



**MEMBERS OF ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND
THE COUNCIL MEETING OF ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL
AT THE BRIDEWELL, THE BURY, ODIHAM, HAMPSHIRE, RG29 1NB
TUESDAY 20th JANUARY 2026 at 7.30pm**

14th January 2026

Andrea Mann, Clerk

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

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85920958560?pwd=6Owi6wGJn5vonVfQHf7NabK45csiPa.1>

Meeting ID: 859 2095 8560

Passcode: 976846

-
- 218/25 To receive apologies for absence**
- 219/25 To receive declarations of interests and requests for dispensation relating to any item on the agenda**
- 220/25 Approval of minutes**
To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16th December 2025 (190-218/25).
- 221/25 Chair's announcements**
- 222/25 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/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Standing-orders-revised-January-2025.pdf> or contact the Parish Office for further advice.

Councillor Reports

- 223/25 Meeting reports from councillors**
To RECEIVE any verbal reports from Councillors on their attendance at outside meetings.
- 224/25 Reports from other councils**
To RECEIVE any verbal reports from Hart District councillors and the Hampshire County councillor representing Odiham.

General

- 225/25 Meeting action points (pages 4-5)**
To consider matters arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the agenda
- 226/25 Co-option of a councillor for the RAF Station ward**
To consider applications received for the vacant RAF Station ward.
Voting will take place in accordance with Standing Orders 7 "Voting on appointments" and in line with <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Casual-Vacancy-and-Cooption-Policy-September-2024.pdf>
Standing Orders will be suspended to allow for applicants to present their application.



227/25 Policies (pages 6-49)

- i) To review the rolling schedule of policies and updates (page 6).
- ii) To consider a new IT Policy based on the NALC model template, to replace the current Cyber Security Policy, to comply with a new audit assertion, deferred from the November Council meeting (pages 7-22).
- iii) To carry out the annual review of Standing Orders, drafted from NALC's 2025 model template (pages 23-49).

228/25 OPC's Risk Assessment (pages 50-57)

To complete and agree the annual review of OPC's risk assessment, as required as part of the audit process.

Amenity Areas Matters

229/25 Odiham Tennis Club (emailed separately)

To consider requests from Odiham Tennis Club as set out in the supporting papers.

230/25 Additional grounds maintenance works Odiham Cemetery (emailed separately)

To consider a quote received from OPC's grounds contractor for additional works, utilising contingency within budget, to continue OPC's ongoing commitment of improving conditions.

231/25 Boundary fencing and planting, Odiham Cemetery (emailed separately)

To consider a quote received to create a new boundary line with fencing and planting.

Community Matters

232/25 Event grants (emailed separately)

To consider and minute applications received from InOdiham for community events: Bands in The Bury, Odiham Food Fayre and Extravaganza. (To be ratified under item 235/25).

233/25 Anti-engine idling campaign

Verbal update from the chair on OPC's partnership project with the schools.

Finance Matters

234/25 Informal Finance Committee 14th January 2026

To ratify the decisions of the informal Finance Committee held on Zoom:

<https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-business/council/finance-committee>

235/25 2026/27 Budget (to follow after Finance Committee 14th January)

To consider and approve Odiham Parish Council's 2026/27 budget, as proposed by the Finance Committee.

236/25 2026/27 Precept (to follow after Finance Committee 14th January)

To consider and approve Odiham Parish Council's 2026/27 precept which will be signed by the Chair and Clerk.

237/25 Payments Listing (to follow)

To approve the payments listing for the period 17th December-20th January 2026 and appoint 2 Councillors to complete the payment approval process for outstanding payments.



- 238/25 New Audit Assertion 10 (pages 58-61)**
To note the Clerk's report summarising requirements, actions taken and compliance.

Planning Matters

- 239/25 Ratification of Planning & Development Committee decisions**
To ratify the decisions agreed by the Planning & Development Committee on email and submitted to Hart under delegated authority. <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-business/council/planning/planning-development-committee>

Traffic and Transport

- 240/25 20mph schemes and other traffic calming**
i) To receive a verbal update from the working group.
ii) To receive a verbal update from the Deputy Clerk on Speedwatch volunteers.
iii) To receive a verbal update on research to increase SID coverage.
- 241/25 Date of next meetings**
Tuesday 17th February 2026 at 7.30pm.

Confidential Matters

- 242/25 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**
- 243/25 Chapel Cottage**
Verbal update from the Clerk.

| Full Council | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Date of meeting | Agenda ref no | Cllr to action | Details | Status |
| Oct-25 | 138/25 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 143/25i | Clerk | Follow up action to request M3 accident data. | |
| | 143/25ii | Clerk | Follow up action to establish whether multiple locations can be included in one TRO application. | Enquiry submitted |
| | 145/25ii | Clerk | Code war memorial overspend to supporting High St EMR. | Complete |
| | 145/25iv | Clerk/CllrSB | Pursue external funding for remaining war memorial works. | Complete |
| | 146/25iii | CllrsAMc&PV/AO | Meet with Rotary to draw up project proposal for The Firs. | Complete |
| | 147/25 | Office | Defer proposal for tree planting scheme on the Rec until 2026 and research "adopt a tree" schemes. | On hold |
| | 148/25i | Office | Award contract for office lights and complete works. | Due 16.01.26 |
| | 148/25ii | Office | Award contract for re-decoration of office and complete works. | Scheduling in March |
| | 148/25iii | Office | Award contract to replace office floor tiles and complete works. | |
| | 148/25iv | Office | Award contract to install replacement blinds in office and complete works. | |
| | 149/25 | Deputy Clerk | Respond to time trial rally organisers showing support. | Complete |
| | 150/25 | Clerk | Respond to organisers of the Commemorative Convoys and direct to InOdiham. | Complete |
| | 151/25 | Clerk/CllrsLC&Amc | Set up payments on Unity Trust and complete payment approval process for outstanding payments. | Complete |
| | 152/25 | Deputy Clerk | Change draft P&D mins to final. | Complete |
| | 153/25 | Clerk | Submit OPC's response for ext of land used at Stapeley Manor Farm. | Complete |
| | 154/25 | Clerk | Ask Cllr Dorn whether comments on best time to respond to Farnborough airport planning can be published and share online. | Complete |
| | 155/25 | CllrAMc | Email MP showing support for campaign to re-route bus to High Street and ask how OPC can support the campaign. | Complete |
| | 156/25 | All | Attend SSE drop-in event 10.12.25 and report back on potential impact of works on Bridewell and OPC. | Complete |
| | | Clerk/CllrPV | Send details of SSE works to Odiham Consolidate Charities. | Complete |
| | 159/25 | Clerk | Add draft licence for Parish Room on November agenda. | Complete |
| | 160/25 | Clerk | Respond to RMD Adventure Learning re Bridewell user numbers and finalise lease. | Complete |
| | 161/25 | Clerk | Revise Bridewell working group ToR's. | Complete |
| | | Clerk/CllrsLC,Amc,PV,CG | Meet to review strategic projects list and report back with proposed priorities. | Complete |
| Nov-25 | 164/25 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 165/25 | CllrAMc/Clerk | Arrange letter to InOdiham to congratulate on Kings Award. | Complete |
| | 169/25 | Clerk | Submit DPI forms to Hart and show position on website. | Complete |
| | | Council | Appoint Cllr CG to committees and positions. | Complete |
| | 171/25 | Clerk | Notify Hart of Cllr PV's appointment as joint Commons rep. | Complete |
| | 172/25ia | Clerk | Check model Financial Regs with Internal Auditor and add to next agenda. | Complete |
| | 172/25ib-d | Clerk | Add reviewed financial policies to website. | Complete |
| | 172/25ii | Clerk | Combine staff related policies and circulate Staff Handbook. | Complete |
| | 172/25iii | Clerk | Research passwords and refer Cyber Security Policy to next agenda. | On agenda |
| | 173/25 | Clerk | Add new Strategy Working Group ToRs to website. | Complete |
| | | Clerk/Strategy WG | Arrange Strategy Working Group meeting. | Complete (all Council) |
| | 174/25 | Clerk | Update website to show Amenity Areas Committee work will be covered by full Council until May '26. | Complete |
| | 175/25ii | Clerk | Revise EMR on Scribe to allocate remaining Supporting the High St EMR to flagpoles. | |
| | 175/25iii | Office | Confirm numbers and support with High St properties for flagpoles. | |
| | 175/25iv | Office | Progress listed building planning application for flag poles. | |
| | | Clerk | Research legalities of ownership and insurance. | |
| | 176/25 | Clerk | Check with Hart whether S106 allocation can be spent on revised spec for Bartley Heath path improvements. | See below |
| | 177/25 | Clerk/CllCG | Arrange vouchers for RAF personnel who will be deployed over Christmas. | Complete |
| | 178/25 | Deputy Clerk | Revise Community Award ToRs to include agreed organisations and add to website. | Complete |
| | | Deputy Clerk/Cllr Amc | Write to all groups to secure interest. | Complete |
| | | Deputy Clerk | Prepare media to attract nominations in New Year. | Complete |
| | 179/25 | Clerk/CllrsAM&PV | Set up payments on Unity Trust and authorise. | Complete |
| | 180/25 | Deputy Clerk | Change P&D mins 29.10.25 to final. | Complete |
| | 181/25 | Deputy Clerk | Submit comments on planning applications to Hart. | Complete |
| | 182/25 | CllrPV/Clerk | Make enquiries to clarify purpose of Deed of Variation on development on land west of Alton Road. | Complete |
| | | Clerk | Add Deed of Variation to next agenda for signature. | Complete |
| | 183/25 | Clerk | Respond to HCC re 30mph on Alton Rd decision notice asking for clarification on comments for justification of decision. | Complete |
| | 184/25 | Clerk/CllrsAM,SB,MT | Submit grant application to the Police & Crime Commissioner's road safety grant for traffic calming improvements around Robert Mays. | Complete |
| | | Clerk | Suggest to RAF Odiham they submit a grant application to the above for a courtesy crossing on Churchill Ave and support application. | Complete |
| | 187/25 | Clerk | Issue agreed Licence to OdSoc for Parish Room and arrange signatures. | Complete |
| | 188/25 | Clerk/AO | Circulate list of proposed permissions and restrictions for Chapel Cottage which will be available to prospective buyers. | Complete |
| Dec-25 | 191/25 | Clerk | Change previous minutes from draft and add to website. | Complete |
| | 197/25 | Clerk | Add co-option of councillor to RAF Station ward on next agenda. | Complete |
| | 198/25ii | Clerk | Add revised Financial Regs on website. | Complete |

