

1. BACKGROUND

The Constitution of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council requires key governance documents (Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation) to be reviewed at the annual meeting.

2. SUMMARY

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are based on model templates provided by NALC and amended for relevance to the Council.

The NALC model Standing Orders were updated in March 2025, and our current Laverstock and Ford Standing Orders (attached **Annex One**) reflect this revision. I have amended the review dates for some non-bold elements listed in section 5j. This is to align our SOs with our actual practice of reviewing those policies and procedures during the course of the year. All changes are highlighted in yellow in the draft SOs attached. In addition, there are minor changes to layout and grammar from the currently adopted version.

The Scheme of Delegation (attached **Annex Two**) is our current adopted version with minor amendments highlighted in yellow. The only significant one is the change in section 8. In the currently adopted policy, the RFO is designated to deputise for the Clerk in their absence. This has been changed to the Deputy Clerk.

The Constitution (attached **Annex Three**) remains unchanged.

The Financial Regulations (attached **Annex Four**) were adopted by Council in February 2026 (Minute Ref: PC26.018)

3. RECOMMENDATION

That in line with Constitution 6 (c), revised Governance documents referenced in this report, with the exception of the Financial Regulations (as they have already been adopted), are reviewed and tabled for adoption at the next (June) meeting of the Parish Council.

REPORT 26.057 Governance

Author: Jon Sloan, Clerk

Date: 29th April 2026

ANNEX ONE – adopted Standing Orders

**DRAFT Standing Orders
of Laverstock and Ford
Parish Council**

Date last amended	6 th May 2025
Date adopted	
Minute Reference	
Date of next review	May 2027

Revision April 2026

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INTRODUCTION

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. Laverstock and Ford Parish Council standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for 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 standing orders do not include financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of the 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.

Standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements.

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:

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Author: Jon Sloan, Clerk

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- 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 considers 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 three minutes without the consent of the chair of the meeting.

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.

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.**
- 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 15 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 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 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 2.5 hours. If at the end of 2.5 hours the business of the meeting has not been concluded, it may be extended by a further half an hour subject to a majority vote of councillors present and voting

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 5 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.

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 has resigned or becomes 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 becomes 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;**
 - 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. **Removed**
 - 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 **not otherwise minuted in Ordinary Council Meetings;**
 - 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. **Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;**
 - xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks. **Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;**
 - xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies. **Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;**
 - xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure. **Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;**
 - 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*). Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media. Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures. Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence. Unless previously resolved within the prior 12 month period;
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

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 may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.
- d If the chair of a committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee, any two members of the committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee.

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 six 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.

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.

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 eight 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 six 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.

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.

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.**

DRAFT MINUTES

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

- a 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 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.**
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- e 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.

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.
- 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.
- 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.**

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.**

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 7 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. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- x. 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);
- xi. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(see also *standing order 23*);
- xii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiii. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority;
- xiv. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme;

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.

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 meeting of the council a report to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure)
 - 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 period being reported andwhich 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 period 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.

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 £30,000 (incl VAT) 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 shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - iv. 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.**

HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council or the Personnel Committee is subject to standing order 11.
- b 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.
- c 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).

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 **The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

- a The 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.**

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.

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), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

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 Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.

- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the Unitary Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

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.
 - iii. Make statements on behalf of the Council

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 6 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.

ANNEX TWO – Scheme of Delegation



DRAFT Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Scheme of Delegations

Date last amended	16 th June 2026
Date adopted	
Minute Reference	PC25.092
Date of next review	May 2027

1. Subject to the matters reserved to the full Parish Council, **Standing Committees** are delegated with the powers and duties described below.
2. **Advisory Committees** which may be established from time to time, may consider matters within their remit and make recommendations to Council but may not take decisions in their own right. All Standing Committees and Advisory Committees will operate under Council Standing Orders and be accessible to the public. All members may attend all Committees if they wish but may only vote at Committees of which they have been designated a member. All members are entitled to be a designated member of at least one Committee.
3. **Working groups** (sub groups) may be established from time to time to work on specific projects or issues and may include non-members of the Council. Working Groups will not take decisions in their own right but report to a standing Committee or to the Parish Council which will take appropriate decisions within their remit. Working Groups are informal and do not operate under standing orders. Councillors are however bound by the Code of Conduct when working on behalf of the Council in all fora whether full Council Committee or Working Group.
4. **The Parish Clerk** is delegated with the powers and duties identified subject to a subsequent report of actions taken to the Parish Council or to the appropriate standing Committee.

