



**MEMBERS OF ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND
THE MEETING OF ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL
AT THE BRIDEWELL, THE BURY, ODIHAM, HAMPSHIRE, RG29 1NB
TUESDAY 19th DECEMBER 2023 at 7.30pm**

13th November 2023

Andrea Mann, Clerk

Members of the public are welcome to attend or join online

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87994915682?pwd=TnJZK0xUcnZUMlJSNTRVYVRZbGRTQT09>

Meeting ID: 879 9491 5682

Passcode: 924557

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|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 203/23 | To receive apologies for absence |
| 204/23 | To receive declarations of interests and requests for dispensation relating to any item on the agenda |
| 205/23 | Approval of minutes
To approve the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 st November 2023 (167-202/23). |
| 206/23 | Chair's announcements |
| 207/23 | Public session
An opportunity for residents to raise questions and issues within the Parish in accordance with Standing Orders. Please view details at https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council/policies-and-publications or contact the Parish Office for further advice. |

Councillor Reports

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 208/23 | Meeting reports from councillors
To RECEIVE any verbal reports from Councillors on their attendance at outside meetings. |
| 209/23 | Reports from other councils
To RECEIVE any verbal reports from Hart District councillors and the Hampshire County councillor representing Odiham. |

General

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|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 210/23 | Meeting action points (page 4)
To consider matters arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the agenda |
| 211/23 | Appointments to committees and working groups (pages 5-6)
To consider new requests and changes to memberships of committees and working groups. |
| 212/23 | “Transforming The Bridewell into a thriving Community Hub” (pages 7-8)
i) General update from the Clerk and Bridewell Working Group. |



- ii) To note the grant application submitted to Hart District Council for funding from the 2024/25 UK Shared Prosperity Fund in the value of £43,400 (circulated to councillors).
- iii) To review and agree The Bridewell Working Group terms of reference (pages 7-8).
- iv) To receive an update on correspondence with Hampshire County Council regarding parking at the front of the building, note actions taken and to consider next steps (if available).

213/23 Review of OPC's policies and updates (pages 9-25)

- i) Safeguarding Policy (pages 9-12).
- ii) Recommendation to replace the Disciplinary and Grievance Arrangements Policy adopted in 2020 <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/OPC-Disciplinary-and-Grievance-Arrangements.pdf> with two new separate policies, based on the HALC templates produced March 2023 (pages 13-20).
- iii) Training and Development Policy (pages 21-25).

214/23 Health & Safety (pages 26-37)

- i) To review and agree OPC's Health & Safety Policy and Statement. The Statement will then be signed by the Chair and Clerk (pages 26-37).
- ii) To consider contract award to KBO for producing a Fire Risk Assessment for The Bridewell (details provided to councillors).
- iii) To consider setting up a small working group to work with the Clerk to ensure all H&S duties are up-to-date and satisfactory mitigation measures are in place.

215/23 HCC Countryside Access Parish Delivery Partnership

To note Cllr Bell's successful grant application totalling £2,036.78 for hand tools and first aid courses to support the Conservation Volunteers Work Group.

216/23 Remembrance and war memorial (pages 38-40)

To consider matters raised in the Clerk's agenda report.

217/23 Communication Strategy

To consider a fee proposal for supporting OPC in writing a Community Strategy (circulated to councillors).

218/23 Cemetery Register Digitisation Project (page 41)

To consider correspondence from HCC Archives.

Community Committee Matters

219/23 2024 Calendar (pages 42-43)

To review and agree the 2024 calendar of events which are overseen by the Community Committee (pages).

220/23 Community Grant to Friends of Mayhill

To consider corresponding requesting different expenditure of the £750 community grant previously awarded (circulated to councillors).



Financial Matters

221/23 Payments Listing (to follow)

To approve the payments listing for the period 22nd November-19th December and appoint 2 Councillors to complete the payment approval process for outstanding payments.

222/23 Financial Regulations (page 44-60)

To carry out the annual review of Financial Regulations.

Planning Matters

223/23 Ratification of planning decisions made by the informal meeting of the Planning & Development Committee held on 28th November 2023

<https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Notes-231128-DRAFT.pdf>

224/23 Tree warden (page 61)

To consider job description and process for filling the position.

225/23 Neighbourhood Plan review

To receive a verbal update from the Chair of Planning & Development.

226/23 Current applications

To consider current applications due for comment before the next Planning & Development Committee. Refer to separate Planning List (circulated to members separately and uploaded on website at <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Planning-List-19.12.23.pdf>)

227/23 Planning support to OPC

Details to follow.

228/23 To confirm date of next meeting

16th January 2023. This meeting will include the annual budget and precept setting.

Full Council				
Date of meeting	Agenda ref no	Cllr to action	Details	Status
OUTSTANDING ON-GOING ITEMS				
Nov-23	168/23	Clerk	Change previous minutes from draft and add to website.	Complete
	170/23	Clerk	Add presentation and responses to website.	Part complete. Awaiting responses.
	175/23	Clerk	Update website for councillor co-option.	Complete
		CllrMT	Complete acceptance of office and DPI form before joining first meeting.	Complete
		CllrMT	Specify chosen committees.	On agenda
	176/23	Clerk	Update website with new committee memberships.	Complete
	177/23iii	Clerk/Bridewell WG	Respond to conditions in Bridewell listed building permissions.	In progress
	177/23iv	Clerk	Order new noticeboard.	Complete
		Clerk/AO	Arrange installation.	
	178/23	Clerk	Circulate Staff Handbook.	
		Clerk	Add H&S Policy review to next agenda.	On agenda
	179/23i	CllrSB	Hold first meeting for the "shoots along the routes" tree planting project.	Complete
	179/23ii	CllrAMc	Arrange for hedgehog highway surrounds to be distributed as per decision.	
	179/23iii	Clerk	Add biodiversity legislation declaration to website.	Complete
	180/23	Clerk	Make enquiries to re-instate work on installing a bus shelter on the east side of Alton Rd.	
	181/23	Clerk	Notify OCC of CllrPV's nomination and support for business plan for affordable homes.	Complete
		CllrPV	Report back from first OCC meeting following appointment as trustee.	
	182/23	Clerk/CllrSB	Continue research on heritage trail app.	
	184/23	Clerk	Respond to OdSoc accepting request to work together to improve signage from High St to Bury & consider early next financial year.	Complete
	185/23	Clerk	Send letter of support to The Cross Barn in support of a Lottery heritage grant application.	Complete
	186/23	Deputy Clerk	Arrange process of displaying and rotating SIDS.	Started 04.12.23
		Deputy Clerk	Update webpage and promote.	In progress
	188/23	Clerk	Complete admin for pledging support for bronze award of the Armed Forces Employers' Recognition Scheme.	Complete
	189/23	Clerk/CllrsLC&AMc	Set up payments online and complete payment approval process.	Complete
	190/23	Clerk/Finance Com	Refer interim internal audit report to Finance Committee.	
	191/23	Clerk	Instruct new contract for IT support.	Complete
	192/23	Clerk	Make investment to the CCLA public sector deposit fund.	Complete
	193/23	Clerk	Offer G Rothery bequest funds to RAF Air Cadets, explaining terms of request.	
	194/23	Clerk/CllrCG	Confirm numbers for RAF gifts and make BACs payment to CllrCG.	Complete
		CllrCG	Arrange for vouchers to be sent.	
	195/23	Clerk	Submit OPC's response to the Farnborough airport extension proposals.	Complete
	196/23	Clerk	Add TOR and appointment of Tree Warden to next agenda.	On agenda
	198/23i	Clerk	Complete admin for accepting Locality grant.	Complete
	198/23ii	Clerk	Award contract to planning consultant for supporting OPC with NP review.	Complete
	201/23	Clerk	Implement decision relating to staffing matters.	Complete
	202/23	Clerk	Notify lettings agency of extension to tenancy agreement and price increase.	Complete. Increase accepted.



