



**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 NOVEMBER 2024 at 7.30pm**

13th November 2024

Andrea Mann, Clerk

Members of the public are welcome to attend in person or online
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81218482765?pwd=uXKVD9sqcllsH0xEeyu4o2q0FSONb4.1>

Meeting ID: 812 1848 2765

Passcode: 913347

184/24 To receive apologies for absence

185/24 To receive declarations of interests and requests for dispensation relating to any item on the agenda

186/24 Approval of minutes

To approve the minutes of the:

- i) Council meeting held on 15th October 2024 (149-176/24).
- ii) Extraordinary Council meeting held on 6th November (177-183/24).

187/24 Chair's announcements

188/24 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

189/24 Meeting reports from councillors

To RECEIVE any verbal reports from Councillors on their attendance at outside meetings.

190/24 Reports from other councils

To RECEIVE any verbal reports from Hart District councillors and the Hampshire County councillor representing Odiham.

General

191/24 Meeting action points (pages 4-5)

To consider matters arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the agenda

192/24 Verbal Report from The Bridewell working group 13.11.24 with any proposals arising (written report to follow)

193/24 Policies (pages 6-32)

- i) To review the schedule of policies and recommendations (in red) (page 6).
- ii) Financial Regulations, based on the new NALC model (guidance on pages 7-8, proposed new Regulations pages 9-23).
- iii) Internal Controls (pages 24-27)



- iv) Reserves Policy (pages 28-30)
- v) Investment Policy (pages 31-32)

194/24 Consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting (pages 33-47)
[Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings - GOV.UK](#)
To agree OPC's response to the Government consultation on allowing councils to use virtual attendance at council meetings. The consultation paper is attached with proposed responses (in red).

195/24 Bus shelter installation, Alton Road
To receive a verbal update from the Clerk on the progress of discussions with HCC.

Amenities Areas Committee

196/24 Grounds maintenance contracts 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028 (page 48-49)

- i) To note the background paper and proposed timeplan for appointing the two grounds maintenance contracts (pages 48-49).
- ii) To consider the tender pack for the Grounds Maintenance Contract 2025-28 (forwarded separately).
- iii) To consider the tender pack for the Cemetery Grounds Maintenance Contract 2025-28 (forwarded separately).

197/24 To consider a quote received to repaint the multi-play unit at the Recreation Ground (quote forwarded to councillors separately)

198/24 To carry out an annual review of the allotment fees (page 50)

199/24 To carry out an annual review of the cemetery fees (page 51)

200/24 Public access to water at cemetery
To note comments received and vandalism and discuss whether there are any other options available to allow access whilst restricting improper use and how this should be communicated.

Community Committee

201/24 2025 calendar of events (pages 52-54)
To review the Deputy Clerk's draft 2025 calendar of events for the purposes of allocating sufficient budget.

Financial Matters

202/24 Payments Listing (to follow)
To approve the payments listing for the period 6th November-19th November 2024 and appoint 2 Councillors to complete the payment approval process for outstanding payments.

203/24 Members' Allowance (pages 55-56)
To re-visit an item deferred from the May 2024 meeting.



Planning Matters

- 204/24 Ratification of Planning & Development Committee decisions (pages 57-58)**
- i) To ratify the comments passed to Hart DC under delegated decision 29.10.24 (pages 55-56)
 - ii) To ratify the decisions of the recent Planning & Development Committee 12.11.24.
<https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-business/council/planning/planning-development-committee>
- 205/24 Neighbourhood Plan Review**
To receive a verbal update from the Planning & Development Committee chair.
- 206/24 Notification of Deed of Variation relating to the Crownfields Neighbourhood Plan development site**
To note correspondence notifying OPC of a Deed of Variation application relating to the above site which will require OPC to re-sign the S106 agreement and consider OPC's position (if documents are received in advance of meeting).
- 207/24 To agree OPC's response to a Planning Appeal**
REF: 23/02063/OUT for Outline planning permission for up to 30 residential dwellings with all matters reserved except access at Land On The South West Side Of, Dunleys Hill, Odiham, Hook, Hampshire PINS REF: APP/N1730/W/24/3352142.
https://publicaccess.hart.gov.uk/online-applications/files/14064EBF1202A7470A487C7F44EF232F/pdf/23_02063_OUT-START_LETTER_AR13_-_24_OCT_2024-1866559.pdf
- 208/24 Date of next meeting**
Tuesday 17th December 2024
- 209/24 To pass a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press to consider confidential contractual and staffing matters which meet the criteria of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 Part 1**
- 210/24 Calculation on ongoing maintenance costs for public open space land (to be reported to the meeting)**
To consider correspondence received from Hart DC.

| Full Council | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| Date of meeting | Agenda ref no | Cllr to action | Details | Status |
| OUTSTANDING ON-GOING ITEMS | | | | |
| Jun-24 (2) | 47/24 | Clerk | Prepare ToR for new 20mph working group. | |
| | | Clerk | Invite members and confirm. | |
| | 54/24 | Clerk | Add Cyber Security Policy to website. | Complete |
| | | Clerk | Refer double authentication of email passwords to next agenda. | Complete |
| | | Staffing Committee | Draft pensions discretions policy. | On agenda |
| | 55/24i | Clerk | Invite members to War Memorial Working Group and arrange first meeting. | Complete |
| | 55/24ii | Clerk | Arrange H&S working group meeting. | Work in progress |
| | 56/24 | Office | Award contract for works to Chapel Cottage septic tank. | Complete |
| | 57/24 | Clerk/CllrsAMc&DS | Site meeting at cemetery with grounds contractor re maintenance regime for remainder of year. | Complete |
| | 58/24 | Office | Award contract to remove 2 x ash trees from land at Colt Hill. | Complete |
| | 59/24 | Office | Notify family of decision relating to fallen grave stone and progress as required. | Complete |
| | 62/24 | Cllr Bell | Meet with chair of InOdiham to clarify plans for future events. | Complete |
| | 63/24 | Clerk/CllrsLC&PV | Set up payments on Unity Trust and login to approve payments. | Complete |
| | 64/24 | Neighbourhood Plan WG | Finish proof-reading and submit plan to Hart. | Complete |
| | 65/24 | Cllr Bell | Refer response from HCC re parking at Laurel Close to residents. | Complete |
| | 66/24 | Office | Include article on maintenance of local rights of way in Summer newsletter. | Complete |
| | 71/24 | Cllr Verdon | Liaise with Hart DC re suggested new rural exception site. | Complete |
| | 72/24 | Clerk | Seek advice from HALC re nomination of award. | Complete |
| Jul-24 | 75/24 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 76/24i | Clerk | Write to telephone exchange manager re state of grounds. | Complete |
| | 79/24 | Cllr Bell | Report on correspondence with InOdiham at next meeting. | Complete |
| | 82/24 | Bridewell WG | Meet to agree next stage of project and remaining works for upgrading co-working space. | Complete |
| | 83/24 | Clerk | Find out whether there's another method for double-authentication of emails other than texts to mobile phones. | Complete |
| | 84/24 | Deputy Clerk | Obtain second opinion & quote for the septic tank at Chapel Cottage. | To be considered by Amenities 19.11.24. |
| | 85/24 | Deputy Clerk | Notify all grant applicants of decision and set up payments where required. | Complete |
| | 86/24 | Clerk/CllrsLC&PV | Set up payments on Unity Trust and login to approve payments. | Complete |
| | 88/24 | Clerk | Submit planning comments to Hart. | Complete |
| | 92/24 | Clerk | Confirm proposed award recipient is happy to accept award before progressing decision and associated work. | Complete |
| | 93/24 | Clerk | Respond to the complaint regarding the location of a bus shelter. | Complete |
| | | Office | Arrange for overhanging vegetation to be cut back prior to bus shelter installation last week in August. | Not required |
| Aug-24 | 97/24 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 104/24 | Clerk/Deputy Clerk/CllrSB | Appoint members to War Memorial working group, hold first meeting and report back to council with plan of action. | Complete |
| | 105/24 | Clerk/All | Add Annual Action Plan to website, circulate to all, follow and report progress at AGM. | Ongoing |
| | 106/24 | IT support/All | Implement double authentication of Outlook emails for all. | Complete |
| | 107/24 | Clerk | Update Document Retention Scheme and add to website. | Complete |
| | 108/24 | Office/CllrsSB&PV | Following confirmation by site inspection, issue letters of overgrown paths when required. | Ongoing |
| | 109/24 | Clerk | Vote at HALC AGM to accept proposed changes to Articles of Association. | Complete |
| | 110/24 | Clerk | Send welcome letter to new MP. | Complete |
| | 111/24ii | Deputy Clerk | Publish plea to residents for community volunteers for Speedwatch including data collected on Farnham Road. | Complete |
| | 111/24iii | Deputy Clerk/Clerk | Continue researching options for rotating SIDs and report back to Council. | Complete |
| | 111/24iv | Deputy Clerk | Order further brackets for newer SID. | Complete |
| | 112/24 | CllrAMc | Respond to HDC Cllr Butler re effectiveness of the HDC Flood Forum. | Complete |
| | 114/24 | CllrsPV&CG | Set up payments on Unity Trust and login to approve payments. | Complete |
| | 117/24 | CllrPV | Meet with resident to draw up a list of proposed responses to the Government's NPPF consultation and refer to Council for decision. | Complete |
| | 120/24ii | Office/AO | Investigate whether cemetery water can be switched off without impacting on supply to the cottage. | Complete, locks fitted |
| | 120/24iii | Clerk | Report back to Council following meeting with Hart Community Safety. | Complete |
| | 121/24 | Office | Obtain quotes for security fencing to Chappel Cottage and refer quotes to Council. | N/A |

