

# Wheatley Parish Council Meeting Agenda for Monday, September 4, 2023



To: All Members of Wheatley Parish Council

Councillors are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Full Parish Council Meeting to be held at the Merry Bells, 89 High St, Wheatley on Monday, September 4, 2023, at 19:30 for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Signed: M Legg Clerk to the Parish Council, 25 August 2023  
Members are reminded to declare an interest for relevant agenda

The meeting is held in public who are welcome to come along.  
You can also watch live. Scan the QR Code to join.

There will be an OPEN SESSION at approximately 7.35pm, when questions may be taken from the public.

Copies of documentation and meeting links are available from the parish office,  
[clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk) or 01865 875615.

## AGENDA

**#69/2023-24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Apologies received from Cllr Wilmott

**#70/2023-24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**#71/2023-24. TO COOPT TO FILL FOUR COUNCILLOR VACANCIES FOLLOWING UNCONTESTED ELECTION**

**#72/2023-24. TO RECEIVE MINUTES**

From Parish Council meeting on **Monday 3rd July 2023** – previously circulated

**#73/2023-24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

From Parish Council meeting on **Monday 3rd July 2023**

**#74/2023-24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CLERK**

And includes:

- i. Local Council's Clerk's Week – communications included an interactive quiz, facts, and details of council's work.
- ii. S106 application for play area maintenance has been approved, awaiting copy of legal agreement.
- iii. Response submitted to SODC/VoWHDC Air Quality Action Policy
- iv. Awaiting a response from primary school regarding involvement in No smoking in play areas
- v. Consultation underway for Littleworth Allotment permissive footpath. Deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> Sept. Site visit was carried out and focus group to take place.
- vi. Emergency Plan submitted to OCC; comments received.
- vii. Wellers Headley approached regarding review of lease to playing fields and Littleworth Field. £750 to review both leases.
- viii. Grounds Maintenance Work



# Wheatley Parish Council Meeting Minutes

## Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

**Present:** Cllrs R Barrett (RB), P Gregory (PG), T Newman (TN), P Ramsdale (PR), A Sercombe (AS) (Chair) A Shepherd (ASh), R Street (RS), L Tully (LT). Cllr Mara joined at 19:35.  
SODC Cllr Kantor arrived at 19:45 and left the meeting at 20:07

**Officer:** Michelle Legg, Clerk to the Parish Council (Clerk)

**Members of Public/Online:** 7/0

**The meeting opened at 19:30 and closed at 21:20**

23-24	Item	Action
49.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> – from Cllr Cooper were accepted and approved.	<b>Chair</b>
50.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> – Cllrs Willmott & Ramsdale Wheatley Playing Field Trust, Wheatley Rugby Club.	<b>Clerk</b>
51.	<b>TO CO-OPT TO FILL FOUR COUNCILLOR VACANCIES FOLLOWING UNCONTESTED ELECTION</b> – a resident stood forward for co-option, who gave a summary of the skills and interests that felt would be a benefit to the council and the community. Councillors were given the opportunity to ask additional questions.	<b>All</b>

Members voted unanimously to co-opt Les Mara to the council, who signed his acceptance of office and joined the council.

### **THE MEETING WAS OPENED FOR PUBLIC SESSION 19:37**

**Resident of Kelly's Rd** - regarding consultation on footpath through littleworth allotments. Raised points regarding questions posed, concerns for consultation being carried out across the wider community that would raise the profile of the footpath and security concerns.

**Resident of Kelly's Rd** – concerned that the footpath through Littleworth allotments is not accessible to all.

**Resident of High St** – Concerns over the extractor system installed on a local restaurant.

Cllr Sercombe advised that the parish council were unable to change the planning and asked SODC Cllr Kantor to take this up. She gave an update of the information given to resident and to make a formal complaint if they felt due process was not taken.

**Representative of local business** – extractor system installed on a local restaurant. Representatives gave an update on a survey undertaken in support of the business and the issues that they have faced and tried to resolve regarding the restaurant aromas.

Cllr Newman advised that the parish council were unable to intervene, as they have no powers to do so. The planning authority (SODC) should be involved.