1. **PARISH COUNCIL** **Meets Monthly**

- **Chair** – elected at the annual Parish Council Meeting
- **Members** – All Councillors
- **Administration Parish Clerk and/or Deputy Parish Clerk**
- **Attending Parish Clerk, Deputy Parish Clerk and other staff as required**

- **Considers all matters reserved as outlined below plus recommendations from Committees and individual Councillor motions**

Matters reserved within Standing Orders.

1.1.1. Any special or general directions which the Parish Council may give from time to time.

1.1.2. Any relevant statutory provisions not mentioned below.

1.1.3. The following specific matters shall also be determined by the Full Council:

- 1.1.3.1. Adoption of the Council's Strategic Plan and approval of the implementation programme.
- 1.1.3.2. Powers reserved in respect of the Council's Finances including: -
 - Final adoption of the forward plan and the annual budget of the Council and the precepts on Wiltshire Council.
 - Schemes involving capital expenditure, outside that which has already been approved in the annual budget. When a scheme has been approved and the estimated cost agreed by the Full Council the appropriate Committee may proceed with it subject to any tender accepted not exceeding the approved estimate.
 - Approval of the Parish Council's annual return and receipt of its audit reports.
 - Determine applications for grants subject to all applications being considered on their merits and in accordance with the agreed grants process.
- 1.1.3.3. To review Parish Council Policies, Procedures and Processes and ensure that they are up to date, fit for purpose, consistent and appropriate
- 1.1.3.4. To determine all personnel policy matters, except any that may be delegated to the Personnel Sub Committee and personnel matters delegated directly by Full Council to the Parish Clerk
- 1.1.3.5. To determine Parish Council planning policy and the response to planning applications except decisions delegated to the Parish Clerk in consultation with members of the appropriate ward.
- 1.1.3.6. The disposal of any freehold land (other than minor adjustments of boundaries).
- 1.1.3.7. The granting or taking of a Leasehold interest in any land.
- 1.1.3.8. The appointment of Committees and representatives on outside bodies.
- 1.1.3.9. The appointment of a Parish Clerk
- 1.1.3.10. The revision of any scale of charges for any service.
- 1.1.3.11. The making of byelaws.
- 1.1.3.12. Any matter of major policy or of sufficient interest or novelty that any three members request that it be debated by Full Council through a motion raised in accordance with standing orders.

1.1.4. The Council will receive minutes/reports from standing Committees at the first appropriate meeting following the Committee. Reports will be taken as read unless

members identify matters for debate.

- 1.1.5. The Council will receive a report from the Parish Clerk at each meeting. Reports will be taken as read unless members identify matters for debate.

STANDING COMMITTEES

2. Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Standing Committee with day-to-day responsibility for overseeing the Council's finances, and swift implementation of any projects delegated by the full Council. Meets bi-monthly one week before Full Council and otherwise as required.

- **Chair – Chair of the Council**
- **Members –**
 - **Chair of the Council**
 - **Chair of Operations Working Group**
 - **Chair of Communications and Community Engagement Working Group**
 - **Two other Council members**
- **Attending- Parish Clerk/RFO**
- **Administration - Parish Clerk**

- 2.1. Day to day oversight of the Parish Council's Finances within the established budget.
- 2.2. Considers reports on financial matters presented by the RFO.
- 2.3. Undertakes a periodic review of financial Risk assessment and insurances.
- 2.4. Oversees Budget preparation for final approval by the Council.
- 2.5. Oversees preparation of the annual return before final approval by the Council
- 2.6. Receives and oversees the response to internal and external audits
- 2.7. Undertakes initial action on Council responsibilities designated within Financial Regulations and not reserved to the full Council or delegated to another committee.
- 2.8. Review of Overall Financial Performance. Makes recommendations for improvements to full Council.
- 2.9. Management of any project or programme specifically delegated to it by the Parish Council.
- 2.10. Institute, defend or settle any judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings on behalf of the Council and engage legal representatives as required.
- 2.11. Submits Minutes/Reports to the Full Council

3. Personnel Committee

Standing Committee with delegated authority for personnel matters not otherwise delegated to the Clerk.

Meets as required but not less than 2 times a year.