| Full Council | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Date of meeting | Agenda ref no | Cllr to action | Details | Status |
| | 198/25iii | Clerk | Research passwords and refer Cyber Security Policy to next agenda. | On agenda |
| | 198/25iv | Clerk | Add revised H&S Policy on website. | Complete |
| | | Office | Research and attend training on Martyn's Law and report back to Council. | |
| | | Staffing Committee | Consider new and enhanced measures to respond to changes in H&S legislation - remote & hybrid working and mental health support. | |
| | 198/25v | Clerk | Add revised Safeguarding Policy on website. | Complete |
| | 199/25 | Clerk | Update Cllr Greensides's appointments on website. | Complete |
| | 200/25 | All | Report OPC's agreed priorities in next newsletter and at APA. | |
| | | Clerk | Update website. | After APA with Annual Action Plan |
| | 201/25 | All | Circulate Cllr CD's comments on LGR to all councillors and encourage councillors to respond individually. | Complete |
| | 202/25 | Clerk | Notify OCC that OPC has agreed their recommended trustee appointments. | Complete |
| | 203/25 | Deputy Clerk | Update website with 2026 APA date and book venue. | Complete |
| | 204/25 | Clerk/CllrCG&PV | Set up payments on Unity Trust and authorise. | Complete |
| | 205/25 | Finance Committee | Refer consideration of earmarked reserves to next Finance Committee. | Complete |
| | 206/25 | Clerk/CllrCG | Transfer funds to Cllr CG to cover cost of purchasing RAF vouchers and arrange purchasing and distribution. | Complete |
| | 207/25 | Deputy Clerk | Change P&D mins 09.12.25 to final. | Complete |
| | 208/25 | Clerk | Submit to Rushmoor Council OPC's objection to Farnborough Airport expansion application to increase flights. | Complete |
| | 209/25 | Deputy Clerk | Refer 1 x pre-application advice application and 1 x tree application to next P&D Committee agenda. | Complete |
| | 210/25 | Clerk | Respond to Hart/Basingstoke legal team to confirm OPC's agreement to Deed of Variation for land west of Alton Rd. | Complete |
| | | Clerk | Arrange signature of revised S106 Agreement for land west of Alton Rd, in accordance with Standing Orders. | |
| | 211/25 | Clerk | Prepare ACV nomination for The Bridewell. | |
| | 212/25 | Traffic Calming WG | Complete review of Traffic Calming survey responses. | Complete |
| | | Traffic Calming WG | Report back to Council with recommendations for improvements to local traffic calming. | Work in progress |
| | 213/25i | CllrSB/office | Progress project works to relay 70m of hardcore on pathway running through Bartley Heath. | |
| | | Clerk | Liaise with Hart to clarify spending permission on S106 funds. | |
| | 213/25ii | All | Forward details of outstanding path issues to Councillors, compile list of paths which councillors can help with and report back. | Complete |
| | 214/25 | Clerk | Update website to show agreed Finance Committee date. | Complete |
| | 217/25 | Clerk | Implement decisions on staff related matters. | Complete |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

REVIEW OF OPC POLICIES - 20.01.26

| 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 | Jan-25 | Essential | Jan-26 - annual review required. Note new model Standing Orders issued by NALC April 2025. On agenda. |
| Scheme of Delegation | Jan-25 | Desirable | Jan-27 - unless change in circumstances. |
| Business Continuity Plan | Feb-25 | Desirable | Feb-27 - unless change in circumstances. |
| Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy | Dec-24 | Advisable | Dec-26. |
| Dignity at Work Policy | Dec-24 | Advisable | Dec-26. |
| Councillor Officer Protocol | Dec-24 | Advisable | Dec-26. |
| Finance | | | |
| Financial Regulations | Dec-25 | Essential | Dec-26. |
| Statement of Internal Controls | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Claiming expenses by Cllrs Policy | Nov-24 | Optional | Jul-27 - new Council. |
| Report on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Hart Parish Councils | | | - |
| Investment Policy | Nov-25 | Essential | Nov-27. |
| Reserves Policy | Nov-25 | Optional | Nov-27. |
| Grant Giving Policy | May-25 | Essential | May-26. |
| Council Strategy | | | |
| Strategic Plan/Business Plan | Mar-25 | Desirable | Mar-26 - annual review required. Reviewed with Annual Action Plan and Annual Report. |
| Annual Action Plan | Mar-25 | Desirable | Mar-26 - annual review required. Reviewed with Business Plan and Annual Report. |
| Casual Vacancy and Co-option Policy | Sep-24 | Optional | May-27. |
| Complaints Procedure | Mar-25 | Essential | Mar '27 |
| 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. On agenda with proposal to change title to IT Policy due to new Audit assertion. |
| Health & Safety | | | |
| Health & Safety Policy | Dec-25 | Essential | Dec-26. |
| Safeguarding Policy | Dec-25 | Desirable | Dec-27. |
| 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 | Apr-25 | Optional | Apr-27. |
| Hiring OPC's land and equipment | Sep-24 | Optional | Sep-26. |
| Tree Policy | Jul-25 | Optional | Jul-27 |
| Communication | | | |
| Communication Strategy | Aug-25 | Desirable | Aug-27. |
| Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy | Apr-24 | Desirable | Apr 27. |
| Staffing | | | |
| Disciplinary and Grievance Arrangements | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Training and Development Policy | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Staff Handbook | Nov-25 | Optional | Nov-27. |
| Sickness absence policy | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Flexible working policy | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Emergency dependants leave policy | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Lone working policy | Nov-25 | Desirable | Nov-27. |
| Pensions Discretionary Policy | Nov-25 | Essential | Nov-27. |

[ENTER COUNCIL NAME] ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL
-INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Purpose of the IT Policy | 2 |
| Monitoring of IT use | 2 |
| Scope of this policy | 2 |
| Computer use | 32 |
| Equipment | 3 |
| Health and safety | 7 |
| Password and authentication policy | 7 |
| Monitoring | 98 |
| Remote working | 10 |
| Email | 1140 |
| Use of the internet | 11 |
| Use of social media | 12 |

Introduction

Each local council ~~will have~~ has its own IT setup and, as such, a single 'one-size-fits-all' IT policy is unlikely to be appropriate. Some smaller parish councils may operate with minimal equipment, while others may manage multiple devices connected to a central server. ~~These guidelines are intended to help councils identify key considerations when developing or updating their own IT policy.~~ Odiham Parish Council has used the NALC model template to produce this IT Policy which assumes:

- i) All staff are issued with IT equipment (excluding phones) and email account.
- ii) All councillors are issued with an email account.
- iii) Councillors use personal IT devices when carrying out Council work.
- iv) OPC has external IT support from BV Computers Ltd which all staff and councillors have access to relating to Council equipment and activities.