| Full Council | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Date of meeting | Agenda ref no | Cllr to action | Details | Status |
| OUTSTANDING ON-GOING ITEMS | | | | |
| Sep-24 | 124/24 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 126/24 | Clerk | Send follow up email to RAF re events to commemorate 100 years of flight at RAF Odiham. | Complete |
| | 128/24ib | HDC Cllr Hale/Clerk | Brief OPC on HDC's plans for 126/24. | |
| | 131/24 | Deputy Clerk | Promote agreed action plan for war memorial improvements. | Complete |
| | 132/24 | Clerk | Add revised polices to website - casual vacancy & co-option, environment & climate change and community use of OPC's land & equipment. | Complete |
| | 133/24 | Clerk | Write to property owners next to Stoney Alley and Terry's Alley seeking consent to install directional signs to The Bury facilities. | |
| | | Clerk/OdSoc | Arrange the purchase and installation of new signage. | |
| | 134/24 | Clerk | Refer Alton Rd bus shelter to next meeting. | Complete |
| | 135/24 | Deputy Clerk | Pay grant awards and notify recipients - Citizens Advice and InOdiham for Extravaganza. | Complete |
| | 136/24i | Office | Complete Autumn newsletter. | Complete |
| | 136/24ivb | All | Submit names for guest list for drinks reception 28.11.24. | Complete |
| | 137/24 | Clerk | Refer 80th anniversary of VE-Day celebrations to next agenda. | Complete |
| | 139/24i | Clerk | Award contract to 24-25 internal auditor. | Complete |
| | 140/24 | C/DC/CllrLC/CllrPV | Set up payments on Unity Trust and login to approve payments. | Complete |
| | 142/24 | Clerk | Submit OPC's planning application comments to HDC. | Complete |
| | 144/24 | Clerk | Submit OPC's response to the Government's consultation on NPPF reforms. | Complete |
| | 148/24 | Clerk | Refer calculation on ongoing maintenance costs for POS to next agenda following site meeting. | Complete |
| Oct-24 | 151/24 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 15624 | All | Put forward names for Christmas tree lights' switch on invite list. | Complete |
| | 157/24 | CllrsLC/PV/Clerk | Meet with Hart Conservation Officers re Bridewell future vision plans and report back. | Complete |
| | 158/24i | Clerk | Add revised Staff Handbook to website and circulate. | Complete |
| | 158/24ii | Clerk | Add revised Pensions Discretion Policy to website and supply copy to Hampshire Pension Fund. | Complete |
| | 159/24 | Clerk | Update members at next meeting on progress of new bus shelter on Alton Road. | Ongoing |
| | 160/24i | Clerk | Award contract to clear spoil and vegetation from Mildmay boundary in cemetery. | Complete |
| | | | Complete works. | |
| | 160/24ii | Clerk | Award contract to level 4 rows of burial plots. | Complete |
| | | | Request donation of topsoil from Topsoil UK. | Complete |
| | | | Complete works. | Scheduled Jan '25 |
| | 160/24iii | Clerk | Award contract for safety surfacing repairs at Bufton Field playground. | Complete |
| | | | Complete works. | |
| | 161/24 | Clerk | Publish online consultation on re-configuring King St toilets to provide accessible cubicle. | Ongoing |
| | 162/24 | Office | Set up working group to research and make proposals for a local event to commemorate 80th anniversary of D-Day 08.05.25. | |
| | 163/24 | C/DC/CllrLC/CllrPV | Set up payments on Unity Trust and login to approve payments. | Complete |
| | 164/24 | Clerk | Publish Q2 payments listing on website and complete Q2 VAT return. | Complete |
| | 165/24 | Clerk plus 2 bank signatories | Complete £50k investment from Unity Trust to CCLA. | Complete |
| | 167/24i | Deputy Clerk | Order new office furniture. | Complete |
| | | | Accept delivery and set up. | |
| | 167/24ii | Deputy Clerk | Award contract for the rotation of 2 SIDs. | Complete |
| | | | Implement new contract. | Underway |
| | 168/24 | Clerk | Change P&D minutes on website to FINAL. | Complete |
| | 169/24 | Clerk/Amc | Sign response letter to NP Examiner and forward to HDC planning. | Complete |
| | 170/24 | Clerk | Confirm in writing to Odiham Tennis Club OPC's support for new clubhouse. | Complete |
| | 171/24 | Clerk | Forward OPC's request for S106 contributions form the Hook Rd development sites to HDC planning. | Complete |
| | 174/24 | Clerk | Increase POS maintenance calculations by 5% annual uplift and forward to HDC. | Complete and on agenda |
| | 176/24 | Clerk/AMc | Implement decisions of the Staffing Committee 09.10.24. | Complete |