- **Chair – Appointed by the Council at the Annual Parish Council Meeting not being a chair of any other Committee**
- **Members – Chair of the Council**

- **Two other Council members**
- **Administration – Parish Clerk**

- 3.1. Forms a panel for any recruitment of the Parish Clerk.
- 3.2. Conducting the Parish Clerk's annual performance appraisal. (minimum of 3 members)
- 3.3. Receives reports from the Clerk on staff appraisals.
- 3.4. Holds meetings as required with the Parish Clerk to discuss any issues or concerns and report to the Parish Council.
- 3.5. Consider any grievances raised by the Parish Clerk.
- 3.6. To appoint, if necessary, a suitably qualified professional to conduct the investigations and/or hearing in the event that disciplinary action needs to be taken against the Parish Clerk.
- 3.7. Considers appeals in staff grievance and disciplinary matters following action by the Clerk.
- 3.8. Authority to dismiss staff failing to satisfactorily complete a probation period.
- 3.9. To settle disciplinary matters in accordance with the agreed Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.10. To receive any grievances against the Parish Clerk.
- 3.11. To authorise, if necessary, an independent professional to conduct any investigations as a result of a grievance or appeal.
- 3.12. To authorise commencement of any action or appeal before an industrial tribunal or in any court.
- 3.13. Consider any other matters delegated to it by the Parish Council
- 3.14. Oversee the development and implementation of employment policies subject to approval by the full Council
- 3.15. Submits Minutes/Reports to the Full Council

WORKING GROUPS – Terms of Reference

4. Operations Working Group.

Working group focusing on projects and improvements for Council Property, Outdoor Services Play and Leisure provision.

Meets as required usually 4 times a year

- **Chair – Appointed by the Council at the Annual Parish Council Meeting not being a Chair of any other Committee or Working Group**
- **Members – Not less than three members appointed by the Council at the Annual Parish Meeting, plus non-members as agreed by the Council.**
- **Attending – Parish Clerk and Deputy Parish Clerk as required**
- **Staffing – Operations Officer**

- 4.1. Recommend to the Parish Council the strategic priorities for all outdoor services.
- 4.2. Consider reports by Operations Officer relating to the ongoing operation of the outdoor services.
- 4.3. Consider all matters relating to definition and implementation of the Parish Council's Environmental Strategy and make recommendations to Council.
- 4.4. Oversight of Management all Council Property.
- 4.5. Oversight of Management of all Parish Council recreational and leisure facilities.
- 4.6. Oversight of Provision, siting and maintenance of bins, bus shelters and benches.

- 4.7. Oversight of service level agreements with other bodies on operational matters.
- 4.8. Oversight of any project or programme at the request of the Parish Council.
- 4.9. Consideration of any other matters at the request of the Parish Council.
- 4.10. Submits reports and recommendations to the Full Council.

5. Communications and Community Engagement Working Group

Working Group focusing on Council Marketing, brand management, public relations, interaction and communication with the community and co-ordination of Council events

Meets as required usually 4 times a year

- **Chair – Appointed by the Council at the Annual Parish Council Meeting not being a Chair of any other Committee or Working Group**
 - **Members – Not less than three members appointed by the Council at the Annual Parish Meeting, plus non-members as agreed by the Council.**
 - **Attending – Parish Clerk and Deputy Parish Clerk as required.**
 - **Staffing – Communications and Community Engagement Officer**
- 5.1. Oversight, development and review of the Council's branding, communications and media programme
 - 5.2. Oversight of Council communications media including social media, Council website, Newsletter and noticeboards.
 - 5.3. Ensure consistent branding on signage at all Council property
 - 5.4. Oversight, development and review of the Council's media relations activity, process for responding to events and for briefing the news media of Council policies and programmes.
 - 5.5. Oversight, development and review of the Council's community engagement programme
 - 5.6. Act as focal point for the management of Community events staged by the Parish Council
 - 5.7. Oversee the development of the Council's Annual report.
 - 5.8. Oversight of any project, programme or other matter at the request of the Parish Council.

