconciliation verification conducted by the Chairman of the Finance Committee. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 2.2. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.
- 3. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT**
- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and matters to which they relate;**
  - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide..
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- Is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;

- reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
  - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
  - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
  - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
  - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms ‘independent’ and ‘independence’ shall have the same meaning as is described in The Practitioners’ Guide..
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors’ rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

#### **4. BUDGET AND PRECEPT**

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee at least annually in November for the following Financial year. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft budgets.
- 4.3. Each year the RFO shall prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following three financial years in the form of a draft budget to be considered by each committee at the relevant committee’s budget meeting. Account shall be taken of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the full council.
- 4.5. No later than November, the Finance Committee shall consider each committee's draft budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves. The Finance Committee will make its recommendation to full council.
- 4.6. Having considered the proposed budget and three year forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of December for the ensuing financial year
- 4.7. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.8. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.9. The approved budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.10. Any addition to, or withdrawal from ,any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or relevant committee.
- 4.11. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

## **5. PROCUREMENT**

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable , that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations, and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of tendering, awarding and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:

- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £30,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation<sup>1</sup> regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £5,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk/RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed price quotes;
- 5.9. Where the value is between £500 and £5,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk/RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases the Clerk/RFO shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtaining competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
  - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
  - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
  - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council or relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
  - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT.
  - a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £5,000 excluding VAT
  - in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council. They will be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.

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<sup>1</sup> The Regulations require councils to use the Find a Tender website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

- the council for all items over £5,000;

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference, except in an emergency.
- 5.18. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is budget provision for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report any such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter by placing it on the payment schedule for the next meeting.
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.20. An official order or communication shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

## **6. BANKING AND PAYMENTS**

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with NatWest, NS&I and Santander. The arrangements shall be regularly reviewed for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO. Where the certification of the invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certifies' by the RFO.

- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking or cheque in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council or duly delegated committee.
- 6.6. The Clerk/RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:
- i. any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
  - ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
  - iii. In consultation with the Council Chairman or Chairman of the Finance Committee any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk/RFO certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
  - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £20,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 6.7. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the document pack for the meeting, to the council. Prior to the Meeting the RFO will request the Chairman of the council verifies the invoice amounts and payees against the payment schedule. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by a resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last payment by two councillors, to include the person chairing the meeting. The payment schedule shall be posted on the council's website.

## **7. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS**

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as service administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a minimum of two councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two will be involved in any online approval process. The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online, where an online facility exists.
- 7.3. The council uses NatWest Bankline which is a business banking system offering additional security for making internet banking payments. Bankline is used to create and authorise all payments made via internet banking transfer. Roles have been created in Bankline to facilitate secure payments. All payments are listed on the

payment schedule in accordance with regulation 6.2 . The roles and procedures are established in accordance with Appendix 2.

- 7.4. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two authorised members. and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.5. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online according to the approved Bankline process, see Appendix 2, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting.
- 7.6. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.7. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be kept in the firebox in the Parish Office in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and /or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.
- 7.8. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.9. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and off site, in an online backup/storage facility.
- 7.10. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.11. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification, should not be used on any computer used for council banking work.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk/RFO and a member. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Bankline forces a check on suppliers' details regularly.

## **8. CHEQUE PAYMENTS**

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by two members of council, and countersigned by the Clerk.
- 8.2. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 8.4. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.

## **9. PAYMENT CARDS**

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council.
- 9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

## **10. PETTY CASH**

- 10.1. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk or staff (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

## **11. PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES**

- 11.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or relevant committee.

- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payment control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cash book. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the Staff Committee to ensure the correct payments have been made.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to council, setting out a clear business case.. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff the council must consider a full business case.

## **12. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS**

- 12.1. Any application for government approval to borrow money , and subsequent arrangements for the a must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year)) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

## **13. INCOME**

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided or goods sold at least annually, as part of the budget setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.
- 13.7. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 13.8. The council's electronic card reader may be used to take payments for or at Parish Council organised events. All sums received shall be deposited intact in the council's current account. The RFO shall ensure that the funds received are reconciled against some form of control record such as ticket issues or, where this is not possible, the receipts will be reconciled against the provider's transaction report. The Chair of the Finance Committee will verify the reconciliation and this will be presented to the Finance Committee, along with other bank reconciliations at least once in each quarter. Use of the card machine and the associated fees shall be reviewed at least annually, as part of the budget setting process.

#### **14. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

#### **15. STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

- 15.1. The Clerk/RFO shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment..
- 15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

## **16. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

- 16.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).
- 16.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of does not exceed £250. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

## **17. INSURANCE**

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property (on the Asset Register) and risks covered reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management. All insurance risks must be listed on the [Risk Register](#) following the review of the risk register.
- 17.2. All new risks, properties or vehicles or alterations affecting existing insurances will be added to the insurance schedule promptly.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be promptly notified of any loss, liability or damage event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The Clerk shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

## **18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 18.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 18.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Parish Council, Finance Committee, and Parish Clerk/RFO

## **MONITORING**

Finance Committee.

## **POLICY APPROVAL**

Council Minute – 7.25.5.b

## **POLICY REVIEW DUE**

May 2026

## **APPENDICES**

### Appendix 1 – Tender Process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18 d Financial Controls and Procurement and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

## Appendix 2 – Bankline Roles and Procedures

### **Administrators**

The Chair of the Finance Committee and the Clerk/RFO will be Administrators for Bankline.

Changes to the system made by one administrator must be approved by the other administrator.

Changes to the system once the initial set up is complete must be authorised by the Finance Committee prior to the changes being made.

### **Payments**

The Chair of the Finance Committee and the Clerk/RFO will be able to create Bankline payments.

Payments will be created by the Clerk/RFO and authorised by the Chairman of the Finance Committee or another member who is an Authoriser for Bankline.

Additionally, if the amount to be paid is over £2,000, a second Authoriser will be required to sign off the payment in Bankline.

### **Authorising Payments**

The Chair of the Finance Committee and the Chair of the Parish Council will be given the role of Authoriser, together with two additional members of the Parish Council.

After the Council Meeting the Clerk will create the payments and will then request a Councillor who has been given the role of Authoriser approves the payments in Bankline in line with the payment schedule approved at the Parish Council Meeting.

A copy of the monthly audit report from Bankline will be attached to the approved payment schedule as proof that the payments have been authorised according to this procedure.

All roles will be reviewed annually at end of the first quarter or more frequently if required.