REVIEW OF OPC POLICIES - 19.11.24

| Policy Name | Latest review | Essential/ Desirable/ Optional | Recommended next review |
|---|---------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Governance | | | |
| Code of Conduct | Sep-23 | Essential | Sep-26 - review at least every 3 years or following change in legislation or guidance. |
| Publication Scheme | Sep-23 | Essential | Sep-26 - unless change in ICO model scheme. |
| Standing Orders | Feb-24 | Essential | Feb-25 - annual review required. |
| Scheme of Delegation | Jan-22 | Desirable | Jan-25 - unless change in circumstances. |
| Business Continuity Plan | Feb-23 | Desirable | Feb-25 - unless change in circumstances. |
| Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy | Dec-22 | Advisable | Dec-24 |
| Dignity at Work Policy | Dec-22 | Advisable | Dec-24 |
| Councillor Officer Protocol | Dec-22 | Advisable | Dec-24 |
| Finance | | | |
| Financial Regulations | Dec-23 | Essential | On agenda |
| Statement of Internal Controls | Aug-23 | Desirable | On agenda |
| Claiming expenses by Cllrs Policy | Jul-23 | Optional | Jul-27 - new Council. |
| Report on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Hart Parish Councils | | | Jul-27 - new Council. |
| Investment Policy | Jul-23 | Essential | On agenda |
| Reserves Policy | Aug-23 | Optional | On agenda |
| Grant Giving Policy | May-24 | Essential | May-25. |
| Council Strategy | | | |
| Strategic Plan/Business Plan | Mar-24 | Desirable | Mar-25 - annual review required. |
| Annual Action Plan | Aug-24 | Desirable | Mar-25 - ongoing review and annual reporting required. |
| Casual Vacancy and Co-option Policy | Sep-24 | Optional | May-27. |
| Complaints Procedure | Feb-24 | Essential | May-27. Note NALC award panel's view that current procedure is "lightweight". |
| Data Protection | | | |
| Data Protection Policy | Jul-23 | Essential | May-2027 - unless change in legislation. |
| Document Retention Policy | Aug'24 | Desirable | May-2027 - unless change in legislation. |
| Consent form for communication with OPC | Jul-23 | Desirable | May-2027 - unless change in legislation. |
| Privacy Notice - General | Jul-23 | Essential | May-2027 - unless change in legislation. |
| Privacy Notice - Staff, Cllrs and Role Holders | Jul-23 | Essential | May-2027 - unless change in legislation. |
| Subject Access Request Policy | Jul-23 | Desirable | May-2027 - unless change in legislation. |
| Cyber Security Policy | Jun-24 | Desirable | Jun-26. |
| Health & Safety | | | |
| Health & Safety Policy | Dec-23 | Essential | Dec-24. |
| Safeguarding Policy | Dec-23 | Desirable | Dec-25. |
| Environment | | | |
| Environment & Climate Change Policy | Sep-24 | Desirable | Sep-26. |
| Biodiversity Action Plan | Aug-22 | Essential | Reviewed Sept 23. Essential under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. |
| Managing assets | | | |
| Memorial Bench Policy | Feb-23 | Optional | Feb-25. |
| Hiring OPC's land and equipment | Sep-24 | Optional | Sep-26. |
| Tree Policy | May-19 | Optional | Overdue. Consider an enhanced policy for consideration as a Supplementary Planning Document. |
| Communication | | | |
| Communication Strategy | Mar-24 | Desirable | Mar 25 - annual review required. |
| Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy | Apr-24 | Desirable | Apr 27. |
| Staffing | | | |
| Disciplinary and Grievance Arrangements | Dec-23 | Desirable | Dec 25. |
| Training and Development Policy | Dec-23 | Desirable | Dec 25. |
| Staff Handbook | Oct-24 | Optional | Oct 25. |
| Sickness absence policy | Oct-23 | Desirable | Oct 25. |
| Flexible working policy | Oct-23 | Desirable | Oct 25. |
| Emergency dependants leave policy | Oct-23 | Desirable | Oct 25. |
| Lone working policy | Oct-23 | Desirable | Oct 25. |
| Pensions Discretionary Policy | Oct-24 | Essential | Oct 25. |



MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

This Model Financial Regulations template was produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in April 2024 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

Notes to assist in the use of this template:

- 1) This document is a model for councils of all sizes to use to develop their own financial regulations, suitable for the size of the council and the activities it undertakes.
- 2) Bold text indicates legal requirements, which a council cannot change or suspend.
- 3) For the rest, each council needs to adapt the model to suit its size and structure. For example, some councils have both a clerk and RFO, possibly with several more staff, while others have a single employee as clerk/RFO. Some councils have committees, some have a high level of delegation and some make all decisions at full council meetings. Many now use online payment methods, but others still rely on cheques.
- 4) Curly brackets indicate words, sentences or sections that can be removed if not applicable, or amended to fit the council's circumstances. An example of this is the phrase {or duly delegated committee}, which can be deleted if there are no committees.
- 5) Specific areas that may need adapting:
 - a) In 1.5 – is the Clerk the RFO?
 - b) In 3.3 and 3.4, the words “Governance and Accountability” do not apply in Wales
 - c) In section 4, does the council have committees and how many years are forecast?
 - d) In 5.6, does the council issue an open invitation to tender, or invite specific firms?
 - e) In 5.9, are online prices acceptable evidence?
 - f) In 5.13, 5.15 and 5.17, does the council have committees?
 - g) In 5.16, will a councillor ever be instructed to place an order?
 - h) In 5.20, is there a minimum level for official orders?
 - i) Section 6 includes several alternatives to cover delegation to committees or to officers, approval of invoices individually or in batches, or for approval of regular contractual payments at the beginning of the year.
 - j) Sections 7, 8 and 9 also includes several alternatives, including wording for where the clerk is a signatory. These are intended to allow a council's financial regulations to fit what they actually do, not to force any council to change what they do.
 - k) Section 10 gives two alternatives, with or without petty cash.
 - l) 13.6 has alternatives for VAT-registered and unregistered councils – only use one.



- m) 13.7 and 13.8 are removable if they don't apply to the council.
 - n) Much of Section 16 can be deleted if not applicable.
 - o) 17.3, is the Clerk the RFO or will the RFO consult the Clerk?
- 6) Square brackets indicate where the council needs to specify who, or how much, or what the timescale is. For example [£500] might need to be £100, or [October] might need to be November, or [the council] might need to say the Policy and Resources Committee.
- a) In 4.1 and 4.7, select the wording for England or Wales, based on your location.
 - b) In Section 4, the council needs to determine the timescale for its budget setting.
- 7) It is challenging to try to offer guidance on setting financial limits. A council spending £1,000 a year is unlikely to delegate authority to spend £500 to its proper officer, but one spending £5 million a year might regard £5,000 as a reasonable limit. Each council needs to determine its own limits, that help, rather than hinder, its operations.
- 8) Key limits to set:
- a) In 5.6, at what limit will the council require a formal tender process to ensure fair competition, rather than just asking for quotes? If this is set too low, it may discourage suppliers. Many small councils might only use formal tenders once every few years.
 - b) In 5.8, at what limit will the council require fixed-price quotes rather than estimates?
 - c) In 5.9, at what level can smaller purchases be made without competition?
 - d) In 5.15, at what level can purchases be made under delegated authority (having complied with the rules about obtaining prices)?
 - e) In 5.18, how much can the clerk commit to spending in an emergency?
 - f) In 6.9, can payment of invoices (for purchases that have already been authorised) be authorised by an officer under delegated authority as a general principle, or only to avoid problems?
 - g) In Section 9, what are the limits for card payments?
 - h) In 16.5, what value of assets can be bought or disposed of, without seeking council approval?
- 9) The contents list is a table that extracts section headings from the document. It can be updated by clicking on the contents list, whereupon a tab saying "update table" appears at the top of the list.
- 10) Once this model has been tailored to fit the council's needs, the resulting Financial Regulations (with the insertion of the council's name at the top) should be adopted at a meeting of the full council. The date of adoption should be inserted below the Contents. Any subsequent proposal for amendment should also be made to the full council.
- 11) The council should keep abreast of developments in legislation that affect the local council sector and should review and update its Financial Regulations annually.
- 12) Please ensure that the latest approved version is published on the council's website.



ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on *19th November 2024*[enter date].



1. General

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



- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
 - **approving accounting statements;**
 - **approving an annual governance statement;**
 - **borrowing;**
 - **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
 - **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**
- 1.7. In addition, the council shall:
- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of [£5,000]; and

2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk/RFO shall prepare, for approval by [the council], a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk/RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
 - **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
 - **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
 - **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
 - **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
 - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. At least [once in each quarter], and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Finance Committee.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put



measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
 - **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
 - is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council



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

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

4. Budget and precept

4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its [council tax (England)/budget (Wales)] requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**

4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by Staffing Committee at least annually in October for the following financial year before being agreed by full Council as part of the annual budget setting process and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk/RFO and the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

4.3. No later than November each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following financial year, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the Finance Committee.

4.5. Each committee cost centre shall be reviewed as part of the annual budget setting process not later than the end of November.

4.6. The draft budget with any committee proposals for the following year including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance Committee and a recommendation made to full council.



- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget, the council shall determine its council tax (England) requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than January full Council meeting, normally the third Tuesday. for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or relevant committee.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed **£60,000** including VAT, the Clerk/RFO shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of**

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.



contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.

- 5.8. For contracts greater than **£3,000** excluding VAT the Clerk/RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;
- 5.9. where the value is between **£500** and **£3,000** excluding VAT, the Clerk/RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, the clerk/RFO shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- The Clerk/RFO under delegated authority, for any items below **£500** excluding VAT.
 - The Clerk/RFO, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below **£800** excluding VAT.
 - A duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under **£5,000** excluding VAT}
 - in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.
 - the council for all items over **£5,000**;
- Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.
- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.



- 5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference except in an emergency or to ensure the safe maintenance of OPC's assets
- 5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk/RFO may authorise expenditure of up to **£2,000 previous Regs state £800** excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk/RFO shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council or relevant committee as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless [the council] is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 purchase orders are generally issue for expenditure over £100 excluding VAT} unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by Clerk/RFO.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with [name bank]. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Council meeting for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the Clerk/RFO.
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.



- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking, except in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with a resolution of the council, duly delegated committee or a delegated decision by an officer, unless [the council] resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. The Clerk/RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments {only} in the following circumstances: See limits in 5.15
- i. {any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget}.
 - ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of [the council], where the Clerk/RFO 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.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £25,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.
- 6.7. The Clerk/RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk/RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify at least three and no more than five councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. The Clerk/RFO may be an authorised signatory of an investment account only, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves. w
- 7.2. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.3. The Service Administrator or Deputy Clerk shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to the two authorised signatories agreed by Council.
- 7.4. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online
- 7.5. A full list of all payments made in a quarter shall be provided to the next Finance Committee.



- 7.6. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved by the Clerk/RFO. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every three years.
- 7.7. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.8. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every three years.
- 7.9. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk/RFO and checked by a member when checking the bank reconciliation. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every three years].
- 7.10. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.11. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members.
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.
- 8.4. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council or committee meeting}. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported at the next convenient meeting.



9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk/ 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.
- 9.2. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk/RFO and Deputy Clerk and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 9.3. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used unless in exceptional circumstances and only for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. The council will not maintain any form of cash float or receive cash.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Staffing Committee
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by Internal Auditor.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.



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

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the Clerk/RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The Clerk/RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the Clerk/RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the Clerk/RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The Clerk/RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.
- 13.7. Any income that 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.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the Clerk/RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the



contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

- 14.2. Any variation or addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk/RFO to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment relating to their area of work.
- 15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.4. The Clerk/RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The Clerk/RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

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, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed **£500**. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.



17. Insurance

- 17.1. The Clerk/RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.
- 17.2. The Clerk/RFO shall notify of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 17.3. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

18. Charities

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

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

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

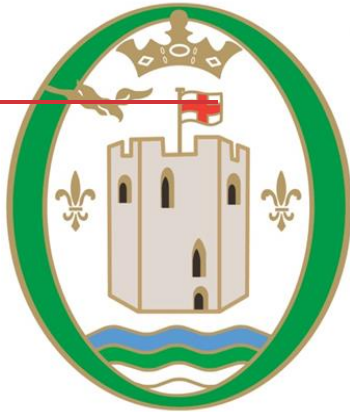
Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened



at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.

- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 17 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.



STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

Reviewed and adopted on
~~15th August 2023~~ 19th November 2024

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Introduction

Odiham Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for as well as being used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

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The System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to:

- a) identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives
- b) evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised
- c) manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The Council's Internal Controls

Decisions

The Council has elected a Chair who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and appointed a Parish Clerk to advise the Council for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful. The Parish Clerk is also the Responsible Financial Officer. The Deputy Clerk may deputise for the Parish Clerk in their absence.

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Responsibility

The Finance Committee meets at least quarterly and reviews and recommends all OPC's financial matters, unless required by full Council as specified by law.

The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

The Committees carry out regular reviews of their relevant budget codes and recommends budget provision in line with their committee's service provision and strategic aims.

OPC has adopted a Strategic Plan which is regularly reviewed by the ~~Strategy Working Group~~ or full Council annually and reported to the annual meeting of electors (Annual Parish Assembly). The Plan is supported by an annual Action Plan.

Budgets and Precepts

OPC reviews its obligations and objectives before determining the level of precept and individual budgets for the following financial year. All Councillors are invited to a budget workshop and the Finance Committee reviews the draft budget before being presented to full Council at its January meeting.

Management of Financial Records

OPC employs a Parish Clerk who acts as the Responsible Financial Officer where specified in law. The Parish Clerk holds qualified Clerk's status and is responsible for advising the Council, processing payments and preparing financial records.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for managing Scribe, OPC's chosen accounts program, which is used to record payments, manage OPC's budgets, generate reports, reconcile accounts, complete the end of year audit papers and to submit VAT returns to HMRC.

Payments

In most cases, invoices are input into Scribe and a monthly Payments Listing presented to full Council or the Finance Committee, whichever is sooner, for decision before payments are made. Where urgent payments are required to meet contractual obligations, the Clerk may seek approval from cheque signatories by email and payments are reported to the next available meeting.