~~Councils that use external IT providers should ensure their policies accurately reflect current practices and contractual arrangements.~~

Purpose of the IT Policy

The purpose of an IT policy is to establish clear parameters for how councillors, staff, and other authorised users use council-provided technology or equipment in the course of their duties. A well-defined policy helps to:

- Set expectations for appropriate use of equipment and systems;
- Raise awareness of risks associated with IT use;
- Safeguard the council's data and digital assets;
- Clarify what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable use;
- Outline the consequences of policy breaches.

Councils will also need to determine and clearly state whether limited personal use of IT equipment is permitted (for example, checking personal email or online shopping during lunch breaks).

Monitoring of IT Use

As an IT provider, the council has the right to monitor the use of its IT equipment and systems, provided there is a legitimate reason for doing so and councillors, employees and other authorised users are informed that such monitoring may take place. Any monitoring must be proportionate and comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws. Other persons may be included if they access or use council systems e.g. if they have a council e-mail address

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, and other authorised users, regardless of their working location or pattern, including those who are home-based, office-based, or work on a flexible or part-time basis. It sets out the expectations for the appropriate use of Council owned IT equipment and systems provided by the council.

Computer use

1.1 Hardware

~~1.1.1 [Either] council computer equipment is provided for council purposes only. [or]~~
Council computer equipment is provided for council purposes, however reasonable personal use is permitted (reasonable interpreted as in the opinion of line managers ~~[specify whom, e.g. "the council, the clerk"]~~). Any personal use of our computers and systems should not interrupt our daily council work in any way. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are asked to restrict any personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.

1.1.2 Locking computers when leaving desk, all councillors, staff, and other authorised users must lock their computers when leaving their desks to prevent unauthorised access. This applies to all council and personal devices used for work. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

1.1.3 All computer and other electronic equipment supplied should be treated with good care at all times. Computer equipment is expensive, and any damage sustained to any equipment will have a financial impact on the council.

1.1.4 Computer and electronic hardware should be kept clean, and every precaution taken to prevent food and drink being dropped or spilled onto it.

1.1.5 All computer and mobile equipment will carry a number which is logged against the current owner of that equipment. A database of equipment issued will be kept.

1.1.6 Equipment should not be dismantled or reassembled without seeking advice.

1.1.7 Councillors, staff, and other authorised are not to purchase any computer or mobile equipment (including software). Unless previously authorised.

~~4.1.8~~ Personal disks, USB stick, CDs, DVDs, data storage devices etc cannot be used on council computers without the prior approval of a line manager ~~[specify whom, e.g. the council]~~.

~~1.1.8~~

~~1.1.9 [Delete if not appropriate] The council has a number of wireless networks. Using a portable device to make personal Wi-Fi hot spots which bypass existing WiFi is not allowed. Staff and councillors would only access public access WiFi.~~

1.1.10 ~~[Optional]~~ Any faults or necessary repairs must be reported to BV Computers Ltd. ~~[specify whom, e.g. "the clerk/IT provider"]~~.

Equipment

2.1 Portable equipment

2.1.1 Portable equipment includes laptop computers, netbooks, tablets, mobile and smart phones with email capability and access to the internet etc.

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2.1.2 It is particularly emphasised that council back-up procedures specific to portable equipment should be followed at all times.

2.1.3 All portable computers must be stored safely and securely when not in use in the office, i.e. when travelling or when working from home. Portable equipment (unless locked in a secure cabinet or office) should be kept with or near the user at all times; should not be left unattended when away from council premises and should never be left in parked vehicles or at any council or non-council premises.

2.1.4 It is important to ensure all portable devices are protected with encryption in case they are lost or stolen. All smartphones or tablets that hold council data, including emails and files, must be protected with a pin code. Where possible, these devices should also be programmed to erase all content after several unsuccessful attempts to break in. Any security set on these devices must not be disabled or removed.

2.1.5 ~~Optional~~ Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is a security process that requires users to verify their identity using two or more independent methods—for example, entering a password (something you know) and confirming a code sent to your mobile device (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and sensitive data. NALC recommends implementing MFA as a best practice to enhance information security and support compliance with data protection obligations under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. OPC resolves that MFA should be enabled wherever possible.

2.1.6 If an item of portable equipment is lost or damaged this should be reported to a line manager and BV Computers Ltd ~~[specify whom, e.g. "the clerk/IT provider"]~~. If the loss or damage is due to an act of negligence, the individual responsible may be liable to meet the first ££ ~~[specify amount]~~ of the loss/damage.

2.1.7 ~~To protect confidential information, unless it is a requirement of the job and this has been authorised, it is forbidden for photographs or videos to be taken on council premises, without the prior written permission of [specify whom, e.g. "the council"]. This includes mobile telephones with camera function, camcorder, tape or other recording device for sound or pictures—moving or still.—??~~

2.1.8 Under no circumstances should any non public meeting or conversation be recorded without the permission of those present. This does not affect statutory rights (under The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014).

2.1.9 In addition, the council does not permit webcams (which may be pre-installed on many laptops) to be used in the workplace, other than for conference calls for council purposes. If there is any doubt as to whether a device falls under this clause, advice should be sought from the Council ~~[specify whom, e.g. "the clerk"]~~.

2.2 Use of own devices

~~[Choose either "no use permitted" below and delete the whole of the rest of this section, or "some use permitted" and tailor to suit.]~~

2.2.1 Personal laptops and other computers or other devices should not be brought into work and used to access council IT systems during working hours, unless this has been authorised by the employee's line manager. This is to ensure that no viruses enter the system, to prevent time being wasted during working hours on personal use and to assist in maintaining security, confidentiality, and data protection.

~~for — if some use is permitted — delete the above, and tailor the remainder of this section, including the options regarding data storage below.]~~

2.2.2 The Council recognises that ~~some~~ councillors, staff, and other authorised users may wish to use their own smartphones, tablets, laptops etc to access our servers, private clouds or networks ~~for normal council purposes, including, but not limited to, reading their emails, accessing documents stored on the council's [insert location e.g. network] or to store data on the council's server(s) or access data in other services.~~ Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the council, but consent for standard systems (MS Windows, Mac OS X, Linux - in commercial configurations) will normally be permitted. Such devices should be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating system or other software on the device are appropriately patched or updated.

2.2.3 However, the same security precautions apply to personal devices as to the council's desktop equipment. For continuity purposes, calls made to external parties ~~(such as [specify, e.g. "external stakeholders"]) must be made on council landlines or mobile phone numbers to ensure that only these numbers are used and/or stored by the recipient, rather than personal numbers.~~ Any emails sent from own devices should be sent from a council email account and should not identify the individual's personal email address.

2.2.4 Councillors, staff, and other authorised persons that use council systems are expected to use all devices in an ethical and respectful manner and in accordance with this policy. Accessing inappropriate websites or services on any device via the IT infrastructure that is paid for or provided by the council carries a high degree of risk, and, for employees, may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal (without notice). For Workers or Contractors, we may terminate the worker agreement. This is irrespective of the ownership of the device used. An example would be downloading copyright music illegally or accessing pornographic material.

2.2.5 In cases of legal proceedings against the council or ~~[specify, e.g. "external stakeholders"]~~, the council may need to temporarily take possession of a device, whether council-owned or personal to retrieve the relevant data. ~~???~~

2.2.6 Wherever possible the user should maintain a clear separation between the personal data processed on the council's behalf and that processed for their own personal use, for example, by using different apps for council and personal use. If the device supports both work and personal profiles, the work profile must always be used for work-related purposes.