Odiham Parish Council

Committee objectives, membership and initiatives

Committee	Overall objective	Within Council policy to exercise the powers of the Council in relation to the management, maintenance and regulation of:	Membership	Identified initiatives
Amenity Areas (Quarterly)	To deliver safe public access to Council owned or managed assets maintained with consideration to environmental, aesthetic and operational standards.	All OPC owned land & buildings (excluding The Bridewell Community Hub project work).	Cllr Sanger (Chair) Cllr Bell Cllr McFarlane Cllr Seabrook Cllr Verdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of public benches and noticeboards including new picnic benches. Allocation of work under the Lengthsman Scheme. Climate Action Plan projects relating to OPC owned open spaces. Charging of cemetery, allotments and asset hire. New area of reflection in Odiham Cemetery. Associated service contracts – main grounds contract expires March 2024.
Community (not currently meeting as separate meeting)	To help foster a vibrant community through partnership with residents, voluntary community organisations, schools and High St businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPC events Community grants and G Rothery bequest PR & publicity Community liaison/consultation Tourism Christmas trees and lights Community awards High St flags & bunting Speedwatch 	Cllr McFarlane (Chair) Cllr Bell Cllr Greensides Cllr Sanger Cllr Seabrook Cllr Verdon Cllr Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with and support to InOdiham Fireworks event with the Lions Annual Parish Assembly Promotion of the village Newsletter oversight (all councillors involved in preparation) Armed Forces Day with InOdiham – to be clarified The Greening Campaign Other community focussed Climate Action Plan projects. Christmas event. Youth projects New flagpoles
Planning & Development (3 weekly, on Zoom. All decisions are ratified by the next available full Council mtg)	To deliver and enforce an agreed framework for encouraging development compatible with the heritage and character of the parish according to the NH Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of planning applications, including trees Planning enforcement Village Design Statement Local plan input Housing and employment Conservation Area Appraisal 	Cllr Verdon (Chair) Cllr Bell Cllr Cornall (Vice Chair) Cllr Seabrook Cllr Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Exception Site. Conservation Area Appraisal. Neighbourhood Plan Review. Liaison with NP site developers. Review and responses to Local Plan updates. Review and responses to national consultation on planning matters.



Odiham Parish Council

Committee objectives, membership and initiatives

Committee	Overall objective	Within Council policy to exercise the powers of the Council in relation to the management, maintenance and regulation of:	Membership	Identified initiatives
Staffing (Minimum two per year)	To ensure that the council complies with the requirements of employment law and follows best practice in providing good working conditions for staff, including health and safety	To work with in partnership with the Clerk to respond to all staff related matters.	Cllr McFarlane (Chair), Cllr Sanger Cllr Seabrook Cllr Verdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support meetings to the Clerk. • The Clerk's appraisal. • Pension arrangements. • Recommendation of annual salary budget to full Council. • Training & Development Policy, arrangements and record keeping of all staff and councillor training completed. • Disciplinary and Grievance arrangements, unless a separate Appeal Panel is required.
Finance (Quarterly plus extra during budget setting)	To ensure all OPC's financial practices and reporting and carried out in accordance with legislation and best practice guidance	To oversee OPC's financial affairs, except where law prevents such delegation from the full Council	Cllr Tyler (Chair) Cllr Cornall Cllr Greensides Cllr McFarlane Cllr Verdon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake quarterly reviews of OPC's income and expenditure, payments list, bank and reserves balances. • Approve monthly bank reconciliations as prepared by the RFO. • Monitor the Council's bank balances and investments. • Monitor general and earmarked reserves. • Scrutinise all aspects of the Councils financial business • The review and development of financial policies • The review of new financial related legislation • The preparation of the annual budget and precept • The review of and changes to banking and investment arrangements • Matters arising from (but not the approval of) internal and external audit reports



The Bridewell Working Group
Terms of Reference (updated December 2023)

1. The Bridewell Working Group is constituted, ~~following OPC's decision to accept The Bridewell freehold,~~ to:

~~i) Oversee the freehold transfer process.~~

~~ii) Oversee repairs and maintenance during year one, making recommendation to full Council and/or the Finance Committee.~~

i) To oversee research and delivery of overarching Business Plan 2.

~~iii)ii)~~ To research and develop a Business Plan 3 setting out a future vision for The Bridewell which aspires to reach a cost neutral management position by maximising community use.

iii) Oversee OPC's request to HCC for extending OPC's ownership to include the front parking area.

~~iv)~~

iv)

The Working Group may decide to set up separate work streams for the above activities.

2. In delivering these objectives, the Working Group shall have authority to:

i) Liaise with third party organisations, including tenants, hirers and professional service providers.

ii) Request and review data from contractors and principal authorities.

iii) Through the Clerk, seek professional advice such as advice on planning, legal and financial matters.

iv) Consult with the Odiham & North Warnborough community. Note that the draft Business Plan shall be approved by OPC before public consultation.

v) Make applications for grant funding and receive donations, on behalf of OPC.

~~vi)~~ Make planning applications relating to agreed work and projects.

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3. Membership shall comprise of:

- A minimum of three Councillors.
- Community representatives, subject to the Working Group's view that their input adds value. Non-Councillors do not have voting rights.

4. The quorum for Working Group meetings shall be at least two Councillors supported by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk.

5. The Working Group may appoint its own Chairman.

6. Full Council retains overall responsibility:

- i) The Working Group must provide regular progress reports to full Council.
- ii) The Working Group does not have authority to agree or sign any contracts or deeds.
- iii) The Working Group does not have delegated financial authority, however, the Clerk may liaise with Working Group members on financial matters which fall under the Clerk's delegated authority.

7. The Working Group must acknowledge OPC's duty to provide for all demographics within the community and must not discriminate against protected characteristics.

8. Conflicts of Interest - Working Group members should declare an interest where there is a potential financial or pecuniary benefit to themselves, or their company/organisation arising from the decisions or recommendations of the group.

9. Data Protection – the Working Group's work must comply with the Data Protection Act and member must have regard to OPC's Data Protection Policies. Documents will be subject to requests for public inspection in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act/Environmental Information Regulations.



Child, Young Person & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy

Adopted on 15.12.20 Reviewed 19.12.23

1.0 Introduction

As an organisation that sometimes works with children, young people and vulnerable adults, OPC's Councillors, staff and volunteers acknowledge that all children, young people and adults have an absolute right to be safe from harm.

OPC believes that all individuals regardless of age, disability, gender and gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief or sexual orientation, should have the greatest possible control over their lives. They should be able to make informed decisions or be supported to make these decisions if unable to do so themselves, without fear of harm or abuse from others.

OPC recognises its duty of care and will take all necessary steps to ensure that everyone with whom it works is enabled to be emotionally and physically safe.

2.0 Policy Statement

OPC is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable persons are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Council.

OPC will endeavour to achieve this by:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are carefully selected, trained and supervised.
- Ensuring Councillors, staff and volunteers who regularly work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be subject to the appropriate level Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Ensuring all Councillors, staff and volunteers adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and themselves against false allegations.

2.1 Policy Aims

This Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy is provided as part of an induction package to Councillors, staff and volunteers who will have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults.

The aims are:

- To create a healthy and safe environment at all activities and sessions held by OPC.
- To ensure children and vulnerable persons are listened to and kept safe from harm.
- To ensure Councillors, staff and volunteers, who work with children and vulnerable persons, are well informed, supported and enabled to exhibit the best possible practice.

2.3 Policy Objectives

The objectives are:

- To raise the level of awareness of Councillors, staff and volunteers about child abuse and its various forms.
- To raise the level of awareness of Councillors, staff and volunteers about what children are entitled to be protected from.

- To ensure that, in conjunction with the OPC's Safeguarding Code of Practice, all Councillors, staff and volunteers are able to recognise signs which could signify the abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- To develop effective procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.

3.0 Good Practice

It is possible to reduce situations where abuse may occur. All those working in Council organised activities that may involve children, young people and vulnerable adults will be asked to read OPC's Safeguarding Code of Practice which includes observing the following more specific examples of care which should be taken when working with children:

3.1 You should:

- Always be publicly open when working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. Avoid any situations where you and an individual child are completely unobserved (encourage an open environment).
- Where possible, children should not be left unattended however this will depend on age and circumstances.
- Where possible ensure parents are responsible for their children at all times.
- Where possible ensure carers are responsible for vulnerable adults.
- If unforeseeable occasions arise where a parent is unable to be with their child make sure that Councillors, staff and volunteers work in pairs when supervising the child/ren.
- Where there are mixed groups, supervision, where possible, should be a male and female member of staff.
- You must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally.

4.0 Users of Odiham Parish Council's Facilities

- All hirers and users of Council facilities will be made aware of OPC's Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy at the time of booking.
- Regular hirers and users of OPC facilities will be required to produce evidence at the time of booking the Council facilities, of their own Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy if the purpose of the hire, use or activity is for children or vulnerable adults.
- Hire agreements for regular hirers or users will be reviewed annually.
- Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the hirer or user being refused permission to use OPC facilities.

5.0 What to do if you have concerns

All staff, volunteers and elected Members of the Council have a responsibility to report their concerns to the relevant authorities or pass on any concerns raised with them. Where someone feels unable or unwilling to make this report directly, they may report concerns to the Clerk and/or the Chair of the Council, who will refer the matter to the Police or Hampshire County Council Children's Services or Adult Services, as the appropriate authority.

Where a concern relates to a member of staff or Councillor, this should also be reported to the Clerk and/or Chair of the Council where reports will be handled in the strictest confidence, or the Deputy Clerk or Deputy Chair of the Council should the concern involve the Clerk or the Chair.

The contact details of which are shown at the foot of this policy.