PARISH CLERK

6. The following matters are delegated to the Parish Clerk:

- 6.1. Acting as Proper Officer as defined by Standing Orders.
- 6.2. Day to day management of the Parish Council and its resources subject to Committee and Council oversight.
- 6.3. Signs all official correspondence arising from resolutions of the Council. Receives all correspondence addressed to the Council.
- 6.4. General personnel management of Parish Council employees in accordance with Council policy, including appraisal, training and first stage in discipline and grievance procedures.
- 6.5. Carrying out expenditure within the delegated spending limits specified within the financial regulations,
- 6.6. Discretion to agree up to five days special leave with pay in any one year for compassionate or other grounds i.e. bereavement, family illness, (compassionate leave in

- excess of five days up to ten days is subject to approval of the Personnel Sub Committee).
- 6.7. Determination of the Council's response, in conjunction with ward members, of any routine planning applications. Ensuring that all significant planning matters are brought to the attention of the full Council.
 - 6.8. Parish Clerk has reasonable discretion on a day-to-day basis to interpret Council policy to achieve reasonable outcomes providing that action taken shall in all cases be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Full Council. Also where possible or appropriate Committee chairs and/or the Council Chair will be consulted.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

7. The following matters are delegated to the Responsible Financial Officer.

- 7.1. Undertakes all duties designated to the RFO within financial regulations.
- 7.2. Carrying out expenditure within the delegated spending limits specified within the financial regulations

DEPUTY CLERK

8. The following matters are delegated to the Deputy Clerk.

- 8.1. To deputise for the Parish Clerk in all matters in the event of their absence.

9. Urgent Business

In all cases where urgent decisions are required and unless otherwise provided, the Parish Clerk shall, from time to time, after consulting the Chair of the relevant Committee concerned (or, in his/her absence, the Vice Chair of the Committee); or the Chair of the Council (or, in their absence, the Vice Chair) and where appropriate the Ward Members, take all necessary steps for protecting the interests of, or advancing the business of the Parish Council, providing that action taken shall in all cases be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Full Council.

10. General Policy

- 10.1. The minimum number of members to which any action shall be delegated is three.
- 10.2. The Parish Council may appoint members or officers to attend a meeting, or meetings, of another local authority or body as a representative of the Parish Council. He/she shall be formally appointed by the Council as its representative.
- 10.3. Any member or officer appointed by the Parish Council to attend a meeting of another authority or body shall represent the views of the Parish Council at that meeting unless they make it clear that the views expressed are their own and not necessarily representative of the Parish Council
- 10.4. Unless formally appointed as a council spokesperson, no member or officer shall make statements to any news media purporting to represent the views of the Parish Council. Otherwise, members and officers should at all times make it clear that any views expressed are their own and not necessarily representative of the Parish Council.
- 10.5. Where appropriate, reports to Committees and the Parish Council should include a Parish Clerk's recommendation.
- 10.6. All reports to Committees or Parish Council should indicate the resource and financial

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Author: Jon Sloan, Clerk

Date: 29th April 2026

implications of the matter and if there are no financial implications that should also be stated.

Reviewed 18th May 2026

ANNEX THREE – Constitution

**Constitution of
Laverstock & Ford Parish Council**

Date last amended	16 th September 2024
Date adopted	16 th June 2025
Minute Reference	PC25.092
Date of next review	May 2026

1. Title and Area

The Council shall be called the Laverstock and Ford Parish Council and operate in the area specified in the Statutory Order setting up the Parish Council or in any subsequent amendment. (Currently this includes the communities of Laverstock, Ford, Old Sarum, Longhedge and Bishopdown Farm).

2. Functions

The functions of the Council shall be:

- (a) To exercise such powers and duties as are laid upon it by its core governance documents .
- (b) To exercise such powers and duties as are laid upon it by statute.
- (c) To exercise such powers and duties as are laid upon it by delegation from the Wiltshire Council or other appropriate public body.
- (d) To protect, enhance and promote the environment of the area of the Parish Council.
- (e) To protect, enhance and promote the collective interests and well-being of the residents of the Parish of Laverstock and Ford.
- (f) To make representations to Wiltshire Council, and any other Statutory Body or Public Utility on matters affecting the residents of Laverstock and Ford Parish.
- (g) To stimulate and foster support for approved policies of the Council.

3. Constitution

- (a) The Council shall consist of:
 - (i) 16 Members elected by the electors of the Parish of Laverstock and Ford or such other number as may be specified by Wiltshire Council which shall not be less than 5.
 - (ii) Such co-opted Members as may be necessary to fill normal or casual vacancies as the Council may determine.
- (b) For the purposes of the election referred to in (a(i)) above the area of the Council shall be divided into three wards each electing Members as specified below:
 - (i) Bishopdown Farm – 5 members
 - (ii) Ford, Old Sarum and Longhedge – 6 members
 - (iii) Laverstock and Milford – 5 members.
- (c) All Councillors shall retire together in every ordinary year of election on the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of such Councillors and the newly elected Councillors shall come into office on the day on which their predecessors retire.