2.2.7 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who intend to use their own devices via the council's infrastructure must ensure that they:

- use a [specify, e.g. "6-digit pin, strong password (i.e. one which uses three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver) or finger print (preferably the latter)"] to protect their device(s) from being accessed. For smartphones and tablets this should lock the device after [specify number] of failed login attempts;
- configure their device(s) to automatically prompt for a password after a period of inactivity of more than [specify duration];
- always password protect any documents containing confidential information that are sent as attachments to an email, and notify the password separately (preferably by a means other than email);
- for smartphones and tablets, activate the automatic device wipe function (where available). Note that use of the remote wipe function may also involve the removal of the individual's personal data. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are therefore advised to keep personal data separate from council data where possible;
- ensure secure WiFi networks are used;
- ensure that work-related data cannot be viewed or retrieved by family or friends who may use the device;
- inform [specify whom, e.g. "the council or the clerk"] if their device(s) is/are lost, stolen, or inappropriately accessed where there is risk of access to council data or resources. To prevent phones being used, they will need to retain the details of their IMEI number and the SIM number of the device as their provider will require this to deactivate it.

[Tailor either this section or the alternative section below, as appropriate.]

2.2.8 Personal data relating to [specify, e.g. "councillors, staff, and other authorised users, associates, residents, external stakeholders"] should not be saved to any personal accounts with third party storage cloud service providers (e.g. [specify name of service provider]) as this may breach data protection legislation or create a security risk if the device is lost or stolen. This applies especially if the passwords used to store/access data are saved onto the device, or if the service permits councillors, staff, and other authorised users to remain logged in between sessions.

2.2.92.2.7 Personal information and sensitive data should never be saved on councillors, staff, or other authorised users own devices as this may breach confidentiality agreements, especially if the device is used by other people from time to time. The following data must never be accessed or processed on a personal device: [specify device].

2.2.102.2.8 If removable media are used to transfer data (e.g. USB drives or CDs), the user must also securely delete the data on the media once the transfer is complete.

2.2.142.2.9 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who open any attachments should ensure that any cached copies are deleted immediately after use. [BV Computers Ltd](#) [Specify job title or department] will provide assistance or training in doing this if needed. Additional risks include data belonging to the council being accessed by unauthorised persons if the device(s) is lost, stolen, or used without the owner's permission.

~~2.2.12~~ ~~for – if work is allowed to be saved onto personal equipment:-> <Optional – tailor to suit!> Any work done on user's own equipment should be stored securely and password protected and should always be backed up in accordance with the council's standard backup procedures.~~

~~2.2.13~~ ~~2.2.10~~ [Optional] If transferring data, either by email or by other means, this should be done through an encrypted channel, such as a virtual private network (VPN) or a secure web protocol (https://). Unsecured wireless networks should not be used.

~~2.2.14~~ ~~2.2.11~~ Prior to the disposal of any council owned device that has work data stored on it, and in the event of a user leaving the council, councillors, staff, and other authorised users are required to allow BV Computers Ltd. [specify whom, e.g. "the IT provider"] access to the device to ensure that all passwords, user access shortcuts and any identifiable data are removed from the device.

~~2.2.15~~ ~~2.2.12~~ Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must take responsibility for understanding how their device(s) work in respect to the above rules if they are accessing council servers/services via their own IT equipment. Risks to the user's personal device(s) include data loss as a result of a crash of the operating system, bugs and viruses, software or hardware failures and programming errors rendering a device inoperable. The council will use reasonable endeavours to assist, but councillors, staff, and other authorised users are personally liable for their own device(s) and for any costs incurred as a result of the above.

Health and safety

~~3.1.1~~ ~~Councillors,~~ ~~s~~Staff, and other authorised users who work in council offices will be provided with an appropriate workstation.

~~3.1.2~~ The council has a duty to ensure that regular appropriate eye tests, carried out by a competent person, are offered to employees using display screen equipment. ~~Further details are set out in the council's [specify, e.g. "display screen equipment policy" or "health and safety policy"]~~. ~~(covered by H&S legislation).~~

~~3.1.3~~ Any VDU user who feels that their workstation requires changes to make it compliant must speak to their line manager. ~~[specify, e.g. "the clerk"]~~.

If any hazards are detected at a workstation, including 'noises' from the IT equipment, this should be reported immediately to their line manager. ~~[specify job title e.g. "councillor/ clerk" or "the IT provider"]~~.

Password and Authentication Policy

~~4.1.1~~ All user accounts must be protected by strong, secure passwords. ~~The council follows the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) recommendations for creating passwords using three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver). This method helps create passwords that are both strong and easy to remember, while offering effective protection against common cyber threats such as brute force attacks. This approach is endorsed in NALC guidance.~~

In addition to strong passwords, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) should be enabled wherever possible. ~~MFA requires users to provide two or more independent forms of verification—for example, a password (something you know) and a code sent to your phone (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and personal data.~~

To further strengthen account security:

- Initial user account passwords must be generated by the IT provider.
- Default passwords provided by vendors or the IT provider must be changed immediately upon installation or setup.
- Service or System (e.g. Website) account passwords are generated and managed by the IT provider.
- The council recommends these practices as part of its commitment to robust information security and to support compliance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

For more guidance, see the NCSC's advice on password security: [NCSC Password Guidance](#)

4.1.2 Access to Passwords

- Passwords are personal and must not be shared under any circumstances.
- Only the assigned user of an account may access or use the associated password.
- In exceptional cases (e.g., incident response or employee offboarding), access to system credentials may be granted to authorised personnel from the IT provider with appropriate approvals and logging.
- Administrative credentials must be stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel with a copy provided to ~~BV Computers Ltd~~ ~~the [specify e.g. chair of council], in a sealed envelope~~, only to be accessed in an emergency.

4.1.3 Password Storage and Management

- Passwords must not be stored in plain text or written down in insecure locations.
- Passwords must be stored using ~~on the Council's secured drive~~ ~~a council-approved, encrypted password manager (e.g., LastPass, Bitwarden, or KeePass).~~

4.1.4 Password Change Requirements

- Immediately change password if compromise is suspected.

4.1.5 Password Access Control and Logging

- All access to administrative or shared credentials must be logged and auditable.
- Attempts to access unauthorized passwords will be treated as a security incident.

4.1.6 Responsibility

- Users are responsible for creating and maintaining secure passwords for their accounts.

The IT security provider is responsible for:

- Managing system/service credentials.
- Enforcing password policies. Auditing and monitoring password-related security practices.

Monitoring

5.1.1 The council reserves the right to monitor and maintain logs of computer usage and inspect any files stored on its network, servers, computers, or associated technology to ensure compliance with this policy as well as relevant legislation. Internet, email, and computer usage is continually monitored as part of the council's protection against computer viruses, ongoing maintenance of the system, and when investigating faults.

5.1.5 The council will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Councils etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018.

5.1.6 Monitoring of an employee's email and/or internet use will be conducted in accordance with an impact assessment that the council has carried out to ensure that monitoring is necessary and proportionate. Monitoring is in the council's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy is being complied with.

5.1.7 The information obtained through monitoring may be shared internally, including with relevant councillors and IT staff if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. The information may also be shared with external HR or legal advisers for the purposes of seeking professional advice. Any external advisers will have appropriate data protection policies and protocols in place.

5.1.8 The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted.

5.1.9 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in the council's data protection policy.

5.1.10 Such monitoring and the retrieval of the content of any messages may be for the purposes of checking whether the use of the system is legitimate, to find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost due to computer failure, to assist in the investigation of wrongful acts, or to comply with any legal obligation.

5.1.11 ~~The council has software and systems in place that can~~ **[optional: "prevent inappropriate internet use and"]** monitor and record all internet usage. A daily log is kept of all activity, which details the names of all websites accessed, along with the date and time of access, by individual councillors, staff, and other authorised users. Records of internet use and sites visited will normally be retained for a period of **[specify duration, e.g. "six months"]** ~~.-?~~

5.1.12 The council reserves the right to inspect all files stored on its computer systems in order to assure compliance with this policy. The council also reserves the right to monitor the types of sites being accessed and the extent and frequency of use of the internet at any time, both inside and outside of working hours to ensure that the system is not being abused and to protect the council from potential damage or disrepute.

5.1.13 Any use that the council considers to be 'improper', either in terms of the content or the amount of time spent on this, may result in disciplinary proceedings.