5.1 USEFUL CONTACTS

Hampshire County Council:

Children's Services Tel 0300 555 1384

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren>

Adult Services Tel 0300 555 1386

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/contact>

Out of Hours Service

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel 0300 555 1373

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/safeguarding/mash-adults>

Hampshire Constabulary:

In an EMERGENCY 999

Non-Emergency 101

6.0 Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or when new legislation or guidance is issued.



~~[Insert name of Council]~~Odiham Parish/~~Town~~ Council ~~(delete as appropriate)~~

Disciplinary policy and procedure

~~Guidance note – delete before issuing document*~~

~~This document is provided by Hampshire ALC as a template for councils wishing to adopt a disciplinary policy and procedure.~~

~~Our logo can be removed and replaced with your council's logo and the header and footer adapted as appropriate.~~

~~This policy needs to fit in with the council's other policies, procedures and contracts of employment. These should be legally compliant, follow good practice and accessible and understood by the employer and the employees.~~

~~The council should have the right management structure in place, with clear lines of communication in order for this policy and procedure to work in practice. The council needs to look at how they can use standing orders, committees, sub-committees and delegated authority to make this work. Where individuals/committees/sub-committees are named in this policy the council needs to ensure that this is in line with the council's other policies and procedures and contracts of employment.~~

1. Policy

The Council aims to ensure that there will be a fair and consistent approach to the enforcement of standards of conduct and performance in the Council. This policy and procedure is designed to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. This procedure sets out the action that will be taken when disciplinary rules are breached.

Matters which may be dealt with under this policy include discipline and dismissal for the following reasons (please note that this list is not exhaustive):

- Misconduct
- Sub-standard performance
- Harassment or victimisation
- Misuse of council facilities, including computer facilities (e.g. email and internet)
- Poor timekeeping
- Unauthorised absence

2. Principles

- Informal action will be offered, where appropriate, to resolve problems.

~~[Insert name of Council]~~Odiham Parish/~~Town~~ Council ~~(delete as appropriate)~~

Disciplinary policy

Adopted: dd/mm/yyyy

Owner: [insert name or job title of owner] Version: V1

Page 1 of 5

- No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee until the case has been fully investigated and a disciplinary hearing has taken place.
- For formal action the employee will be advised in writing of the nature of the complaint against him or her and will be given the opportunity to state his or her case before any decision is made.
- Employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of meetings.
- At all stages of the procedure the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative, or work colleague.
- Any mitigating circumstances will be taken into account when reaching decisions on appropriate disciplinary penalties.
- No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will be dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.
- An employee will have the right to appeal against any discipline imposed.
- The procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants such action.

3. Procedure

Informal stage

Minor faults will be dealt with informally. Where the matter is more serious the following procedure will be used.

3.1 Stage 1

This will normally be either:

an improvement note for unsatisfactory performance if performance does not meet acceptable standards.

This will set out the performance problem, the improvement that is required, the timescale, any help that may be given and the right of appeal. The employee will be advised that it constitutes the first stage of the formal procedure. A record of the improvement note will be kept for six months, but will then be considered spent – subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory performance

Or

a first warning for misconduct if conduct does not meet acceptable standards.

This will be in writing and set out the nature of the misconduct and the change in behaviour required and the right of appeal. The warning will also inform the employee that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change. A record of the warning will be kept, but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after six months.

3.2 Final written warning

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve performance to the prescribed standard during the currency of a prior warning, a final written warning may be given to the employee. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to dismissal (or some other action short of dismissal) and will advise of the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct or performance. In exceptional cases the period may be longer.

3.3 Dismissal or other sanction

If there is still further misconduct or failure to improve performance to the prescribed standards the final step in the procedure may be dismissal or some other action short of dismissal such as demotion or disciplinary suspension or transfer (as allowed in the contract of employment). The employee will be provided, as soon as reasonably practicable, with written reasons for dismissal, the date on which his or her employment will terminate (in accordance with the employee's notice entitlement), and will be notified of his or her right of appeal.

If some sanction short of dismissal is imposed, the employee will receive details of the complaint, will be warned that dismissal could result if there is no satisfactory improvement, and will be advised of the right of appeal. A copy of the written warning will be kept but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after twelve months subject to achievement and sustainment of satisfactory conduct or performance.

Gross misconduct

The following list provides some examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- theft or fraud
- physical violence or bullying
- deliberate and serious damage to property
- serious misuse of an organisation's property or name
- deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material
- serious insubordination
- unlawful discrimination or harassment
- bringing the organisation into serious disrepute
- serious incapability at work brought on by alcohol or illegal drugs
- causing loss, damage or injury through serious negligence
- a serious breach of health and safety rules
- a serious breach of confidence.

This list is not intended to be an exhaustive one and only gives an indication of the types of offence that may be considered gross misconduct.

If the employee is accused of gross misconduct, the Council may suspend him or her from work with pay while it investigates the alleged offence. This will be as brief as possible, normally for no more than five working days, and the Council will explain its reasons in writing. The employee shall not attend his or her place of work during suspension, other than for the purpose of attending disciplinary proceedings, including investigatory interviews. The employee shall not contact any other employees or contacts of the Council, except the employee's companion, without the Council's consent.

If, on completion of the investigation and the full disciplinary procedure, the Council is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal, i.e. dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Disciplinary investigations

The Council is committed to ensuring that all potential infringements of disciplinary rules are fully investigated. This may entail carrying out interviews with the employee

concerned and third parties such as witnesses, colleagues and managers, as well as analysing written records and information. It may also involve a search of the employee's person and/or property. The investigation report will be made available to all the parties concerned. The identity of witnesses will be kept confidential where necessary.

Where an employee is called to attend an investigatory interview, it will be made clear that this is not a disciplinary hearing.

Disciplinary hearing

An employee will be invited, in writing, to a disciplinary hearing once the investigations are complete. Prior to the meeting the employee will be informed of the nature of the allegations that are to be addressed. The disciplinary hearing will be conducted by members of the Council's Disciplinary Panel.

Appeals

An employee who wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision must do so within five working days. Members of the Appeals Panel will hear all appeals and their decision is final. At the appeal any disciplinary penalty imposed will be reviewed.

If the employee wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision, he or she must do so through the Appeals Panel within five working days of the receipt of the disciplinary letter. The appeal should be made in writing, stating the ground(s) on which the disciplinary penalty should be reviewed.

Members of the Appeals Panel will hear the appeal. In the rare circumstances where this is not possible, alternative arrangements will be agreed with the employee and his or her companion.

The appeals hearing will be normally held within 10 working days of receipt of the letter. The decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final.

Appeals hearing

At the appeals hearing, the employee will be given opportunity to state the ground(s) on which the appeal is made. The Disciplinary Panel who took the original decision will then have the opportunity to explain their decision to impose the given penalty. The members of the Appeals Panel conducting the appeal may exercise discretion as to whether or not the two parties will be present together during the proceedings. The hearing will be adjourned when all the evidence has been heard. The members of the Appeals Panel conducting the appeal will consider the merits of the appeal, in private, before reaching a decision.

The members of the Appeals Panel will, whenever possible, verbally inform the employee of the decision reached and confirm this in writing no later than five working days after the hearing.

The members of the Appeals Panel has the authority to quash or reduce a disciplinary penalty or, in exceptional and appropriate circumstances, to increase it, in accordance with the penalties specified in the Council's disciplinary procedure.

An appeal hearing is intended to focus on specific factors that the employee feels have received insufficient consideration, such as:

- an inconsistent/inappropriate harsh penalty
- extenuating circumstances
- bias of the disciplining manager
- unfairness of the hearing
- new evidence subsequently coming to light.

Where an appeal against dismissal fails, the effective date of termination shall be the date on which the employee was originally dismissed.

Notes

1. Employees will receive a written invitation to all disciplinary meetings
2. Outcomes of formal meetings will be confirmed to the employee in writing.
3. The timescales listed above will be adhered to wherever possible. Each party can request an extension of the permitted timescale, however, where there are good reasons.
4. The Council reserves the right to seek assistance from external facilitators at any stage in the disciplinary procedure, in the interests of seeking a satisfactory outcome for all those concerned.
5. For employees during their first year of employment, the Council reserves the right to speed up the decision making process and may choose to follow a shortened version of the above procedure.
6. The grievance procedure should not be used for appeals against disciplinary decisions. That is the purpose of the disciplinary appeals procedure. If, however, the employee has a complaint against the behaviour of a manager during the course of a disciplinary case, they may raise it as a grievance with a senior manager. If necessary, the disciplinary procedure may be suspended for a short period until the grievance can be considered. Another manager may be brought in to deal with the disciplinary case.

Abuse of this policy

Any abuse in the application of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with The Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and may possibly result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal.

Alterations and amendments to this policy

This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment. The Council reserves the right to amend or withdraw this Policy at its absolute discretion, in accordance with the needs of the council.