Payments are made by BACS from OPC's main current account, Unity Trust. Payments are first set up by the Parish Clerk or Deputy Clerk, then authorised by two Councillors with cheque signatory rights and OPC aims to rotate those Councillors authorising payments regular basis. There are no less than 3 and no more than 5-4 Councillors with approval rights who are agreed at each annual council meeting.

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Bank Reconciliations

The Parish Clerk carries out monthly bank reconciliations on all accounts and these are reported to the Finance Committee on a quarterly basis, then countersigned by the Finance Committee Chair, or other committee member agreed by resolution

The Council as an Employer

The Staffing Committee is responsible for monitoring the Staffing budget including recommending the Clerk's salary which is then determined by full Council.

The Parish Clerk is responsible for determining salary levels for other staff in line with budgets and in consultation with the Staffing Committee.

At least two References ~~references~~ are obtained ed for all staff appointments.

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OPC is registered with HMRC and uses the HMRC Payroll system to calculate payments. Monthly salary payments are included on the monthly Payments Listing and payments processed by BACS.

Staff may reclaim any purchases made on the Council's behalf, subject to the purchase having been previously been agreed by an allocated budget, by a line manager.

Staff and Councillors may claim reasonable and justifiable expenses incurred in line with OPC's policies on claiming expenses, including as a result of travelling to meetings/training/events which have been agreed by a line manager:

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- For cars - 45p per mile up to 10,000 mile.
- Meal allowance: up to £10.00 per day and up to £25.00 per 24 hour period when an overnight stay is required.

Expense reclaim forms are countersigned by the Parish Clerk or the Chair of the Council.

Management of Risk

OPC has a Council Risk Assessment which is reviewed and agreed by full Council every year.

OPC's insurance cover is provided by Zurich Ltd and Access Insurance (for unoccupied buildings) which are reviewed annually to ensure adequate cover.

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OPC appoints an independent Internal Auditor Do The Numbers, who reports to the Council on the adequacy of its: financial records, procedures, systems, internal control and management of risk. This appointment is reviewed and agreed annually.

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OPC is subject to an annual, external, Intermediate Audit Review which is undertaken by the Council's External Auditors, BDO Ltd.



RESERVES POLICY

Reviewed and adopted on ~~15th August 2023~~
19th November 2024

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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of reserves.

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Odiham Parish Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation, but has no legal powers to hold reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs or for specifically earmarked purposes.

Reserves can be used for long term planned or exceptional (unbudgeted or higher than expected) expenditure on the following conditions:-

- the expenditure must not be recurring
- Income in reserves from the sale of fixed assets ('capital receipts') such as the sale of land, can only be used for capital projects, such as the acquisition and enhancement of land, building, vehicles, plant and equipment.

Budget allocations can be moved from one budget line to another during the course of a financial year, with approval from the Council, so long as the total expenditure for the financial year is not exceeded.

2 TYPES OF RESERVES

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4- Earmarked and other reserves;

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Reserves can be categorised as earmarked, ring fenced or general.

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~~There is, in practice, no upper or lower limit to EMR save only that they must be held for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects, and their level should be subject to regular review and justification (at least annually and at budget setting), and should be separately identified and enumerated. Significant levels of EMRs in particular may give rise to enquiries from internal and/or external auditors. (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance – March 2023).~~

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2.1 Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked reserves are a means of building up funds over several years to deliver a defined project, predicted liabilities or for known significant expenditure. They are not to be used for emergency operations.

Earmarked reserves must be reviewed and/or established by the Council at the annual budget setting meeting and should include a costed project plan. The Finance Committee reviews total earmarked reserves quarterly.

Earmarked reserves are to be administered by the relevant committee in consultation with the RFO. Any changes (virements) to the proposed use of reserves must be agreed by Council.

The RFO will note earmarked reserves movements at the end of the financial year.

Earmarked reserves can be held for:

- Renewals - to enable services to plan and finance an effective programme of equipment replacement and planned property maintenance. These reserves are a mechanism to smooth expenditure so that a sensible replacement programme can be achieved without the need to vary budgets.
- Carry forward of significant under spend for a project which started within a financial year - some services commit expenditure to projects, but cannot spend the budget in year. Reserves can be used as a mechanism to carry forward these resources but general reserves should be used for lower values.

2.2 Ring Fenced

Ring fenced reserves are money or grants allocated for a specific project only.

2.3 General Reserves

General reserves are funds which do not have any restrictions as to their use. These reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cash flows, offset the budget requirement if necessary or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

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Odiham Parish Council has considered guidance in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioners' Guide 2024 which states that "any authority with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should plan towards 3 months equivalent general reserves" and considers a prudent level of general reserves to be closer to approximately 6 months of its annual expenditure due to specific liabilities, including a high number of Grade II listed properties and timber play equipment. Odiham Parish Council acknowledges this level of reserves is higher than recommended in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance and will review levels regularly, at least quarterly or following a change in circumstances.

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If in extreme circumstances general reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council would be able to draw down from its earmarked reserves to provide short term resources.

Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the Council's finances the Council must keep a minimum balance sufficient to pay three month's salaries to staff in general reserves at all times.

3 OPPORTUNITY COST OF HOLDING RESERVES

In addition to allowing the Council to manage unforeseen financial pressures and plan for known or predicted liabilities, there is a benefit to holding reserves in terms of the interest earned on funds which are not utilised. This investment income is fed into the budget strategy.

However, there is an "opportunity cost" of holding funds in reserves, in that these funds cannot then be spent on anything else. As an example, if these funds were used to repay debt the opportunity cost would equate to the saving on the payment of interest and the minimum revenue provision, offset by the loss of investment income on the funds. However, using reserves to pay off debt in this way would leave the Council with no funds to manage unexpected risks nor provide a mechanism to fund the planned expenditure for which the reserves were earmarked.

Given the opportunity costs of holding reserves, it is critical that reserves continue to be reviewed each year as part of the budget process to confirm that they are still required and that the level is still appropriate.



INVESTMENT POLICY

Reviewed and adopted ~~18th July 2023~~ 19th November 2024

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A Local Council's Investment Strategy

A local council has a general power to invest its funds for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment and for the prudent management of its financial affairs (Local Government Act (LGA) 2003 sections 12). The investment of surplus funds is governed by Section 15 of the LGA 2003 and Guidance issued by the Secretary of state. Investments below £10,000 are not subject to this guidance but the Council must make a formal decision on the extent to which the guidance applies for investments between £10,000 and £50,000.

This guidance recommends that the Council produces an Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the Council's policy on managing investments.

OPC adopted the following investment terms at the full Council meeting on ~~18th July 2023~~^{19th November 2024}

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All investments shall be made in £ sterling.

Short term investments are defined as investments up to 1 year.

Long term investments are defined as investments over one year.

Investments shall consider the following objectives to ensure the best balance between:

1. Security
2. Liquidity
3. Yield

All investments shall be "specified investments" giving relatively high security and liquidity such as short term deposits, 1, 2 or 3 year bonds or short term fixed deposits with high street banks or other funds marketed to the public sector.

"Non-specified investments" such as stocks and shares give a much higher, potential risk and shall not be considered.

Full Council or The-the Finance Committee will review and agree all investments and every transaction will require two Councillor signatories plus the Responsible Finance Officer.