4. Financial and Administrative Year

The Financial and Administrative year of the Council shall be in the period commencing on the first day of April and ending on the thirty-first day of March in the following year.

5. Meetings of the Council

Meetings of the Council shall normally be held by rotation in each ward of the parish subject to availability of venues. Meetings shall commence at 7.00pm unless otherwise determined.

6. Governance

- (a) The Council will be governed by reference to three core documents;
 - i. **Standing Orders** which set the rules of debate in Council meetings and the role of the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer.
 - ii. **The Scheme of Delegations** which details those of its powers and responsibilities the Council delegates to Committees and to Officers.
 - iii. **Financial Regulations** which set out how the Council's financial affairs will be managed.
- (b) Governance Documentation will be reviewed and confirmed at the Annual Parish

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Council meeting taking place each year.

- (c) Amendments to any of the three core documents can only be made having been tabled, proposed and seconded at a Parish Council meeting where the matter is then deferred to the following meeting to allow all members to consider the changes proposed.
- (d) The Council will seek to meet and maintain compliance with the requirements to adopt the General Power of Competence for Parish Councils as set out in **The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012**
- (e) The Council will publish annually following the Annual Parish Council meeting a calendar of key events for the following 12 months including;
 - i. Next Annual Parish Council Meeting
 - ii. Next Annual Parish Meeting
 - iii. Dates of all normal Parish Council and Committee meetings
 - iv. Date for submission of AGAR financial returns
 - v. Date for adoption of the Parish Council's Budget
 - vi. Deadline for submission of Precept demand on Wiltshire Council
 - vii. Dates of planned events to inform and engage with the community.

Revised 16th September 2024 Reviewed 12th May 2025

ANNEX FOUR – Financial Regulations

**Laverstock and Ford
Parish Council**

**FINANCIAL
REGULATIONS**

2026

Chapters 1 – 19

Amendment List No:	Section amended, & summary	Date amendment approved

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 16th February 2026.

1. General

1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's three governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Constitution, Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation. They should be read in conjunction with the Council's Reserves Policy and Annual Investment Strategy.

1.2 Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

1.3 Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.4 In these Financial Regulations:

- 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
- "**Approve**" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
- "**Authorise**" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.

- ‘Proper practices’ means those set out in *The Practitioners’ Guide*
- *Practitioners’ Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Smaller Authorities’ Proper Practices Panel and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
- ‘Must’ and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
- ‘Shall’ refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.

1.5 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the council;
- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

1.6 **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

- **Setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement).**
- **The outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls.**
- **Approving accounting statements.**
- **Approving an annual governance statement.**
- **Borrowing.**
- **Declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence.**
- **Addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors.**

1.7 In addition, the council shall:

- Determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts.
- Authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £5,000.

2. Risk management and internal control

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

2.2 The Clerk, with the RFO, shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

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

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

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

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
- **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
- **ensure division of responsibilities.**

2.6 At least twice a year, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair or a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.

2.7 Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

3.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.2 The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:

- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
- **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**

3.3 The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

3.4 The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.5 The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.

3.6 Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.

3.7 The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their

work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.

3.8 The council shall ensure that the internal auditor

- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council,
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year,
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity, and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the management or control of the council.

3.9 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

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

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

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

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

4. Budget and precept

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

4.2 Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Personnel Committee at least annually in November for the following financial year.

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

4.4 Unspent revenue budgets shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year except for the Grant Budget. Unspent Grant funds shall be placed in an earmarked reserve. Unspent funds for other partially completed projects may be retained in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the full council.

4.5 Each committee and working group shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance & General Purposes committee not later than the end of November each year.

4.6 The draft budget with any committee or working group proposals, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance and General Purposes committee and a recommendation made to the council.

4.7 Having considered the proposed budget forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.

4.8 Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.

4.9 The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

4.10 The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.

4.11 Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

4.12 The Council shall maintain a Medium-Term Financial Plan covering a minimum of three and up to five financial years.

5. Procurement

5.1 Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

5.2 The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

5.3 Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.