Additional information

For further information, please contact the Parish Clerk or Staffing Committee, c/o the Chair. ~~[insert name/job title or committee/sub-committee name].~~

Amendment Record

Version 1: Initial Issue



~~[Insert name of Council]~~ Odiham Parish/Town Council ~~(delete as appropriate)~~

Grievance policy and procedure

Guidance note – delete before issuing document*

~~This document is provided by Hampshire ALC as a template for councils wishing to adopt a grievance policy and procedure.~~

~~Our logo can be removed and replaced with your council's logo and the header and footer adapted as appropriate.~~

~~This policy and procedure needs to fit in with the council's other policies, procedures and contracts of employment. These should be legally compliant, follow good practice and accessible and understood by the employer and the employees.~~

~~The council should have the right management structure in place, with clear lines of communication in order for this policy and procedure to work in practice. The council needs to look at how they can use standing orders, committees, sub-committees and delegated authority to make this work. Where individuals/committees/sub-committees are named in this policy and procedure the council needs to ensure that this is in line with the council's other policies and procedures and contracts of employment.~~

1. Policy

It is the Council's policy to encourage employees with grievances relating to their employment to use the procedure below to seek satisfactory solutions. The Council will try to resolve grievances as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of the individual(s) concerned. Where this is not possible, every effort will be made to explain the reasons for the decision.

If employees are not satisfied with the outcome, they have the right to pursue their grievance to the next stage. It is hoped that most grievances will be resolved during the informal discussion. Employees who have raised grievances will be treated fairly at all times before, during and after the grievance hearing(s).

~~[Insert name of Council]~~ Odiham Parish/Town Council ~~(delete as appropriate)~~

Grievance policy and procedure

Adopted: dd/mm/yyyy

Owner: [insert name or job title of owner] Version: V1

Page 1 of 3

Certain kinds of grievance cannot be dealt with under this procedure either because it is inappropriate or because there are already established agreements for the settlement of disputes in relation to them. Examples of these are: -

- Matters not relating to employment or matters over which the Council has no control
- Disciplinary matters
- Queries relating to statutory deductions from pay or rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level
- Matters relating to the pension scheme(s)

3. Relates policies and procedures

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Council's [insert the name of policies where applicable] policies.

4. Procedure

4.1 Informal stage

If you have a grievance about your employment you should discuss it informally with [insert name of position or committee]. The [insert name of position or committee] will give a response within five working days. (See Notes 1–3 below for exceptions to this procedure.)

4.2 Stage 1

If you feel that the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily through informal discussions, you must put your grievance in writing to the Chairman of the Council. The Chairman shall report your written grievance to a Grievance Panel meeting, held in the absence of the public and the press. You will receive a reply within five working days follow this, and a meeting will be arranged. You must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. You, any relevant witnesses and members of the Grievance Panel will attend the meeting. You may choose to be accompanied by a colleague, lay or trade union official. The meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated or to give the members of the Grievance Panel time to consider the decision. The members of the Grievance Panel will give a response in writing within five working days of the meeting and will inform you of the appeals procedure.

4.3 Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the members of the Grievance Panel's response, you may raise the matter, in writing, with the Council's Appeal Panel within five working days. A meeting will be arranged, constituted as in Stage 1, except that members of the Appeal Panel will replace members of the Grievance Panel. The members of the Appeal Panel will give a response within five working days of the meeting. The Appeal Panel's decision is final.

4.4 Investigations

The Council is committed to ensuring that all grievances are investigated fully. This may involve carrying out interviews with the employee concerned and third parties such as witnesses, colleagues and managers, as well as analysing written records

and information. The investigation report will be made available to all the parties concerned. The identity of witnesses will be kept confidential where necessary.

5. Notes

1. The grievance procedure should not be used for appeals against disciplinary decisions, as that is the purpose of the disciplinary appeals procedure. If, however, you have a complaint against the behaviour of a manager during the course of a disciplinary case, you may raise it as a grievance with a senior manager. The disciplinary procedure may be suspended for a short period if necessary until the grievance can be considered.
2. Employees are encouraged to raise grievances and will not suffer any detriment from doing so.
3. The timescales listed above will be adhered to wherever possible. Where there are good reasons, e.g. the need for further investigation or the lack of availability of witnesses or companions, each party can request that the other agrees to an extension of the permitted timescale.
4. The Council reserves the right to seek assistance from external facilitators at any stage in the grievance procedure.
5. For employees during their first year of employment, the Council reserves the right to speed up the decision making process and may choose to follow a shortened version of the above procedure.
6. A copy of the written grievance and written decisions made will be placed on the employee's/ex-employee's personnel file, together with any notes or evidence taken or compiled during the course of the procedure.

6. Abuse of this policy

Any abuse in the application of this policy e.g. if an employee's grievance is found to be malicious or to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with in accordance with The Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and may possibly result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal.

7. Alterations and amendments to this policy

This policy and procedure does not form part of employees' contractual rights. The Council reserves the right to revise the contents of this policy and procedure from time to time or withdraw it at its absolute discretion, in accordance with the needs of the council.

8. Additional information

For further information, please contact [the Parish Clerk or Staffing Committee, c/o the Chair ~~\[insert name/job title or committee/sub-committee name\]~~](#).

9. Amendment Record

Version 1: Initial Issue



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Adopted by full Council 15.06.21

Reviewed 19.12.23

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Odiham Parish Council values training and development for staff and councillors. The Council will ensure that staff and councillors are provided with the means to develop and enhance their skills and abilities to deliver high quality services, management skills to plan those services, kept informed of all new and changes to legislation and also to further develop the OPC's Strategic Plan.

1.2 The intention of this policy is to provide a framework for identifying training needs for staff and councillors.

1.3 Odiham Parish Council recognises its duty to provide equal access for all councillors and staff to training and development in accordance with equal opportunities legislation.

2. COMMITMENT

2.1 Odiham Parish Council is committed to developing its staff and councillors in order to assist the Council in achieving its aims and priorities.

2.2 The Council will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access training to meet the particular demands of their job or role.

2.3 The Council will provide resources to enable staff and councillors to access relevant training, support and sources of information.

3. STAFF TRAINING

3.1 New members of staff will receive on-the-job training as an induction which will include compulsory H&S training required by law. They will also be encouraged to attend training provided locally by Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) and by the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC). For staff who are new to the sector, this could include attending the two 'What You Need to Know' sessions. Additional training sessions relevant to the individual's particular role and experience include: minute-taking, finance, planning, cemetery management and health and safety.

3.2 As part of their on-going development, members of staff are required to be proactive in identifying training courses, workshops, briefings, etc which will support them in effective delivery of services. All staff can access the HALC calendar of training which is available online and can ask to enrol on a course relevant to their role or personal development at any time throughout the year. Decisions will be made subject to available training budget and other work commitments and, where necessary, decisions will be referred to the Staffing Committee for consideration.

3.3 Training is also available through 'webinars', on-line modules and discussion forums. This method of training is often a simple and cost effective way of attending a short course or update.

3.4 The Parish Clerk is CiLCA qualified and Odiham Parish Council would expect anyone recruited to this position to hold this qualification

3.5 In addition to formal courses, Officer updates, networking meetings, Councillor updates and sector specific AGMs are also useful.

3.6 Training needs will be considered throughout the year where training will allow staff to meet a gap in skills when the Council starts a new project or provide a new service. Training needs will routinely form part of the annual staff appraisal.

3.7 OPC will consider staff requests for financial support for training and decisions will be dependent on the training supporting the Council and the individual in fulfilling their role and personal development.

3.8 Where OPC funds training over the value of £500:

- i) The employee must re-pay 75% of the course fee if they leave OPC within 1 year of obtaining the qualification, or completing the paid for course, whichever is later.
- ii) The employee must re-pay 50% of the course fee if they leave OPC within 2 years year of obtaining the qualification, or completing the paid for course, whichever is later.

3.9 Staff will be allowed reasonable time off work to attend work related training courses. This does not apply to course assigned homework or time to prepare course portfolios.

COUNCILLOR TRAINING

4.1 New councillors receive an induction pack including printed material and links to OPC's policies and key documents which includes:

- Declaration of office – to be signed prior to taking part in council business
- Consent to receive summons via email
- Disclosable pecuniary interest form – to be completed within 28 days of taking office
- Openness and transparency on personal interests guide
- Training and events calendar from HALC
- Council Risk Assessment
- Budget for current year
- A quick guide to planning meetings
- The Good Cllrs Guide to Finance and Transparency
- Being a Good Employer
- The Good Councillors guide
- H&S Policy

Signposting to the Council's policies and procedures on OPC's website:

- Code of Conduct
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Year-end accounts for previous years
- OPC approved policies and procedures
- Committee terms of reference
- NH Plan

New councillors are also invited to meet with the Parish Clerk to receive an overview of the Council.

4.2 All new councillors are encouraged to attend HALC's 'The Knowledge' and 'Core Skills' course which give an introduction to the essentials a councillor should know. These two sessions may be delivered in-house by arrangement with HALC.