Assumptions:

No less than £25,000 shall be held in the Unity Trust account to cover any unforeseen expenditure or interruption to OPC's administration. This is based on easy to access funds being available in the CCLA Deposit account and Lloyds Treasurers account.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Some occupations such as serving members of the armed forces

Open consultation

Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

Published 24 October 2024

Applies to England

Contents

Scope of this consultation

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-at-local-authority-meetings/enabling-remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-at-local-authority-meetings>

Scope of this consultation

Topic of this consultation

This short consultation seeks views on the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England.

Scope of this consultation

Government is consulting on introducing powers for local authority members to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and vote by proxy in certain circumstances.

If any changes to legislation are made as a result of this consultation would apply to England only local authorities meaning:

- a county council
- a unitary authority
- a London borough council
- a district council
- the Common Council of the City of London
- the Greater London Authority
- the Council of the Isles of Scilly
- a parish council
- a joint board continued in being by virtue of section 263(1) of the 1972 Act
- a parish meeting constituted under section 13 of the Local Government Act 1972
- Transport for London, Para.5 of Schedule 10 of the GLA 1999 allows the GLA to regulate its own procedures and committees
- an authority established under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1985
- a joint authority established under Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1985
- a joint committee constituted to be a local planning authority under section 29 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- a combined authority established under section 103 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

- a combined county authority established under section 9 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023
- a fire and rescue authority constituted by a scheme under section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 or a scheme to which section 4 of that Act applies, or created by an order under section 4A of that Act
- a National Park authority as referenced at section 184 of the LGA 1972 and/or established under section 63 of the Environment Act 1995
- the Broads Authority established by section 1 of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988
- a conservation board established under section 86 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- a police and crime panel established under section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Geographical scope

The questions in this consultation apply to all relevant local authorities in England as defined above.

They do **not** apply to authorities in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Impact assessment

If any policy changes are made following this consultation they will be subject to appropriate assessment. No impact assessment has been conducted at this time.

Basic information

This is an open consultation. We particularly seek the views of individual members of the public; prospective and current local authority members/representatives; all relevant local authorities defined above; and those bodies that represent the interests of local members/representatives at all levels.

Body/bodies responsible for the consultation

The Local Government Capability and Improvement Division in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is responsible for conducting this consultation.

Duration

This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 24 October 2024.

Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation please contact:
remoteattendanceconsultation@communities.gov.uk

How to respond

You can only respond to this consultation through our online consultation platform, Citizen Space. [Respond via Citizen Space \(https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting\)](https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting).

Ministerial foreword

The government has set out its intention to reset the relationship between central and local government as partners in delivering better outcomes for the communities we collectively represent. Key to this is supporting the sector to modernise democratic engagement, raise standards and widen the range of candidates standing for council by removing unnecessary barriers.

The attendance of elected members at local authority meetings is a core part of the democratic process at the local level and is integral to members carrying out their functions effectively. In addition to the value of members coming together to debate and discuss the issues which impact the lives of the people they represent; it is also important that local residents have the

opportunity to engage directly with the people they have elected to take key decisions on their behalf.

At the same time, the government recognises that there are circumstances in which it may not always be possible for members to attend council meetings in person. It is with this in mind that the government intends to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings.

The intent is that this increased flexibility will strike the balance between the principle that significant in-person engagement remains vitally important, and a recognition that there will sometimes be a need to accommodate members' requirements to attend council meetings remotely. We hope it will encourage a wider diversity of people willing and able to stand and actively participate in local democracy by creating improved conditions where meetings are accessible and inclusive.

In addition, we are seeking views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an elected member, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely, for example during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

In line with the government's commitment to working with local government to establish partnerships built on mutual respect, genuine collaboration, and meaningful engagement, this short consultation seeks your views on the detail and practical implications of this proposition to inform our ongoing policy development.

Who we would like to hear from

Responses are invited from local authority elected members, all types and tiers of authorities, and local authority sector representative organisations. We are also particularly keen to hear from those members of the public who have point of view based on their interest in accessing local democracy in their area or standing as a candidate for local government at any tier to represent their local community at some future point.

Question 1

Please tick all that apply - are you responding to this consultation as:

a) an elected member – if so please indicate which local authority type(s) you serve on

- Town or Parish Council

- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

b) a council body – if so please indicate which local authority type

- Town or Parish Council ✓
- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

c) a member of the public

d) a local government sector body – please state

The proposal for remote attendance

The government intends to legislate to give local authorities the flexibility to allow elected members to attend formal council meetings remotely. We believe that this modernising measure of providing broad flexibility to enable remote attendance will have the dual positive impacts of diversifying the representation of those willing and able to stand for elected office and enhance the resilience of local authorities in the face of local or national emergencies.

The intent is that this legislative change would give local authorities the flexibility to allow members to attend remotely.

Question 2

Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Yes/~~No~~

If you answered No to the above question please go directly to question 4.

Question 3

If you answered Yes to the above question, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance. ✓
- b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies. ✓
- c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.
- d) [Free text box] **Some work related commitments eg armed forces personnel, emergency service workers and members who work shift patterns. Also for a member with caring responsibilities and childcare.**

Question 4

If you are an elected member can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?

- yes
- no
- I am not an elected member

Question 4a

If you answered No please use the free text below

[Free text box]

Question 4b

If you answered Yes, could you indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely

- very occasionally
- from time to time

- regularly but not always
- all the time

Question 5

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- less than 10%
- more than 10% but less than 50% ✓
- more than 50% but less than 90%
- most of them 90% to 100%

Question 6

The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a twelve-month calendar period.
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances. ✓
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence.
- d) [Free text box]

Question 7

Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Please tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance. ✓

g memb

b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings. ✓

c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location. ✓

d) Other [Free text box]

Question 8

Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

Should be considered because

Should not be considered because

It is a positive modernising measure. ✓

Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.

It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve. ✓

It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils. ✓

Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance. ✓

It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Question 9

In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics, for example those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

Please tick an option below:

- it would benefit members ✓
- it would disadvantage members
- neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

[Free text box] The authority would need to ensure adequate AV equipment so that those joining remotely can hear the meeting and be heard by the physical meeting.

Proxy voting

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence.

It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

Question 10

In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- yes
- no
- unsure ✓

Question 11

If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?

Please select all that apply:

- Type text here
- physical or medical conditions ✓
 - caring responsibilities ✓
 - parental leave or other responsibilities ✓
 - other [Free t

Some occupations

Question 12

Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?

[Free text box] Where there is a DPI between the two members or where the authority's members are affiliated to a political party.

Question 13

If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?

[Free text box] See question 12 response.

About this consultation

This consultation has been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic

confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure>).

Annex A: Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under the Data Protection Act 2018. Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name address and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for

statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, MHCLG may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

We use a third-party platform, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance, your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based servers.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for 2 years from the closure of the consultation.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a) to see what data we have about you
- b) to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c) to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d) to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> (<https://ico.org.uk/>), or telephone 0303 123 1113.

7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making

9. Your personal data will be stored on a secure government IT system

Your data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible after the consultation has closed, and it will be stored there for the standard 2 years of retention before it is deleted.