5.1.14 All computers will be periodically checked and scanned for unauthorised programmes and viruses.

Remote working

6.1.1 Increased IT security measures apply to those who work away from their normal place of work (e.g. whilst travelling, ~~or working from home~~ ~~or at a [specify, e.g. "external stakeholders"] premises or any other different venue~~), as follows:

- if logging into the council's systems or services remotely, using computers that either do not belong to the council or are not owned by the user, any passwords must not be saved, and the user must log out at the end of the session deleting all logs and history records within the browser used. If the configuration of the device does not clearly support these actions (for example at an internet café), council services should not be accessed from that device;
- the location and direction of the screen should be checked to ensure confidential information is out of view. Steps should be taken to avoid messages being read by other people, including other travellers on public transport etc;
- any data printed should be collected and stored securely;
- all electronic files should be password protected and the data saved to the council's system/services when accessible;
- papers, files or computer equipment must not be left unattended at any property other than work or home ~~[specify, e.g. "non council"] premises unless arrangements have been made with a responsible person at a [specify, e.g. "non council"] premises for them to be kept in a locked room or cabinet if they are to be left unattended at any time~~;
- any data should be kept safely and should only be disposed of securely;
- papers, files, data sticks/storage, flash drive or backup hard drives should not be left unattended in cars, except where it is entirely unavoidable for short periods, in which case they must be locked in the boot of the car. If staying away overnight, council data should be taken into the accommodation, care being taken that it will not be interfered with by others or inadvertently destroyed;
- where possible the ability to remotely wipe any mobile devices that process sensitive information should be retained in the case of loss or theft;
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work away from the office with sensitive data should be equipped with a screen privacy filter for mobile devices and should use this at all times when accessing such data away from the office.

~~6.1.2~~ Those issued with a 'dongle' to enable internet access from a laptop via 3G or 4G networks whilst away from their normal workplace should note that the cost of internet access can be very high. Dongles should therefore be used for essential council purposes only, especially if abroad.

~~6.1.36.1.2~~ Similarly, use of paid for Wi-Fi access, for example at airports should be carefully monitored and restricted to essential council use.

Email

7.1.1 Council email facilities are intended to promote effective and speedy communication on work-related matters. Although we encourage the use of email, it can be risky. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users need to be careful not to introduce viruses onto council systems and should take proper account of the security advice below.

7.1.2 On occasion, it will be quicker to action an issue by telephone or face to face, rather than via protracted email chains. Emails should not be used as a substitute for face to face or telephone conversations. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are expected to decide which is the optimum channel of communication to complete their tasks quickly and effectively.

~~7.1.3~~ These rules are designed to minimise the legal risks run when using email at work and to guide councillors, staff, and other authorised users as to what may and may not be done. If there is something which is not covered in the policy, councillors, staff, and other authorised users should ask their line manager and/or Clerk who will seek the answer via the appropriate source. [specify, e.g. "IT provider"], rather than assuming they know the right answer.

~~7.1.3~~

7.1.4 All councillors, staff, and other authorised users who need to use email as part of their role will normally be given their own council email address and account. The council may, at any time, withdraw email access, should it feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.

~~7.1.5~~ [Either] Email messages sent on the council's account are for council use only. Personal use is not permitted.

~~[or] Email messages sent on the council's account should be for council use only. Personal communications are permitted provided they do not encroach upon working time or interrupt council business in any way. Employees and other authorised users are asked to restrict their personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours, and to use their personal email accounts, rather than council addresses.~~

Use of the Internet

8.1 Copyright

8.1.1 Much of what appears on the Internet is protected by copyright. Any copying without permission, including electronic copying, is illegal and therefore prohibited. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 set out the rules. The copyright laws not only apply to

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documents but also to software. The infringement of the copyright of another person or organisation could lead to legal action being taken against the council and damages being awarded, as well as disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against the perpetrator.

8.1.2 It is easy to copy electronically, but this does not make it any less an offence. The council's policy is to comply with copyright laws, and not to bend the rules in any way.

8.1.3 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should not assume that because a document or file is on the Internet, it can be freely copied. There is a difference between information in the 'public domain' (which is no longer confidential or secret information but is still copyright protected) and information which is not protected by copyright (such as where the author has been dead for more than 70 years).

8.1.4 Usually, a website will contain copyright conditions; these warnings should be read before downloading or copying.

8.1.5 Copyright and database right law can be complicated. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should check with their line manager and/or Clerk who will seek the answer via the appropriate source. [specify, e.g. "the clerk"] if unsure about anything.

8.2 Trademarks, links and data protection

8.2.1 The council does not permit the registration of any new domain names or trademarks relating to the council's names or products anywhere in the world, unless authorised to do so. Nor should they add links from any of the council's web pages to any other external sites without checking first with the Clerk. [specify, e.g. "the council/ the clerk"].

8.2.2 Special rules apply to the processing of personal and sensitive personal data. For further guidance on this, see the council's data protection policy, a copy of which is [specify location, e.g. "included in the Employee Handbook" and available online at <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-business/council/policies-and-publications>].

8.3 Accuracy of information

8.3.1 One of the main benefits of the internet is the access it gives to large amounts of information, which is often more up to date than traditional sources such as libraries. Be aware that, as the internet is uncontrolled, much of the information may be less accurate than it appears.

Use of social media

9.1.1 Social media includes blogs; Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted; multimedia or user generated media sites (YouTube); social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, etc.); virtual worlds (Second Life); text messaging and mobile device communications and more traditional forms of media such as TV and newspapers. Care should be taken when using social media at any time, either using council systems or at home.

9.1.2 Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites ~~[choose either]~~ are not permitted during working hours, ~~unless relevant to Council work. [or] should be restricted to breaks during working hours, or after hours with permission.~~

9.1.3 The council recognises the importance of councillors, staff, and other authorised users joining in and helping to shape sector conversation and enhancing its image through blogging and interaction in social media. Therefore, where it is relevant to use social networking sites as part of the individual's position, this is acceptable.

However, inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of the council, even if it is not directly referenced. If comments or photographs could reasonably be interpreted as being associated with the council, or if remarks about ~~external stakeholders~~ could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, sexual harassment, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, the council will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should be aware that parishioners or other local organisations may read councillors, staff, and other authorised users' personal weblogs, to acquire information, for example, about their work, internal council business, and employee morale. Therefore, even if the council is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed.

9.1.4 To protect both the council and its interests, everyone is required to comply with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to their council role or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours:

~~[Tailor the following list to suit]~~

- Contacts from any of the council's databases should not be downloaded and connected with on LinkedIn or other social networking sites with electronic address book facilities, unless this has been authorised.
- ~~• Any blog that mentions the council, its current work, councillors, employees, other users associated with the council, partner organisations, local groups, suppliers, parishioners, should identify the author as one of its councillors or employees and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of [specify, e.g. "the council"]. Even if the council is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (e.g. via a disclaimer statement such as: "The comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions of my employer/ the council.") Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the council.~~
- ~~• Any employee who is developing a site or writing a blog that will mention the council, [specify e.g. "our current or potential plans, councillors, staff, and other authorised users, partners"], must inform [specify whom, e.g. "the clerk/ the council"] that they are writing this and gain agreement before going 'live'.~~
- The council expects councillors, staff, and other authorised users to be respectful ~~about the council and its current or potential~~ ~~[specify e.g. "all staff, including employees, councillors, clerks, and authorised users"]~~ and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on its reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or

any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.

- Photos or videos that include employees or other workers wearing uniforms or clothing displaying the council's name or logo should not be posted on social media if they could reflect negatively on the individual, their role, their colleagues, or the council. Additionally, photos, videos, or audio recordings must not be taken on council premises without explicit permission
- Comments posted by councillors, staff, and other authorised users on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise the council in any way.
- Inappropriate conversations with [specify whom e.g. "external stakeholders"] should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.
- Any writing about or displaying photos or videos of internal activities that involves current councillors, staff, and other authorised persons, might be considered a breach of data protection and a breach of privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, their permission should be gained prior to uploading any such material. Details of any kind relating to any events, conversations, materials or documents that are meant to be private, confidential or internal to the council should not be posted. This may include manuals; procedures; training documents; non-public financial or operational information; personal information regarding other councillors, staff, and other authorised users anything to do with a disciplinary case, grievance, allegation of bullying/harassment or discrimination, or legal issue; any other secret, confidential, or proprietary information or information that is subject to confidentiality agreements. This does not affect statutory requirements to publish information including under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on an online forum or blog, post, feed or website). Councillors should always be mindful of the Members Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by other organisations, and any individual or council that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other councillors, staff, and other authorised users can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.
- Postings to websites or anywhere on the internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, should not breach copyright or other law or disclose confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about the council ~~or its~~ [specify e.g. "councillors, staff, and other authorised users"], or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach data protection legislation.
- Contacts by the media relating to the council, should be referred to the Clerk and/or Chair [specify whom e.g. "the clerk"].
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving the council.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use X.com, LinkedIn, or other social media/networking sites for council development purposes must ensure they

provide the council with login details, including password(s), so that these sites can be accessed and updated in their absence.

- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who have left the council must not post any inappropriate comments about the council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users on LinkedIn, Facebook, X.com or any other social media/networking sites.
- During your employment/ involvement with the council, you may create or obtain access to a variety of professional contacts and confidential information. This includes, but is not limited to, contacts made through professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn, where those contacts have been established or maintained in your capacity as a councillor, member of staff, or other authorised user. All such contacts will be considered council property and may be subject to disclosure upon request.

9.1.5 Note that the council may, from time to time, monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with the council. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air council concerns or complaints: these should be raised with the council or formally through the grievance procedure.

9.1.6 It is important to note that ~~[specify e.g. "external stakeholders"]~~ contact details and information remain the property of the council. In addition, councillors, staff, and other authorised users leaving the council will be required to delete all council-related data including ~~[specify e.g. "external stakeholders"]~~ contact details from any personal device/equipment.

Misuse

Misuse of IT systems and equipment is not in line with the council's standards of conduct and will be taken seriously. Any inappropriate or unauthorised use may lead to formal action, including disciplinary proceedings or, in serious cases, dismissal.

Guidance

~~Where there is text in [square brackets] this part may be updated or be deleted if not relevant. An alternative option may have been provided.~~

Important notice

~~This is an example of a policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.~~

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This document has been written by Worknest HR — a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish Councils. Please contact them on 01403 240 205 for information about their services.



STANDING ORDERS

January 2026

Based on



**MODEL STANDING
ORDERS 2025 UPDATE
(ENGLAND)**

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

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| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 4 |
| 1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS..... | 6 |
| 2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS..... | 8 |
| 3. MEETINGS GENERALLY..... | 8 |
| 4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES | 11 |
| 5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS..... | 12 |
| 6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES | 14 |
| 7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS | 14 |
| 8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS | 15 |
| 9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER | 15 |
| 10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE | 16 |
| 11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION..... | 16 |
| 12. DRAFT MINUTES | 17 |
| 13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS..... | 18 |
| 14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS | 19 |
| 15. PROPER OFFICER..... | 20 |
| 16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER..... | 21 |
| 17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS..... | 21 |
| 18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT | 22 |
| 19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS | 24 |
| 20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION | 25 |
| 21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION | 25 |
| 22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA..... | 26 |
| 23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS | 26 |
| 24. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS | 26 |
| 25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES..... | 27 |
| 26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY | 27 |

INTRODUCTION

~~This is an update to Model Standing Orders 14 and 18.~~

HOW TO USE MODEL STANDING ORDERS

~~Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.~~

~~Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.~~

~~The model standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of NALC.~~

DRAFTING NOTES

~~Model standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. Model standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. It is NALC's view that all model standing orders will generally be suitable for councils.~~

~~For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights. Model standing orders use gender neutral language (e.g. "Chair").~~

~~A model standing order that includes brackets like this '(—)' requires information to be inserted by a council. A model standing order that includes brackets like this '[]' and the term 'OR' provides alternative options for a council to choose from when determining standing orders.~~

1. **RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS**

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chair of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chair of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chair of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chair of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

- o Unless permitted by the chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed (3)~~(—)~~ minutes without the consent of the chair of the meeting.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Full Council meetings | ● |
| Committee meetings | ● |
| Sub-committee meetings | ● |

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice ~~OR [The minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting].~~**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed (10) minutes unless directed by the chair of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than (3) minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i ~~[A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]~~ OR [A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chair of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**

- q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**

- r **The chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of the meeting;
- ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.

- u **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.**

- v **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present (**4 councillors for full Council and three for committees**) and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

- w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted**
 - and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting
 - shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of (2) hours.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer (3) days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair of the standing committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;

- ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair ~~(if there is one)~~ of the Council.**
- f **The Chair of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chair of the Council, ~~if there is one~~, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and**

shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- j Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (~~if there is one~~) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date; (in model SO's & covers OPC's rolling review of policies).**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
 - vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
 - ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
 - xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
 - xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
 - xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
 - xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of

its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);

- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

6. **EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chair of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chair of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within (5) days of having been requested to do so by (2) members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any (2) members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

7. **PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least (2) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. **VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chair of the meeting.

9. **MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least (5) clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least (5) clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. **MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

- i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
- ii. to move to a vote;
- iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

11. **MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

See also standing order 20.

a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements**

shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.

- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council’s retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council’s contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. **DRAFT MINUTES**

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●
- Sub-committee meetings ●

- a **Draft minutes of a meeting will normally be circulated to councillors within 5 working days of the meetin.** If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but this view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

- e **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is**
 - **higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a**
 - **website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than**
 - one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

See also standing order 3(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made [by the Proper Officer] OR [by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required] and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
- i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered ~~[by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required]~~ OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. **CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**

- a **Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. **PROPER OFFICER**

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:

- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
- **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least (5) days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer ~~(if there is one)~~;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;

- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(*see also standing order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to ~~o all members of the Planning & Development Committee within 2 working days of receipt; [Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair (if there is one) of the Council] OR [Chair or in their absence Vice Chair (if there is one) of the (—) Committee] within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of [the Council] OR [(—) committee];~~
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(*see also standing order 23*).

16. **RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. **ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial

regulations.

- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. **FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT**

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;

- iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below [60,000] or due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19. **HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of [~~Council~~] OR [the () Staffing Committee] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] is subject to standing order 11.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chair of [the () Staffing Committee] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] or, if they are not available, the vice-chair (~~if there is one~~) of [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] Staffing Committee at its next meeting.
- c The chair and vice chair of the Staffing Committee [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] or in their absence, the vice chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Parish Clerk and the Parish Clerk for other members of staff [~~the member of staff's job title~~]. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Staffing Committee [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~].
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chair of the Staffing Committee [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] or in their absence, the vice-chair of the Staffing Committee [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~] in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Staffing Committee or full Council where the matter refers to full Council, an Appeal is requested or action affecting full Council is required. [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~].
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by a member of staff [~~the member of staff's job title~~] relates to the chair or vice-chair of the Staffing Committee or line manager [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~], this shall be communicated to another member of [the Staffing Committee () committee] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~], which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Staffing Committee (if quorate) or full Council (if the Staffing Committee is inquorate or the matter affects full Council). [~~the () committee~~] OR [~~the () sub-committee~~].
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

See also standing order 21.

- a In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.

- ~~b. *[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000]* The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the **Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**~~

OR

[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000] The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the **Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

21. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

- a The ~~Proper Officer acts as the Council's~~~~Council may appoint a~~ Data Protection Officer.
- b The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.
- c The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.
- d The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.
- e The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.
- f The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.

22. **RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. **EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **[Subject to standing order 23(a), the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.]**

The above is applicable to a Council with a common seal.

OR

[Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.]

The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.

24. **COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the District and County Council ~~OR Unitary Council~~ representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council ~~OR Unitary Council~~ shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

25. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. **STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least (3? new) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|---------|--|--------|---|---|
| Finance | Effective and secure Banking | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Regulations. • Internal Controls. • Reserves Policy. • Investment Policy. • Finance Committee. • Scheme of Delegation. • Online banking with 2 administrators. • Dual signatories for banking transactions. • Online banking with 2 Councillors appointed to complete the payment process. • Insurance cover for loss of money “in transit”, in the private residence of employee, in OPC’s premises.No cash handling policy. • Internal Audit. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFO monthly reconciliation of banks which are counter signed by the Finance Chair on a quarterly basis. • Quarterly review of all banks and <u>investments-balances</u> by Finance Committee. • A monthly payment listing is presented to full Council with 2 Councillors appointed to approve. • Annual review of Financial Regulations or following NALC updates or changes in legislation. • Regular review of Internal Controls, Investment Strategy and Reserves Policy. • Bank signatories minuted by full Council annually. • The Clerk has authority to move funds between OPC’s accounts to ensure adequate cash flow. |
| | Effective and secure Investments | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment Strategy. • Finance Committee. • Internal Audit. • Scheme of Delegation. • Multiple bank accounts. • <u>Finance Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS)</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly review of investments by Finance Committee. • All investments made in accordance with Investment Strategy deposited across multiple accounts to minimise risk. • All accounts reconciled and reviewed by RFO on a monthly basis. • Keep each investment fund/account below the FSCS limit where possible. • Follow Internal Auditor’s advice. • The Clerk has authority to move funds between OPC’s accounts to ensure adequate cash flow. |
| | Loss of income or need to provide essential services upon critical damage, loss or non-performance of third party. | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme of Delegation. • Reserves Policy. • All contractors involved with contracts in excess of £500 to provide proof of public liability cover. • Annual lease <u>agreements for Chapel Cottage.</u> • Waiting list held for allotments. • 3 year business plan for Bridewell. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General reserves held equating to 3-6 months running costs – with quarterly reviews. • Insurance policy reviewed annually. • Staff to source evidence of insurance and risk assessments for all contracts in excess of £500. • Regular reviews of services and contracts by staff and committees. • Council focus on generating income for The Bridewell. |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|------|--|--------|--|---|
| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sufficient budgets for <u>cemetery-land and buildings'</u> maintenance. • <u>Clerk/RFO</u>, working group, Finance Committee and Amenities Committee to keep Bridewell income under regular review. • <u>Regular review of I&E against asset portfolio.</u> |
| | <u>Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty</u> | Medium | • No cash handling policy. | |
| | Failure to comply with HMRC regulations | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAT returns submitted through Tax Digital. • Scribe • HMRC PAYE payroll system. • HMRC helpline for advice. • Internal Audit. • External Audit. • RFO Staff training where required. • Professional advice line through SLCC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use HMRC helpline when necessary or ask accountant for advice. • Registered for Tax Digital and submit quarterly VAT returns through the finance package. • Payroll is calculated and submitted on HMRC Payroll. • VAT returns are reconciled with all bank accounts and reported to Finance Committee quarterly and full Council annually. • Seek professional advice for new projects and services. |
| | Failure to keep track of spending | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scribe. • RFO. • Finance Committee. • Financial Regulations for procurement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoices entered into Scribe and reconciled with bank statements monthly. • Monthly budget position reports reviewed by RFO. • Quarterly budget position reports reviewed by Finance Committee. • Half year position reviewed by Finance Committee and end of year position forecasted. • Staffing Committee to regularly review staffing budgets. • Finance Chair, Internal Auditor and Deputy Clerk have viewing rights to Scribe. |
| | Adequate budgeting and annual precept to cover the Council's | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Workshop for all Councillors and Staff. • Business Plan. • Annual Action Plan. • Asset Register. • Finance Committee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full review of half year position by Finance Committee <u>or Council.</u> • Draft budgets to be prepared in accordance with the financial regulations and reviewed at budget workshop and Finance Committee prior to the full Council meeting in January. • Budget and proposed precept to be approved together at the |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|-----------------|--|--------|---|---|
| | operations | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit. • Service contracts, <u>generally 3 years</u>. • Independent play area inspections. • Training | <p>January Council meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly reviews of expenditure against budgets. • <u>Regular inspection of assets and liaison with contractors.</u> • <u>Regular oversight by the Amenities Areas Committee.</u> • Annual review of OPC's subscriptions and contracts. • 2 reviews of Strategic Plan per year including a review prior to the budget setting process. • Ensure method of keeping up-to-date with changes in sector legislation and costs in services. • Annual review of OPC's charging policy. • Earmarked Reserves listing recorded on Scribe. • Training and CPD for staff and Councillors to understand required expenditure arising from changes in legislation and OPC's liabilities. |
| | Compliance with borrowing restrictions | Low | No borrowing at present. | |
| Security | <u>Land and Buildings</u> | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Amenities Officer</u> • Buildings insurance. • Asset register. • Buildings security considered as a high priority. • <u>ILOQ system for The Bridewell.</u> • Manage number of key holders. • Risk assessments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Routine inspections and recording by the Amenities Officer (key sites weekly)</u> • Annual review of insurance. • Annual review of asset register. • Minimise key holders (check limits with insurer – 20 maximum, Police approved key safe acceptable). • <u>Record when keys are borrowed & returned. <u>Keys issued from Parish Office.</u></u> • Open premises for contractors wherever possible rather than giving the key directly. • Clerk to notify insurer of every asset addition and deletion at time of acquisition or disposal. • <u>Professional fire risk assessment for Bridewell.</u> • <u>Regular updates from Police and other local councils</u> • Council to consider self insurance for properties.?? |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|---------------|--|--------|--|---|
| | Theft | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Amenities Officer.</u> • Contents insurance cover for Office. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Routine inspections and recording by the Amenities Officer (key sites weekly)</u> • Annual review of insurance. • Annual review of risk assessment. • Secure premises as a high priority, eg repair broken <u>or missing fencing or</u> locks immediately. • Internal offices and cabinets locked. • Minimal equipment stored in Parish office. • No cash stored in office. |
| Assets | Protection of physical assets | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets Register. • Insurance cover for buildings and play equipment. • Land registered with Land Registry. • Inspection regimes. • Amenities Committee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of insurance. • Annual review of asset register. • New items added to asset register and insurance policy in a timely manner. • Regular inspections of assets by staff and service contractors. • Parish Office available to take public reports. • <u>Concerns reported to Amenities Committee on a quarterly basis.</u> • <u>ILOQ system for The Bridewell.</u> |
| | Maintenance of <u>land and</u> buildings | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Amenities Officer.</u> • Buildings maintenance programme. • <u>Regular inspections.Amenities Officer.</u> • Adequate budget provision and earmarked reserves. • Amenities Committee. • Strategic Plan. • Professional advice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual inspections by Amenities Officer. • Amenity Areas Committee reviews inspection programme at 6 monthly intervals. • Amenity Areas Committee consider rolling R&M programme and input to the Strategic Plan. • <u>Seek professional advice and reports where required.</u> • <u>Robust reviews and planning for acquisition of new assets.</u> |
| | Maintenance of play areas | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Amenities Officer.</u> • Compliance with RoSPA guidelines. • Regular inspections. • Amenities Committee. • Adequate budget provision and earmarked reserves. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All play areas are inspected weekly by grounds contractor, additional 2 weekly check by Amenities Officer plus full annual independent inspection. • Annual review of inspection records by Amenity Committee. • Significant R&M reported to Amenities Committee quarterly. • Respond to medium and high risk issues as identified. |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|--------------|--------------------|-------|--|---|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate budget provision when setting budget. • Build earmarked reserve for low priority issues and complete replacements in accordance with anticipated life of equipment. |
| Legal | Public Liability | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance cover for public liability and Hirers Liability. • H&S Policy. • Proper R&M of OPC's assets. • All H&S matters considered as a high priority. • Clerk acts as Responsible H&S Officer. • H&S training for staff and Councillors. • Risk Assessments. • Tree Inspection Policy. • Bridewell hiring conditions. • Policy on hiring OPC's land and equipment. • Memorial Testing Policy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of insurance by full Council. • Annual review of H&S policy or following change in legislation or circumstances. • Risk assessments carried out and reviewed when required. • Annual check of 3rd party insurance hirers by Staff. • Ensure all contractors have adequate insurance. • Staff to obtain risk assessments and insurance for contracts over £500 and method statements for large projects. • Regular liaison with Bridewell hirers and tenants. • High risk H&S matters to be reported to full Council and actioned asap. • Training schedule regularly reviewed by Clerk and Staffing Committee. • Compulsory H&S training for key roles. • Annual review of H&S Policy or following significant change in legislation or circumstances. |
| | Employer Liability | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing Committee. • Qualified Clerk. • Compliance with employment law. • Compliance with H&S at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 + other specific, relevant H&S legislation. • Compliance with Equality Act 2010. • Essential Employment Law training for Staffing Committee, Clerk and any other member of staff with line management responsibilities. • Health & Safety Policy. • HALC HR support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of staff structure. • At least 2 Staffing Committee meetings per year. • Monthly support meetings to Clerk. • Seek professional advice wherever possible. • Urgent employment law matters to be reported to Staffing Committee or full Council (whichever is most suitable and minimising any disclosure of personal data). • High risk H&S matters to be reported to Staffing Committee or full Council (whichever is most suitable & minimising any disclosure of personal data). • Training schedule regularly reviewed by Clerk and Staffing Committee. • Annual review of insurance. |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|------|-------------------|--------|--|--|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers Liability Insurance. • Legal insurance cover. • Fidelity guarantee insurance cover. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of H&S Policy or following significant change in legislation or circumstances. |
| | Acting lawfully | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Clerk with membership of SLCC. • Training and CPD for Staff and Councillors. • Compliance with key sector legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and Misc Provision 1974. • Local Government Finance Act 1988. • Localism Act 2011. • Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 & Smaller Authorities Regulations 2015. • Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. • GDPR 2018. • Equality Act 2010. • Sound and reliable sources of advice – eg HALC, NALC & SLCC. • Legal expenses insurance cover. • Fidelity guarantee insurance cover. • Libel & slander insurance cover. • Scheme of Delegation. • Internal Auditor. • Monitoring Officer. • Membership of HALC and NALC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of Standing Orders. • Annual review of Financial Regulations. • Ensure all Councillors have completed DPI forms and review annually. • Regular review of Code of Conduct including review against national model and local district. • The appointment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. • Training schedule regularly reviewed by Clerk and Staffing Committee. CPD encouraged and supported. • Clerk to advise Council on acting within legal powers and complying with relevant legislation. • Clerk (or committee with delegated authority) to obtain advice where required. • Clear policies on how OPC will comply with legislation. • Council decisions to be clearly minuted including decision, value and power to act (should OPC lose the General Power of Competence). • Promote transparency by publishing as much Council business as possible on OPC’s website. • Membership of ICO. • Interim and annual auditor by Internal Auditor. • Report corporate breaches to Monitoring Officer. |
| | Loss of key staff | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity Plan. • Staffing Committee and clear staffing policies. • Staff contracts. • Annual appraisals. • Regular 1-2-1 meetings for all staff. • Appeals panel and related policies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular support meetings to Clerk. • Regular 1-2-1 meetings better Clerk (line manager) and other staff. • Review of continuity plan. • Succession planning. • Appropriate notice periods in staff contracts. |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|---|---|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Retention Policy. • Second bank administrator. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive records and reports. • Ensure staff annual leave does not impact on business continuity. • Proper handover and induction plans with staff changes. • Staffing Committee and Appeals Panel to respond to matters arising in a timely manner and in accordance with policies. |
| IT & Council Records | Threat of IT failure and loss of IT records | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>IT Policy – paper copy kept</u> • Data Retention Policy. • Professional IT support. • Secure areas on Council server, password protected. • Daily IT back-ups. • Anti-virus software. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of IT security practices. • Regular review of Data Retention Policy. • Staff to ensure premises are secured. • Staff to back-up important documents. • Daily back-up of server files. |
| | Loss of paper records | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Retention Policy. • Building security. • External storage. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular clean up in office. • Staff to ensure premises are secured - internal office doors and filing cabinets are locked. • Legal and burial papers are filed in fireproof cabinets wherever possible. • Some historic records are held offsite in the North Chapel or Hampshire Archives. |
| Business Continuity | Loss of key staff. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity Plan. • Scheme of Delegation. • Insurance. • Membership of HALC. • Staffing Committee. • Second key holders and banking admins. • Record of critical passwords. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of Business Continuity Plan. • Regular review of Scheme of Delegation. • Regular dialogue between staff. • Regular training of staff. • Regular dialogue with Councillors. • Ensure record of passwords is kept up to date and in secure place. |
| | <u>Insufficient councillors to operate</u> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Business Continuity Plan.</u> • <u>Scheme of Delegation.</u> • <u>Hart Monitoring Officer</u> • <u>Membership of HALC.</u> • <u>Communications Strategy.</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Regular review of Business Continuity Plan.</u> • <u>Regular review of Scheme of Delegation.</u> • <u>Hart has legal power to appoint temporary councillors.</u> • <u>Can seek legal advice from HALC and Monitoring Officer.</u> • <u>Regular, positive Council comms to attract new councillors.</u> |