4.3 All Councillors are strongly advised to attend training on GDPR, covering their role as a Councillor.

4.3-4 Councillors who chair meetings, either of the full Council or of a committee of the Council, are advised of the relevant training and are recommended to attend HALC's 'Chairing Skills'.

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4.4-5 All councillors who are members of the Planning Committee are encouraged to attend HALC's sessions to support their knowledge of planning matters. The sessions available currently are 'Basic Planning for Local Councils' and 'The Planning Framework'.

4.5-6 All councillors who are members of the Staffing Committee must attend HALC's 'The Council as an Employer' course at the earliest opportunity or evidence recent completion of other industry-appropriate employment training.

4.6-7 All councillors involved in financial matters (eg as bank signatories) should attend 'Local Finance for Councillors' run by HALC.

4.8 OPC's H&S Policy covering all OPC's activities provides guidance on H&S practices. OPC will consider all reasonable requests for further H&S related training.

4.7 Other training will be identified for councillors as needed. Councillors are required to actively participate in identifying their training and development needs.

5. RESOURCES

5.1 The Council provides an annual budget for training and development.

5.2 The training budget takes into account the following factors:

- the identified training and development needs of staff and councillors (eg for an election year it would be anticipated that an increase in the budget would be required to accommodate training for new councillors)
- training and development needs which are essential to improve and progress the agreed policies and strategies of the Council
- high priority training needs arising from legislation
- high priority training due to health & safety, financial or reputational risk
- the costs of training, development and learning.

5.3 In addition to the cost of training courses, Odiham Parish Council covers associated travel and parking costs for agreed attendance at training.

5.4 The Council pays the subscription to relevant publications and to advice services such as HALC, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the SLCC (subject to annual agreement by the Staffing Committee).

5.5 The Council pays a subscription to "Onboarding", a learning management system.

5.6 'Local Council Administration' by Charles Arnold Baker and other relevant publications are provided for reference and remain the property of the Council. Magazines including SLCC's 'The Clerk', NALC's 'LCR' and 'Clerks and Councils Direct' are examples.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The Parish Clerk maintains a record of training undertaken by councillors and staff.

6.2 Training undertaken will be evaluated to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness.

6.3 Training will be reviewed in the light of changes to legislation, new qualifications, complaints received or incidents which highlight training needs.

7. DATE OF REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually.



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Adopted August 2022
Reviewed December 2023

POLICY STATEMENT:

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of Odiham Parish Council:

Odiham Parish Council recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing a safe and healthy environment for its members; staff; volunteers; visitors; and for anyone affected by its activities. For the purpose of this Policy, Councillors are defined as volunteers unless otherwise stated.

The Council maintains this policy for the management of health and safety as its top priority and will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure effective organisation and planning are established and maintained. The Council will also ensure that appropriate and effective audit and review mechanisms are used to inform the work of the Council, which undertakes to commit appropriate resources to manage health and safety.

Our statement of general policy, below, is based upon that required by virtue of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The principles of the Act and its underpinning Regulations as later published are taken by the Council as a minimum requirement for the safe and effective management of the Council and its activities.

Our statement of general policy is:

- To provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities;
- To consult with our staff on matters affecting their health and safety;
- To provide and maintain safe equipment;
- To provide sufficient information, instruction, and supervision of staff, volunteers and visitors as far as is reasonably practical;
- To ensure all staff and volunteers are competent in their Council-related activities, and to provide adequate training as far as is reasonably practical;
- To prevent accidents and activity-related ill health as far as is reasonably practical;
- To maintain safe and healthy conditions for conducting the Council's business and the public facilities it provides; and
- To review and revise this Policy as necessary at regular intervals, but at least annually.

Approved by the Council on:

Signed: Chairman
..... Responsible Officer

1. Responsibilities

1.1 The full Council has overall responsibility for Health and Safety. The Council:

- Provides a lead in developing a positive health & safety culture through its decisions, policies and individual behaviour.
- Ensure adequate resources are available to implement adequate health & safety systems.

1.2 The Parish Clerk will fulfil the role of 'Competent Person' responsible for the implementation of the policy. The Parish Clerk shall:

- Keep informed of relevant Health and Safety policy legislation and inform the Council accordingly.
- Advise the Council on the resources and arrangements necessary to fulfil the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work legislation.
- Make effective arrangements to implement this Policy.
- Ensure that matters of Health and Safety are regularly discussed at OPC meetings.
- Ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices, with subsequent consideration and review of any necessary corrective/protective measures.
- For major works, request method statements from contractors prior to the works starting and retain these in a file.
- Maintain a file of risk assessments for all staff and voluntary activities.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are given access to this policy before starting any task or activity or as soon as practical upon joining the Council.
- Ensure that work activities by the Council do not unreasonably jeopardise the health and safety of members of the public.
- Maintain a central record of notified accidents.
- When an accident or hazardous incident occurs, take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.
- Act as the contact and liaison point for the Health and Safety Inspectorate.

1.3 All employees and voluntary helpers will:

- Co-operate fully with this Policy.
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety, to use appropriate personal protective clothing and, where appropriate, ensure that appropriate first aid materials are available.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their activities.
- Not operate any item or equipment or machinery unless they have been trained or authorised to do so.
- Not misuse any plant, equipment tools or materials so as to cause risks to health and safety or carry out any repairs.
- Not undertake any unauthorised activity or task without prior consent and training.
- Wear appropriate PPE which has been provided to them.
- Report any accidents or hazardous incidents to the Parish Clerk.

- Report to management any medical condition or medication which could affect the safety of themselves or others.
- Co-operate with the management on the implementation of the medical or occupational health providers (employees only).

1.4 When it is necessary to employ, engage or facilitate outside contractors, the Contractor shall:

- Provide a method statement, risk assessments and evidence of Public Liability Insurance not less than £10M.
- Consider all potential hazards imposed upon OPC employees, volunteers or members of the public.
- Ensure all control methods are in place to minimise all risks to OPC employees, volunteers, members of the public and their own staff.
- Ensure their own staff are trained and competent in undertaking the work they have been instructed to carry out.
- Manage the provision of PPE for their workers.
- If necessary, agree to arrange for a building or facility to be closed throughout the works or schedule their works at a time when less footfall is expected.

2. Arrangements

2.1 Risk assessments

- The Parish Clerk will complete a risk assessment for every building, facility and equipment owned by OPC.
- The Parish Clerk will complete risk assessments for all employee activities. In some instances a verbal discussion and agreement on the potential risks and control methods will suffice.
- Risk assessments will be completed for all events and activities by the lead organiser who will act as the H&S Responsible Person at the event.
- Every member of staff and volunteer has a duty to risk assess their own actions before undertaking a new or different task.
- Risk assessments shall be reviewed regularly or following a significant change in circumstances or legislation.

2.2 First aid kit

- A First Aid kit is located in the Parish Office.
- Use of an item from any first aid kit must be notified to the Parish Clerk who will then arrange suitable replenishment.
- It is the duty of the Parish Clerk to ensure that the contents of the office first aid kit is always at least at the prescribed stock level and in date.

2.3 Fire safety

- Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms are sited at the specified locations in the Bridewell and are maintained by KBO Fire & Security Ltd.
- Fire extinguishers in the parish room and south chapel are maintained and serviced annually by KBO Fire & Security Ltd.

2.4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- PPE will be provided to all employees and volunteers who are involved in activities where there is a potential risk of injury or exposure to the elements.
- A high viz jacket must be worn for all activities working on, adjacent to or near the highway.

3. Accident and injury at work procedures

3.1 Although every effort will be made to ensure a safe environment, it is accepted that accidents can occur. Accidents and incidents occurring in the OPC offices and/or OPC premises shall be reported immediately to the Parish Clerk or senior employee on duty at the time of the accident.

3.2 If any of the following occur they must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) procedures (see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm>):

- Fatal accidents.
- A specified injury to an employee as detailed in regulation 4.
- An injury to a non-employee where that person is taken to hospital immediately following the injury.
- Any employee diagnosed as suffering from a disease specified in the Regulations.
- Any employee diagnosed with a cancer caused by work related exposure to a known carcinogen or mutagen.
- Accidents resulting in a period of absence of more than 7 days.
- Injuries to the public where they have to be taken to hospital.
- Some dangerous occurrences.

3.3 All accidents resulting in injury and near misses will be investigated to identify any unsafe acts, equipment or working practices to determine whether changes need to be made to equipment, training or systems of work to reduce, as far as possible, the likelihood of the same occurring in the future.

3.4 All accidents resulting in injury and near misses will be reported to the Council in accordance with OPC's Data Protection Policy.