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REPORT ON: Grounds maintenance contracts 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028
WRITTEN BY: Parish Clerk
MEETING DATE: 19th November 2024
AGENDA ITEMS: 196/24

Background

OPC's open spaces and outdoor equipment are maintained under two main contracts; one covering Odiham Cemetery and one covering all other sites. Both contracts are currently held by Larkstel Ltd and mature 31st March 2025.

As far as I'm aware, the rationale behind keeping the two contracts separate is due to the different maintenance methods and regimes. However, OPC has the right to award the contracts to the same contractor. There have been suggestions of combining the two contracts into one but this is not being suggested this time because various learnings suggest that two contracts would give OPC greater flexibility in awarding contracts to the most suitable and cost effective contractor.

The value of the combined contracts is significant against OPC's budget but the decision to award contracts must be based on amenity value and public liability as well as affordability. The current contracts were awarded in 2020 and 2021 so OPC should expect some uplift in costs and this will need to be fed into the 2025/26 budget and precept setting process.

Tender documentation

Two tender packs are presented with this agenda for decision. The schedule of works includes changes from the current contracts, including:

- increased cuts in the higher footfall areas
- decreased areas in some lower footfall areas
- some areas managed for biodiversity value which will see less cuts
- contingency for additional cuts with discretion on timing given to the contractor
- updated wording to reflect OPC's Environment and Climate Change Policy, Biodiversity Action Plan and evidence of assessment of risk and insurance cover.

Procurement Process

OPC is governed by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 which affect the way in which these contracts should be awarded. The thresholds include the total value of the contract including VAT and both contracts are expected to exceed the thresholds covered by these Regulations. This is set out in clause 5.7 (page 8) in the draft Financial Regulations included with this agenda. Note that new rules, The Procurement Act 2024, will come into effect 24th February 2025.

The contract opportunities must be advertised on Contracts Finder, or similar, for 30 days less one 1 (where the documents are published electronically).

The timeplan on the following page proposes a timescale for advertising and awarding contract.

**IS THIS PROJECT AN IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC PRIORITY – YES
HAS BUDGET BEEN ALLOCATED – 2025/26 BUDGET TO BE AGREED**



IS THIS PROJECT AN IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC PRIORITY – YES
HAS BUDGET BEEN ALLOCATED – 2025/26 BUDGET TO BE AGREED

REPORT ON:
WRITTEN BY:
MEETING DATE:
AGENDA ITEMS:

Allotment Fees
 Parish Clerk
 19th November 2024
 198/24

| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Annual rent | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 55 | 60.5 |
| Total annual income | 100 | 1185 | 1150 | 810 | 1100 | 1341) |
| Deposit (refundable subject to plot being returned in a satisfactory condition) | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Key deposit (refundable) | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Management costs | 1847 | 645.25 | 575.25 | 1359.45 | 1184 | 1900 |
| | (actual) | (actual) | (actual) | (actual) | (budget) | (budget) |

1100 (current year to date

| For decision | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------|--------|-------|
| | 2025 | | | |
| | No increase | 3% | 5% | 10% |
| Annual rent | 60.5 | 62.315 | 63.525 | 66.55 |
| Total annual income | 1100 | 1246.3 | 1270.5 | 1331 |
| Deposit (refundable subject to plot being returned in a satisfactory condition) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Key deposit (refundable) | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |

REPORT ON: Cemetery Fees
WRITTEN BY: Parish Clerk
MEETING DATE: 19th November 2024
AGENDA ITEMS: 199/24

INTERMENT

First burial in any grave space

Registered elector
 Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include headstone approval

Non registered elector

Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include headstone approval

Subsequent burial in any grave space including ashes

Registered elector – to include permission to change inscription
 Non registered elector - to include permission to change inscription

Interment of ashes in the new garden of remembrance

Registered elector
 Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include memorial stone approval subject to transfer of the exclusive rights

Non registered elector

Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include memorial stone approval subject to transfer of the exclusive rights

Subsequent interment of ashes in the new garden of remembrance

Registered elector - to include permission to change inscription
 Non registered elector - to include permission to change inscription
 Subsequent additional inscription to a memorial for an interment which took place before 31 March 2010 and approval of renovations or repairs to existing memorials

Transfer of Exclusive Rights

Annual management costs

Annual income

| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | For decision 2025 | | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | | | | | | 0 increase | 3% rounded up/down | 3% up/down | 5% rounded up/down | 5% up/down |
| Registered elector | | | 800 | 825 | 907.50 | 907.5 | 934.725 | 935 | 952.88 | 953 |
| Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include headstone approval | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Non registered elector</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include headstone approval | | | 1840 | 1895 | 2084.50 | 2084.5 | 2147.035 | 2148 | 2188.73 | 2189 |
| <u>Subsequent burial in any grave space including ashes</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Registered elector – to include permission to change inscription | | | 200 | 210 | 231.00 | 231 | 237.93 | 238 | 242.55 | 243 |
| Non registered elector - to include permission to change inscription | | | 465 | 480 | 528.00 | 528 | 543.84 | 544 | 554.40 | 555 |
| Interment of ashes in the new garden of remembrance | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Registered elector</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include memorial stone approval subject to transfer of the exclusive rights | | | 535 | 550 | 605.00 | 605 | 623.15 | 624 | 635.25 | 635 |
| <u>Non registered elector</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Exclusive rights of 50 years – to include memorial stone approval subject to transfer of the exclusive rights | | | 1065 | 1100 | 1210.00 | 1210 | 1246.3 | 1247 | 1270.50 | 1271 |
| Subsequent interment of ashes in the new garden of remembrance | | | | | | | | | | |
| Registered elector - to include permission to change inscription | | | 140 | 145 | 159.50 | 159.5 | 164.285 | 165 | 167.48 | 168 |
| Non registered elector - to include permission to change inscription | | | 270 | 280 | 308.50 | 308.5 | 317.755 | 318 | 323.93 | 324 |
| Subsequent additional inscription to a memorial for an interment which took place before 31 March 2010 and approval of renovations or repairs to existing memorials | | | 40 | 45 | 49.50 | 49.5 | 50.985 | 51 | 51.98 | 52 |
| Transfer of Exclusive Rights | | | 60 | 70 | 77.50 | 77.5 | 79.825 | 80 | 81.38 | 82 |
| Annual management costs | 13915.63 (actual) | 21163.24 (actual) | 18417.8 (new contract) | 19196 (actual) | 22900 (budget) | | | | | |
| Annual income | 12761 | 15280 | 8185 | 12000 (budgeted) | 1200 (budgeted) | | | | | |
| | | | | 9209 (actual) | 7799 (year to date) | | | | | |

Calendar dates for 2025

Agenda item 200/24

January:

- 1st National Holiday
- 7th Planning committee
- 11th Parish news deadline
- 21st Full Council and Finance
- 23rd Planning Committee

February:

- 17th-21st Hampshire school Holidays
- 17th Planning Committee
- 18th Full Council and Amenities
- 27th Newsletter articles deadline

March:

6th Newsletter to printers (£3500 Cost code 3010) (to cover both Spring and Autumn)

10th Newsletter delivery (same as above)

- 11th Planning committee
- 18th Full Council

April:

Annual Parish Assembly (date TBC budget £250 – Cost Code 3035)