Odiham Parish Council – Annual Risk Assessment 2025/2026

| AREA | RISK | LEVEL | CONTROL MEASURE | CONTROL METHOD |
|------|------------------|-------|---|--|
| | National crisis. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity Plan. • Scheme of Delegation. • Adequate banking signatories and admins. • Record of critical passwords. • <u>Website.</u> • <u>IT</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of Scheme of Delegation. • Timely risk assessment of new threats, eg Covid. • Ensure adequate banking signatories and second banking administrator. • Ensure record of passwords is kept up to date and in secure place. • <u>Keep website up-to-date with key policies and information.</u> • <u>Ability to hold Zoom, informal meetings.</u> |

Reviewed and approved at OPC meeting held on: ~~21.01.25 (minute 243/24)~~

REPORT ON: New Audit Assertion 10
WRITTEN BY: Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer
MEETING DATE: 20th January 2026
AGENDA ITEMS: 238/25

Introduction

As set out at <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/assertion-10-hub.html>:

Assertion 10 was added to proper practices for smaller authorities in 2025 to bring digital and data management to the fore in an ever-changing digital world. Proper practices can be found in the Practitioners' Guide and are mandatory for smaller authorities. Assertion 10 will appear in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the first time in 2025/26.

Meeting Assertion 10 requirements

| To warrant a positive response to Assertion 10, OPC needs to have taken the following actions | Compliance |
|---|---|
| <p>Email management Every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain, for @odiham.gov.uk</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> |
| <p>Website accessibility All smaller authorities (excluding parish meetings) must meet legal requirements for all existing websites regardless of what domain is being used.</p> <p>All websites must meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA and the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (where applicable).</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Full Audit requested to Somerset Web Services (OPC's website support and host) @ £150. See following pages.</p> |
| <p>Freedom of Information and transparency All websites must include published documentation as specified in the <u>Freedom of Information Act 2000</u> and the <u>Transparency code for smaller authorities</u> (where applicable).</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>And set out in https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Publication-Scheme-September-2023.pdf</p> |
| <p>Data Protection and GDPR All smaller authorities, including parish meetings, must follow both the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018. All smaller authorities, including parish meetings, must process personal data with care and in line with the principles of data protection.</p> <p>The DPA 2018 supplements the GDPR and classifies an authority as both a Data Controller and a Data Processor.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>And set out in https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Data-Protection-Policy-July-2023.pdf</p> <p>The Parish Clerk is appointed as OPC's Data Protection Officer Councillors should note their role of Data Processor.</p> |

IT Policy

All smaller authorities (excluding parish meetings) must also have an IT policy. This explains how everyone - clerks, members and other staff - should conduct authority business in a secure and legal way when using IT equipment and software. This relates to the use of authority-owned and personal equipment.



Also set out in OPC's IT Policy (to be adopted 20.01.26).

Clerk

Subject: FW: Website Accessibility Audit Services for Councils – In Line with the 2025 Practitioners' Guide

From: Somerset Web Services <info@somersetwebservices.co.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, December 02, 2025 12:55

To: Clerk <clerk@odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: Website Accessibility Audit Services for Councils – In Line with the 2025 Practitioners' Guide

Dear Andrea (Odiham Parish Council),

This email relates to your website <https://odihamparishcouncil.gov.uk> for which we provide hosting and support.

We're writing to highlight an important update that affects all local councils and smaller authorities.

The Smaller Authorities' Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) has released the updated **2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide**, providing clearer guidance around governance, financial management and digital responsibilities.

Alongside confirming continued obligations under **GDPR and the Data Protection Act**, as well as **FOI** and the **Transparency Code**, the updated Guide introduces strengthened expectations under **Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance**.

A key part of this compliance involves ensuring that your council's website meets recognised accessibility standards and remains usable for all residents - including those with disabilities or access needs. This is not only best practice, but an important step toward meeting your statutory duties around digital inclusion and transparency.

Our Accessibility Audit Services for Councils

To support you with these responsibilities, we're offering two levels of accessibility auditing specifically designed for smaller authorities:

1. Quick Accessibility Audit – £50 + VAT

A concise review of your council website, highlighting the most common accessibility issues that could affect compliance with digital duties.

2. Full Audit with Recommendations – £150 + VAT

A detailed assessment tailored for local councils, including:

- A review against key WCAG 2.2 accessibility criteria
- Clear, prioritised recommendations for improvements
- 30-minute online meeting to review and discuss the audit
- Practical guidance to help you move toward stronger compliance under Assertion 10

We've also published some additional information to assist Councils who wish to know more about it. You can view it on the link below:

<https://www.councilwebsite.co.uk/guide-to-website-accessibility-for-councils/>

This page will be regularly updated with new information and tips as we get it.

If you would like us to carry out an audit - or you'd like to discuss which option best suits your council - please reply to this email and we will be happy to assist.

Somerset Web Services Ltd

e: tim.church@somersetwebservices.co.uk

w: www.somersetwebservices.co.uk