4. Communication to employees and volunteers:

- The H&S Policy Statement will be published on OPC's website.
- The H&S Law Poster will be displayed on internal noticeboards at The Bridewell.
- A copy of this Policy will be provided to all staff and volunteers carrying out a task or function on behalf of the Council.
- New employees and volunteers will be required to sign to confirm they have read this Policy.
- H&S will be a regular item for discussion in Staff Meetings and meetings of the Staffing Committee.
- Formal H&S training will be offered to staff where this is considered appropriate.
- Any new activity or project involving volunteers will involve a dedicated H&S briefing or training session.

- Any employee seen breaching or showing disregard to this Policy will be spoken to by the Parish Clerk or the Staffing Committee and serious actions may lead to disciplinary action.
- Any volunteer or organisation using the Council's amenities seen breaching or showing disregard to this Policy will be spoken to by a representative of OPC and serious actions may lead to the volunteer or organisation being refused use of OPC's amenities.

5. Hazards and risks

5.1 Fire

Evacuation procedures in the event of outbreak of smoke and/or fire:

- Visitors and other persons in the building should immediately proceed and assemble in an orderly manner to the Mayhill Junior School playground, which is the fire assembly point.
- The Parish Clerk or senior employee should arrange for a register to be called.
- The Parish Clerk or senior employee should ensure the emergency services are summoned.
- Employees and visitors shall not remove a fire appliance from its designated place unless it is to be used in an attempt to extinguish a fire.
- Any use of a fire extinguisher should be reported to the Parish Clerk.

5.2 Display Screen Equipment

OPC complies with the H&S (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 by:

Staff:

- All staff who regularly use DSE as part of their work must complete a DSE risk assessment for their work station to assess and reduce risks of ill health. This should be completed as soon as possible after starting work or following a change in equipment. This should be a home work station where a member of staff has been sanctioned to work from home.
- The risk assessment(s) will be discussed with the Parish Clerk to agree and implement control methods which will minimise risk.
- OPC will offer free eye tests to employees, in accordance with the Regulations, for employees who spend a significant amount of their working day using a display screen.

Volunteers:

- All volunteers who regularly use DSE as part of their work or voluntary activities on Council owned or managed premises must complete a DSE risk assessment for their work station to assess and reduce risks of ill health. This should be completed as soon as possible after starting the voluntary activity or following a change in equipment.
- The risk assessment(s) will be discussed with the person in charge of the voluntary activity to agree and implement control methods which will minimise risk.

- All volunteers who regularly use DSE at home as part of their voluntary activity are encouraged to complete a risk assessment for their home work station. Volunteers should discuss concerns with the person in charge of the voluntary activity for advice on how control methods may help to minimise risk.
- All risk assessments should be reviewed regularly and following any change in circumstances.
- Employees and volunteers should read further details on the DSE Regulations at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.htm>

5.3 Manual Handling

The incorrect handling of loads causes high numbers of injuries each year and can result in pain, time off work and sometimes permanent disability.

- All employees and regular volunteers will be required to undertake manual handling training.
- Manual handling should be avoided wherever possible but, where operations cannot be avoided, these general principles should be followed:
 - o Assess the load and the task
 - o Plan the route
 - o Position feet
 - o Get a good grip
 - o Keep the load close to the body
 - o Maintain good posture throughout the procedure
 - o Use the leg muscles
 - o Use body momentum
- Where it is possible to move a load without lifting the load should be pushed and not pulled.

5.4 Driving for Work

- All employees required to drive as part of their working day, either as part of their normal duties or when driving to and from a meeting or training event etc shall provide a copy of their driving licence to the Parish Clerk.
- No member of staff or volunteer disqualified from driving will be permitted to drive for work related activities whatsoever or permitted to drive any Council owned vehicle.
- Employees and volunteers driving their own vehicles for work related activities should ensure they hold the relevant insurance cover and provide a copy to the Council.
- Employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring their own vehicles are road worthy with a valid MOT certificate where required and should not volunteer to drive for work related activities if they are aware of any issues.
- Employees and volunteers should not drive for work related activities if they are tired, feeling unwell or under the influence of drugs, alcohol or prescribed medication which affects their ability to drive.
- Any employee or volunteer driving to work related appointments should prioritise safety over time and never rush to make an appointment on time.

5.5 Working at Height

Falls from height are one of the biggest causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries. Common causes are falls from ladders and through fragile roofs. Generally, Council employees and volunteers have limited need to work from heights themselves and as such should avoid working at height where it is reasonably practical to do so.

OPC acknowledges the following tasks require staff or volunteers to work from height:

- Displaying flags on the High Street.
- Arranging books.
- Setting up/clearing away from events.
- Managing the Speed Indicator Device (SID).

Where work at height cannot be avoided:

- Use the correct equipment – for use in The Bridewell a kick step should be sufficient.
- Ensure the equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job.
- Don't overload or overreach.
- Take precautions when working near fragile surfaces.
- Provide protection from falling objects.
- Consider space to fall should be by clearing space around the ladder or kick step.
- When a ladder is required, always ensure a second person is present to hold the ladder stable.

5.6 Lone Working

There are frequent occasions when employees are lone working, either in the parish office or on site. In this situation to ensure employees are as safe as possible all members of staff must ensure they:

- Have access to a working phone; for off-site workers this shall be a mobile phone.
- Outside of the public opening hours for the office, ensure that the Bridewell door is locked.
- The front and rear parish office doors should remain locked at all times.
- Inform a second person where they are working and how long they expect to be lone working.
- When working in The Bridewell, always ensure the sign at the front door indicates when someone is in the building.

5.7 Smoking

- OPC complies with the legislation that became law in July 2007 therefore smoking is not permitted in any part of OPC owned or managed buildings.

5.8 Drugs and Alcohol

- No non-prescription drugs are permitted in any Council owned or managed buildings at any time.
- No alcohol should be consumed on the premises unless by prior agreement for pre-arranged functions or events.
- Anyone found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol may be subject to gross misconduct charges or asked to step down from voluntary activities.

5.9 Premises

- The office should be kept clean and tidy.
- The office temperature should be at least 16C in accordance with HSE guidance. There is no H&S guidance on the maximum temperature but staff and volunteers should raise any concerns with line management.
- Office windows should have blinds or other shading systems in good working order.
- Outside access to the building must be safe and properly maintained.
- Stairs and corridors must be unobstructed.
- All cables, leads and wires should be properly secured so that they do not constitute a trip hazard.
- All filing cabinets, shelves and cupboards should be stable and secure and kept closed when not in use.
- Any spillage must be mopped up and the floor dried.

5.10 Dangerous substances

- Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended), OPC must conduct a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to health from exposure to any hazardous substance.
- COSHH sheets will be sourced wherever possible and used to assess potential harm and substances will only be used where necessary.
- This list is not exhaustive, but substances used by OPC may include: Tippex, photocopier toner, weed killer, paint, WD40, de-icer, glass cleaning fluids and cleaning solvent.
- All lids/tops must be properly secured after a substance has been used and should be stored safely and clearly labelled in a secure place.
- Photocopier toner can cause eye and skin irritation. The photocopier toner cartridge should be changed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions; in addition, vinyl or rubber gloves should be worn during this operation.

5.11 Electrical Equipment

- No employee or volunteer should use any electrical appliance which they have not been authorised to use.
- No employee or volunteer should carry out any repair to any electrical appliance on Council owned property.
- Lighting sockets must not be left empty: a suitable bulb or fluorescent tube must be in place.
- Any faulty equipment, wiring, plugs or bulbs must be reported to the Parish Clerk.
- All electrical equipment will be PAT tested annually.

5.12 New and expectant mothers

- Expectant mothers should make their employer aware they are pregnant as soon as practical in order for any required adjustments to be made.
- Each workstation will be assessed and OPC will strive to make all reasonable adjustments to work stations or working practices which may cause harm to them or their unborn child.
- A new or expectant mother should not lift heavy loads, stand for long periods of time or do anything they consider will be a risk to them or their unborn child.
- OPC will consider temporarily adjusting working conditions or offer suitable alternative work if this is deemed necessary.

5.13 Disabilities

- OPC will make all reasonable adjustments for disabled workers and volunteers.
- Employees and volunteers must make OPC aware they have a disability in order for OPC to make these adjustments and may call on third party professional advice if required.

5.14 Working Time Regulations

All employees and volunteers will adhere to the Working Time Regulations which limits the working time to less than 48 hours per week, requires set rest hours, holiday entitlement, rest periods, 11 hours between shifts in any 24 hour periods and rest break if working over 6 hours.

The full legislation can be viewed at
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1998/1833/contents/made>

5.15 Home Working

This policy applies to employees who are equipped and authorised to work from home. Anyone requiring advice or support to help meet best H&S standards at home should speak to the Parish Clerk or their appointed Councillor support or committee.

5.16 Stress

OPC acknowledges its legal duty to protect employees from stress at work. The HSE defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them”.

There are six main areas of work design which effect stress levels:

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

Stress affects people differently and signs of stress will display differently in different people, a person suffering with stress may not even be aware themselves.