- 1st and 22nd Planning Committee
- 7th- 21st Hampshire School Holidays
- 14th Flags up for St Georges Day
- 15th Full Council
- 18th and 21st Bank Holidays
- 23rd St Georges Day
- 30th Flags Down

FULL COUNCIL 19.11.24
201/24

May

5th National Holiday

13th Planning Committee

8th May VE Day- 80th Anniversary (Budget £1,000 Cost code 3060)

20th Full Council and Amenity Committee

22nd Staffing Committee

26th National holiday

26th-30th- Hampshire School Holiday

June:

3rd and 24th Planning Committee

23rd-29th Armed Forces week (Honorary title event- budget £1,500 cost code 3060)

18th Full Council /Planning Committee

28th June Armed Forces Day

28th June Bands in the Bury

July:

14th National Town Crier day

15th Planning Committee

15th Full Council/ Finance Committee

23rd- 31st Hampshire School Holidays

August:

All: Hampshire School Holidays

5th and 26th Planning Committee

19th Full Council/ Amenities committee

25th National Holiday

25th IN Odiham Food Festival?? Date TBC

September:

7th All Saints Church fete (date TBC)

16th Full Council / Planning Committee

FULL COUNCIL 19.11.24
201/24

23rd Newsletter articles deadline

30th Newsletter to printers

October:

6th Newsletter delivery (Budget £ 3500 for both the spring and Autumm Newsletter)

7th and 28th Planning Committee

21st Full Council/Finance Committee

27th-31st Hampshire School Holidays

31st Put up Poppys and Flags

November:

9th Remembrance Sunday parade (budget £2000 cost code 3065 road closure may be less)

11th Remembrance Day

17th Poppys and flags down

17th Planning Committee (TBC)

18th Full Council and Amenities Committee

27th Christmas tree lights switch on and drinks reception (Budget £1000 Cost code 3035)

30th In Odiham Extravaganza

Dec

9th Planning Committee

16th Full Council

21st -31st Hampshire School Holidays

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

25th National Holiday

26th National Holiday

REPORT ON: Members' Allowance
WRITTEN BY: Parish Clerk
MEETING DATE: 20th May 2024
AGENDA ITEM: 29/24

Background

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) allows **elected*** Councillors to claim an allowance:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2003/1021/contents/made>

“91. Parish councils may choose to pay their members an allowance, known as ‘parish basic allowance’, to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties. There is no obligation on parish councils to pay such allowances. Each parish council may make an allowance available to its chair only, or to each of its members. Where all members receive an allowance, the amount payable to the chair may be different to that paid to other members, but otherwise the amount paid to each member must be the same. Parish basic allowance is a discretionary allowance. It may be paid in a lump sum, or at intervals throughout the year.

92. If a parish council wishes to pay a basic allowance, it should have regard to a recommendation from its parish remuneration panel. This is a panel set up to make recommendations to parishes in its area. The membership of a parish remuneration panel will be the same as the independent remuneration panel of the district or county council within whose area the parish is situated. The panel will make a recommendation as to whom basic allowance should be paid, and the level of the allowance.”

The latest report (circulated to Members separately) from the local remuneration panel dated 2016 recommended:

- i) “The Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 10% of the Basic Allowance for Hart District Council.”

The latest Hart allowances can be viewed at: <https://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-12/Members-Allowances-Dec-23.pdf>

The Panel also recommended:

- ii) “Chairman’s Allowance.

The Panel felt that any decision regarding the payment of a Chairman’s Allowance should be left entirely to the discretion of individual parish councils, taking into account local circumstances.

The Panel therefore recommends the Chairman’s Allowance should be up to 15% of the District Council’s Basic Allowance (namely £684**). This could be in addition to the Basic Allowance, or not, if no Basic Allowance is paid.”

- iii) Travel and Subsistence

The Panel recommends that the Parish Councils should pay a mileage allowance of 45p per mile (for a car) which is in line with the HMRC recommendations.”

* Legislation does not extend to co-opted members.

** See latest Hart allowances for current figure.

For decision

- i) Should OPC pay allowances to elected members? If so, this will require a new policy and should be considered as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.
- ii) Should OPC pay a separate Chair's allowance?
- iii) Should OPC continue to pay the travel rates in line with the published HMRC mileage rate?

COPY



| OPC Ref | Hart Ref | Address | Details | Decision |
|---------|--------------------|---|--|---|
| 47/24 | 24/01941/HOU | 29 Archery Fields Odiham Hook Hampshire RG29 1AE | Erection of a replacement porch, first floor side extension, single storey rear extension and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation | No objection. |
| 48/24 | 24/01906/FUL | Stapeley Farm Long Lane Odiham Hook RG29 1JE | Change of use to equestrian and erection of three stables, a tack room, a hay barn, a feed room and an undercover preparation area | No objection, however, should HDC agree to the proposals then OPC requests suitable mitigation of light pollution to neighbouring properties. |
| 49/24 | 24/01983/HOU | Napier House 10A Coronation Close Odiham Hook RG29 1AD | Erection of a first floor rear extension, front porch and insertion of window first floor side. | No objection, |
| 50/24 | 24/02067/LBC | 1 Albert Cottages Colt Hill Odiham Hook Hampshire RG29 1AN | Replacement of two windows | No objection. |
| 51/24 | 24/02044/FUL | Highways Cottage Farnham Road Odiham Hook Hampshire RG29 1AB | Erection of a 4 bedroom dwelling following demolition of existing 3 bedroom dwelling | No objections in the main, however this application was previously not supported due to the render at the front of the property. This new application states it will be in keeping with local vernacular, but there is a comment embedded in the note from architect that talks about keeping the option to paint the brickwork in the future, which OPC would object to. |
| 52/24 | 24/02071/FUL | Clevedge House Hook Road North Warnborough Hook Hampshire RG29 1ER | Erection of single storey garage to serve dwelling approved under Application No. 23/01060/FUL | No objection. |
| 53/24 | 24/02097/AMCO N | 7 Terrys Cottage The Street North Warnborough Hook Hampshire RG29 1BL | Variation of Condition 3 (approved Plans) attached to Planning Permission 24/01219/HOU dated 10/09/2024 - Demolition of existing rear outbuildings and erection of a single storey extension | No objection. |



| OPC Ref | Hart Ref | Address | Details | Decision |
|----------------|-----------------|--|--|-----------------|
| 54/24 | 24/01399/CON | 1 Albert Cottages Colt Hill Odiham Hook RG29 1AN | Approval of Condition 3- window and door details- pursuant to 24/01399/LBC Conversion of the existing garage to habitable accommodation to include the replacement of the garage door to the front with a door and a window, replacement of the door and window to the rear with bi-fold doors and the insertion of three rooflights to the side, erection of an open porch to the side, replacement of french doors to the rear and replacement garden shed | No objection. |
| 55/24 | 24/02112/CON | 1 Albert Cottages Colt Hill Odiham Hook RG29 1AN | Approval of Condition 2- brickwork - pursuant to 24/01399/LBC Conversion of the existing garage to habitable accommodation to include the replacement of the garage door to the front with a door and a window, replacement of the door and window to the rear with bi-fold doors and the insertion of three rooflights to the side, erection of an open porch to the side, replacement of french doors to the rear and replacement garden shed | No objection. |