5.4 For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation (“the Legislation”), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.

5.5 Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:

5.6 For contracts estimated to exceed £30,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

5.7 For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the

advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of invitations and notices.

5.8 For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes.

5.9 Where the value is between £1,000 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 estimates, which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.

5.10 For smaller purchases, the Clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

5.11 Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.

5.12 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

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

5.13 When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.14 The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

5.15 Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- The Clerk or RFO under delegated authority, for any items of £5000 and below excluding VAT.
- The Council for all items over £5,000;

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute or other auditable evidence trail.

5.16 No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

5.17 No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the Council except in an emergency.

5.18 In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk

shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.19 No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.20 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £100 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate such as online purchases of sundries by the Clerk, Deputy Clerk or RFO. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.21 Any ordering system can be misused and access to Purchase Orders shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

6.1 The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be

delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Lloyds Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

6.2 The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Except for debit card purchases three people shall be involved in any payment. Cheques shall be signed by three councillors. Online payments shall be approved by one officer and two councillors. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

6.3 All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously approved by the council before being certified by the RFO and one member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Any list of payments that has been prepared by and signed by the RFO indicates that they have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO.

6.4 Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be listed anonymously to avoid disclosing any personal information.

6.5 All payments shall be made by online banking, in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.

6.6 The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to approve payments in the following circumstances:

- i. any payments of up to £1,000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
- ii. payments of up to £5,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
- iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of [the council], where the [Clerk and RFO] certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council {or finance committee}.
- iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £1,000,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance and General Purposes committee. This includes the purchase of shares (subscription) and the sale of shares (redemption) from the Council's account with the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. The purchase and sale shall only be made from the Lloyd's Trustee account.

6.7 The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation together with the relevant invoices and documents, to a member of the Finance & General Purposes committee before each council meeting. The member shall review the schedule, invoices and documents for compliance. The council shall review the schedule and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payments by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be signed by the member carrying out the review and by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be published as a Report to the Council alongside the Agenda and Minutes of the meeting at which payments were authorised.

7. Electronic Payments

7.1 Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify at least four councillors, usually members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of three people will be involved in any online approval process. The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and RFO may be authorised signatories.

7.2 All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.

7.3 No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

7.4 The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with hard copies of the relevant invoices, shall be checked by one authorised member signatory and be available to view online by other signatories on the council's accounting system.

7.5 In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator any officer who is an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.

7.6 Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

7.7 Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online.

7.8 A full list of all debit card, direct debit and standing order payments made in a month shall be provided and authorised by resolution at the next council meeting.

7.9 With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as utilities, broadband, IT support, payroll services, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by

variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by three authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

7.10 If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by one officer and two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to and approved by council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

7.11 Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk or RFO and one member. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.

7.12 Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

8. Cheque Payments

8.1 Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by three members.

8.2 A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3 To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

9. Payment Cards

9.1 Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, the RFO and other officers with the approval of the council and will be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000 unless authorised by the council or finance committee by resolution before any order is placed.

9.2 Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

10. Petty Cash

10.1 The Council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact.

11. Payment of salaries and allowance

11.1 As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.

11.2 Councillor's allowances are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.

11.3 Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council.

11.4 Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.

11.5 Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.

11.6 Payments to employees of net salary, and to creditors of statutory and discretionary deductions, shall be reviewed by a member of the Finance and General Purposes committee to ensure that correct payments have been made.

11.7 Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.

11.8 Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

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

12.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

12.3 The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

12.4 All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

12.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

12.6 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

13.1 The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

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

13.3 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

13.4 All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

13.5 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

13.6 The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least quarterly and whenever the claim exceeds £10,000.

13.7 Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

14.1 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

14.2 Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the

final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and Equipment

15.1 The Operations Officer shall be responsible for the care and custody of equipment and stores held for the Community Emergency Volunteer group.

15.2 The Operations Officer shall be responsible for periodic checks of equipment and stores, at least annually.

16. Assets, properties and estates.

16.1 The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.

16.2 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

16.3 The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

16.4 No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

16.5 No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £1,000. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

17.1 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.

17.2 The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

17.3 The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.

17.4 All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

18. Charities

18.1 Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

19.1 The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of Clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

19.2 The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.

19.3 The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

REPORT 26.057 Governance

Author: Jon Sloan, Clerk

Date: 29th April 2026

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