Any employee suffering from stress should speak to the Parish Clerk to discuss what reasonable control methods can be put in place.

Failure to resolve stress in the workplace through reasonable control methods may be referred to the Staffing Committee in confidence.

Further detail is available at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/what-to-do.htm>

5.17 Infectious Diseases/Illness

Staff and volunteers must not knowingly come to work or join a voluntary activity whilst infected with a contagious disease or illness.

Covid-19

Although HSE will no longer expect COVID-19 control measures, employers must continue to consult workers and their representatives on any changes they make that might affect health and safety

Any member of staff or Councillor testing positive with Covid should not attend the office or any OPC meeting. Staff and Councillors should only return to the office or attend meetings once they have a negative test (PCR or LFT).

6 Contractors

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 section 3 OPC recognises its responsibility for the health and safety of contractors and anyone else that could be affected by their activities. However, this does not absolve contractors from the legal responsibilities for health and safety.

Before awarding a contract, OPC will:

- i Identify the level and scope of works and create a detailed job description including health & safety implications.
- ii Review the contractor's schedule of works prior to starting works. Ideally OPC will see a method statement.
- iii Checks will be undertaken to ensure and verify the contractor's competency to carry out the specified works. This may include seeking references.
- iv For larger projects or major works, the contractor should provide a risk assessment and health & safety policy prior to starting work.
- v Check proof of adequate insurance before work begins. This should include public liability and, if necessary, professional indemnity insurance.

At the start of the works, OPC will

- vi Carry out an induction of the site.
- vii Carry out an inspection to ensure safe working methods ie use of PPE and barriers to keep members of the public safe.
- viii Ensure OPC staff, councillors and contractors' own staff are clear about who is supervising the works.

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6 7 Monitoring and evaluation

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- 6.1 It will be necessary for OPC to determine, from time to time, whether or not health and safety responsibilities are being discharged properly. Monitoring may take place through a number of mechanisms, including spot checks on employee behaviour, a full safety inspection and reports to the full Council by the Parish Clerk.
- 6.2 Reports of all accidents, near-misses and sickness linked to work shall be monitored on a regular basis. Recommendations may follow on the need for greater safeguards, more training or the need to change an employee's work practices.
- 6.3 Employees shall be consulted on any proposed changes to this policy.

7 Review

The full Council shall review this policy at least once every three years from the date of adoption or following a change in legislation or circumstances.

REPORT ON: Remembrance and war memorial
WRITTEN BY: Parish Clerk
MEETING DATE: 19th December 2023
AGENDA ITEMS: 216/23

Background

OPC has been taking over the organisation for Remembrance over the last couple of years. This year, OPC organised the road closure, brought together key organisations, managed the publicity and arranged for the large poppies on the lamp posts.

OPC owns and manages the war memorial but not the 2 grass verges either side of the memorial which are owned by HCC and maintained under HDC's grounds contract. OPC does now arrange for the hedges either side of the memorial to be cut prior to the Remembrance service but there is no formal agreement in place.



OPC carried out work in 2020 to improve the stability of the steps. The works involved repairing several steps and curb stones and re-pointing sections of the wall.

These works did not include re-painting the lettering or cleaning the wall, which is badly stained and covered with lichen. A couple of quotes were obtained in 2020 @ approx. £500 for the lettering and £1,500 for cleaning. These works have not been progressed, largely due to subsequent research questioning cleaning methods (below) and because it would have been necessary to award contract asap after Remembrance because memorial contractors are too busy May-November.

“Cleaning the war memorial by the methods proposed could possibly cause issue and damage to the memorial as some building stones are more susceptible to erosion than others, due to their geology.

Acids or alkalis contained in chemicals, even antifungal agents ,can cause and acerbate deterioration of the stone or surface dressing and can make the stone more porous and susceptible to future issues. The surface of the stone can become more easily damaged and develop long term issues due to changes in permeability or leaving residues which attract lichen and other growths

post treatment. Permanent discoloration can sometimes occur by using some cleaning methods on stone where the method chosen is unsuitable.

Similarly pressure washing is usually not recommended and conservators specialising in this type of stone memorial conservation usually employ gentler cleaning systems, such as the Doff system."

There is £1,600 set aside in earmarked reserves and a further £500 proposed in the 23/24 budget.

Recent enquiries

In the last few weeks, OPC has received several enquiries:

- i) An offer from Mr Champion to gift OPC Remembrance statues - there are 7 statues: 2 x soldier, 1 x sailor, 1 x aviator, 1 x nurse, 1 x female worker plus 80 poppies.

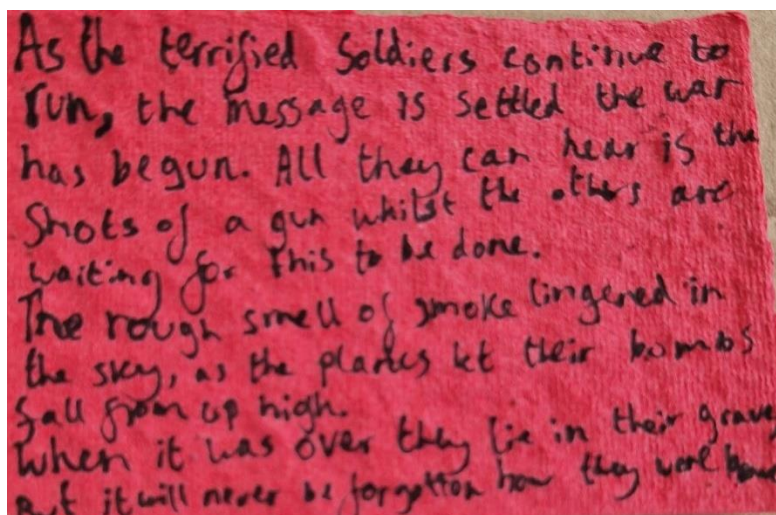
"I have been putting the WW1 'lest we forget' guardians and tall poppies at the war memorial since 2018 and felt I should confirm that you wish me to continue next year. I'm happy if you wish to formalise the agreement, as I just did it by word of mouth with the RBL before. Besides the Peace Garden at Chapel Pond, Robert Mays has a permanent one and RAF Odiham has a remembrance garden and Buryfields and Mayhill set out temporary peace/remembrance gardens each November. It would be quite easy to publicise a short trail next year (including the High St with all its flags and the war grave at the cemetery) if you wished, with atmospheric music and flowers in the Church."

- ii) A further request from <https://ww1aviationheritagetrust.co.uk/> to plant poppy seeds in the Peace Garden and, if possible, next to the war memorial:

"My Trust is making STEM Visits to schools in Essex and getting children to fly our simulator, to learn about the RFC pilot who designed the simulator, and to write Poems about WW1 on paper seeded with the memorial flowers of Britain (Poppy), France (Cornflower), and Germany (Forget-Me-Not).

We plan to fly them to the Somme commemorations on 1 Jul 24 and drop them from our Nieuport 17. On the way back we will bring poems from children in France, Germany, Canada, and the US and drop them at the National Arboretum, our base in Essex, and Lord Wandsworth. Our poem-writing is about to advertised nationally. It is teacher-led.

I planted a poem paper in my garden in June - see below. I would have had to start in February to get the Forget-Me-Nots."



iii) Flags

"It is a good idea and we had great success with 'flags over Odiham' everywhere along roads and lanes for Magna Carta in 2015; and in 2018 to mark the centenary of the end of WW1. The 'lest we forget' flags sell for £6.99 on Amazon, by the way: they last about 6 months flying, so can be used for about 6 years if flown for a few weeks each year.

Rather than OPC splashing out, it might be better for the Council to encourage lots more people to buy and put up flag poles. OPC might also wish to put up a few strategic flagpoles (e.g. entrance to NW, Priors Corner, entrance to Odiham on Farnham Road, outside RAF Odiham by road), which are easy to dismantle and put away when not in use. Once people have bought a flag pole the outlay for flags is quite small for individuals. Flags over Odiham could become a regular event for special days. We found in 2015 it became contagious and people followed their neighbours. Some other days/weeks to celebrate could be the reissue of Magna Carta in 2025, Armed Forces Day in 2024 etc, the General Election in 2024 etc."

There is £500 in the 23/24 Armed Forces Day budget which could be allocated to this.

For discussion and decision

- i) Should OPC use this paper as an opportunity to combine outstanding and new matters into one project with the aim of producing a clear plan for completing actions in line with required timescales?
- ii) Is OPC ready to accept the offer of Remembrance statues? (noting they will need to be stored in North Chapel or put on permanent display).
- iii) How might this project be progressed? Should the office draw up an outline project plan or would councillors like to take on this project? ie through a small working group.
- iv) Do councillors want the Clerk to make enquiries with HCC about taking over grounds maintenance responsibility for the 2 small grass verges either side of the war memorial? OPC's ground contractor has quoted £80 per cut x 12 = £960 per annum.

Clerk

Subject:

FW: Cemetery Register Digitisation Project - Odiham Parish Council

Cemetery Register Digitisation

I'm writing as the Information and Archives Manager at Hampshire County Council's Archives Service, based at Hampshire Record Office, Winchester. <https://www.hants.gov.uk/archives>

We wanted to let you know about an exciting project currently underway at Hampshire Record Office, which as you may know provides an archives service for Hampshire, collecting, preserving and giving access to the county's historic records. The project is to:

- digitise parish registers and other family history sources relating to Hampshire and;
- provide access to them via the internet, online access being provided free of charge to customers visiting the Record Office or Hampshire libraries, but on a charged for basis for other forms of access.

The royalty payments we receive from this project will help offset the costs associated with caring for and giving access to our collections, and also contribute to the overall costs of maintaining the Archives Service.

Following a procurement exercise, we signed a contract with the commercial firm Ancestry in December 2021 and to date excellent progress has been made with filming and indexing Church of England registers of baptisms, marriages, marriage banns and burials dating from 1536 until 1921, and also probate records from c1500 to 1858. These can all now be viewed on Ancestry. [Online sources | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

We now want to widen the scope of the project to cover more name-rich sources which will appeal to family historians and other users of the archives. These include civil burial ground / cemetery records up until 1923.

As you may be aware we hold some Odiham Parish Council cemetery records and would like to include the following items in the Ancestry digitisation project if possible:

32A06/PX1	Register of burials, Odiham Cemetery	1860-1893
32A06/PX2	Register of burials, Odiham Cemetery	1893-1950 (
32A06/PX6	Register of burials in the new consecrated burial ground, Odiham Cemetery	1915-1958 (

If you have no objection to your records up to 1923 being included in the project, we would be grateful if you could send formal written permission as from Odiham Parish Council so that we can proceed.

Information and Archives Manager
Archives and Records, Universal Services
Hampshire County Council
Hampshire Record Office

Community Committee Calendar dates for 2024

January:

1st National Holiday
3rd Planning Committee
11th Parish news deadline
16th Full Council and Finance

February:

8th parish news deadline
12-16th Hampshire School Holiday
20th Full Council and Amenities

March:

1st Deadline for Newsletter articles and design poster/save the date for Annual Parish Assembly
14th March parish news deadline
18th Newsletter to printers
19th Full Council
25th- 29th Newsletter distribution
21st-31st-Great British Spring clean
29th National Holiday

April:

1st National Holiday
2nd-12th Hampshire School Holidays
9th Flags up for St Georges Day
11th Parish news deadline
16th Full Council/ Planning/ Finance
23rd St Georges Day
26th Flags Down
26th Annual Parish Assembly (proposed date – must take place between 1st March & 1st June)

May:

6th National Holiday
9th Parish news deadline
21st Annual Full Council and Amenity Committee
24th Flags up for VE day anniversary
27th National holiday
27th-31st Hampshire School Holiday

June:

6th VE Day Anniversary Beacon Lighting
13th June Flags up for Armed Forces day
13th Parish News Deadline
18th Full Council /Planning Committee
29th June Armed Forces Day
29th June Bands in the Bury

July:

1st July Summer newsletter (new!) – online only (proposed)

8th National Town Crier day

16th Full Council/ Finance Committee

24th-31st Hampshire School Holidays

August:

All: Hampshire School Holidays

8th parish News deadline

20th Full Council/ Planning/ Amenities committee

26th National Holiday

26th IN Odiham Food Festival?? Date TBC

September:

7th All Saints Church fete (date TBC)

12th Parish News deadline

20th newsletter articles deadline

17th Full Council

HALC Village of the year awards (date TBC)

October:

7th Newsletter to Printers

10th Parish News deadline

11-17th Newsletter distribution

15th Full Council/Finance Committee

28th-31st Hampshire School Holidays

26th Spooktacular

23rd Put up Poppys and Flags

November:

7th Parish news deadline

10th Remembrance Sunday

18th Poppys and flags down

19th Full Council and Amenities Committee

21st Christmas lights switch on and drinks reception

24th In Odiham Extravaganza

Dec

17th Full Council

23rd-31st Hampshire School Holidays

21st All Saints Carol in the Bury (date TBC)

25th National Holiday

26th National Holiday



ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on ~~12th December 2022~~^{14th April 2020} and reviewed annually, with the last review on ~~12th December 2022~~^{19th December 2023}. They are based on the NALC Model Financial Regulations 2019 for England.

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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 three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders¹ and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
 - for the timely production of accounts;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. 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.
- 1.9. 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;
- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.

1.14. In addition, the council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of [£5,000]; 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.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

1.16 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, two cheque signatory members and the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The members shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Finance Committee.

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be 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 for that purpose.

2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.

2.6. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;

- report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
- to 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

2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting 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.

2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.9. 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 statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

- 3.1. Each committee shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than January, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Finance Committee then council.
- 3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over [£5,000];
- a duly delegated committee of the council for items over [£500]; or
- the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £800.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. 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').
- 4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed by the Staffing Committee at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk in consultation with the Chair or relevant committee Chair may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £800. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of [£100] or [15%] of the budget.
- 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council or finance committee. The council / committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council or finance committee. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council or Finance Committee meeting.
- 5.4. The Clerk as the RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
 - a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify 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 or finance committee;
 - b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee; or
 - c) Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of ~~£10,000~~ **£20,000**, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.
- 5.6. For each financial year the Clerk/RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council or a duly authorised committee, may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance Committee.

- 5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be ~~approved in writing by a Member.~~ Recorded in the council's financial records and checked by the Internal Auditor.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be affected by BACS, cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council or duly delegated committee.
- 6.4. 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 in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. 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 in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. 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 or Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as

made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.11. 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 handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council 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.
- 6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.13. 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 preferably off site.
- 6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or

saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

- 6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by the RFO. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the RFO 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.
- 6.19. ~~A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council or Finance Committee. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Council or Finance Committee and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Council or Finance Committee.~~
- 6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall ~~not be used under any circumstances. Only be used in exceptional circumstances.~~
- 6.21. ~~The council will not maintain any form of cash float (from 1st April 2020). As of 1st September 2023, the Council does accept cash payments. All cash received must be banked intact.~~
- 6.21. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk, other staff or Councillor (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

7. Payment of salaries

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Staffing Committee.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;

- b) by the internal auditor;
 - c) by the external auditor; or
 - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

8. Loans and investments

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk or RFO.
- 8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.5. The council has an Investment Strategy and Policy which reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.8. 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 Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. Income

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to 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 such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

10. Orders for work, goods and services

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.
- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

11. Contracts

11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b) Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations².
- c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)³.
- d) 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.
- e) Such 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

² The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

³ Thresholds currently applicable from 1st January 2024 are:

a) For public supply and public service contracts ~~£213,477~~ ~~£214,904~~

b) For public works contracts ~~£8,336,937~~ ~~£5,372,609~~

appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. 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.

- f) 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.
- g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders 18 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £500 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.
- i) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- j) Should it occur that 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, provided that the specification does not change, 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.

12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works]

- 12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.
- 12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. Stores and equipment

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. 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.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

14. Assets, properties and estates

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the 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.
- 14.2. 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 tangible movable property does not exceed £250.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing 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).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing 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).
- 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. 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.

15. Insurance

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. 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.

16. Charities

- 16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate

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financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. Risk management

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council 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 drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.



Tree Warden - Terms of Reference

1. The Tree Warden position is a voluntary, advisory role appointed by the Council at every Annual Council meeting.
2. The objective of the Tree Warden position is to protect and promote local trees.
3. The main role of the Tree Warden is to support the Planning & Development Committee through:
 - i) Inspecting trees listed in local tree applications and providing comments for consideration by the Committee.
 - ii) Reporting any unauthorised work on trees, in particular in the Conservation Area.
4. The Tree Warden may also be involved in:
 - i) Getting involved in local tree projects.
 - ii) Encouraging local projects relating to trees and woodlands.
 - iii) Identifying opportunities for involving the community in taking an interest in, planting and caring for hedgerows and trees
 - iv) Keeping watch on important trees in the parish, in order to provide early warning of threats, disease, decay or vandalism.
5. The Tree Warden:
 - i) Can be a councillor or non-councillor.
 - ii) Does not have any financial authority.
 - iii) Can only act on behalf of the Council when inspecting trees listed in current planning applications or when specifically requested to do so.
 - iv) Must only inspect trees from public land, unless a landowner grants clear consent to enter private land for trees not visible from public land.
 - v) When inspecting trees, the Tree Warden will be required to a high-viz jacket branded with OPC logo and any other related PPE.
 - vi) Must comply with OPC's related adopted policies: Health & Safety Policy, Environment and Climate Change Policy, Odiham & North Warnborough Conservation Area Appraisal and OPC's Tree Management Policy.