### **PUBLIC SESSION ENDED AT 20:01**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 52. | <b>TO RECEIVE MINUTES</b> from Parish Council meeting on Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 – previously circulated were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting |
| 53. | <b>TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS</b> from Parish Council meeting on Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 – none.   |

54. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CLERK** including
- i) Local Council's Clerk's Week – suggestion for weeklong communications promoting the role of the Clerk/Assistant Clerk.
  - ii) WPC registered on Wheatley Daily Info.
  - iii) Letter sent to C Lalley (OALC), and response received.
  - iv) Reactive work carried out following storms and tree issues.
  - v) Memorial plaque installed for J Funge
  - vi) Support from SODC to submit s106 request for play area maintenance
55. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER** – Cllr Bearder was not in attendance and no report circulated prior to the meeting.
56. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SODC DISTRICT COUNCILLOR CLLR ALEXANDRINE KANTOR**  
 Made a request to consider accessibility access on footpaths.  
 Beginning to receive applications for SODC Cllr grants but awaiting launch date.  
 SODC Cllr surgery on second Saturday of each month.
57. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM WHEATLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE** – Clerk had submitted a formal response to the examiner's points. Council and committee await further correspondence.
58. **TO CONSIDER COUNCILS RESPONSE TO AMENDED OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION [P22/S3975/O](#) FOR OXFORD BROOKES CAMPUS**  
 It was felt that the council's concerns and comments still apply. Members approved that a response is submitted citing the previous objections. **Cllr Newman to submit response.** **TN**  
 Still no update on when the application will be considered by SODC's planning committee.  
 S106 agreement has not been confirmed for this application.
59. **TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO SODC/VOWHDC AIR QUALITY ACTION POLICY** – Cllr Tully was concerned regarding asthma sufferers. Members were made aware of the monitoring device on the High St, although no readings have been shared. Members approved **Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk to respond under delegated powers.** **TN/AS/ Clerk**
60. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT & HEADS OF TERMS FOR PROJECT ACTIVE/LITTLEWORTH FIELD**  
 Cllr Willmott raised his concerns -  
 - Tree survey, ODSST have been asked to complete a tree survey, so council are informed of the state of the trees.  
 - Fencing costs, diagrams were for illustrative purposes. A fence would be placed between the north and south boundaries, with the exact location to be confirmed by both parties  
 -Funding opportunities listed are not guaranteed  
 - Demolition of pavilion would be costly and questioned why? The reciting of the pavilion would enable other facilities to be built within the green belt area.  
 -Sub lease initially mentions 25 years but are now suggesting a 40-year lease.  
 -Correction in the reports given previous history.
- Cllr Tully supported the project as it would open the space for community use.
- Cllr Newman proposed the recommendation to instruct Wellers Headley to review the heads of terms on behalf of the council. This was approved by majority of members. With one objection. **Clerk/Chairman to approach solicitors.** **AS/ Clerk**

61. **TO RECEIVE A RECOMMENDATION REGARDING NO SMOKING IN PLAY AREAS**  
 Cllr Newman proposed that the report is approved by members., this was approved unanimously. **Chairman to contact Wheatley Primary School before grant application is submitted by the Clerk.** AS/  
 Clerk
62. **TO COMMISSION A REVIEW OF THE LEASE ON WHEATLEY PLAYING FIELDS BY LAWYERS WHO SPECIALISE IN PARISH COUNCIL LAW.**  
 Members approved the review. **Clerk/Chairman to approach solicitors.** AS/  
 Clerk
63. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON CONSULTATION ON PERMISSIVE FOOTPATH THROUGH LITTLEWORTH ALLOTMENTS TO LITTLEWORTH NATURE RESERVE.**  
 Cllr Newman recommended that SODC Urban Planning Officer and Thames Valley Police are included in the consultation. **Chairman/Clerk to make contact.** AS/  
 Clerk  
 Members approved the questions and approach for the consultation including focus groups.  
**Cllrs Newman, Gregory, and Barrett offered to assist with survey delivery to households.** TN/PG/  
 RB
64. **TO APPROVE POLICIES & DOCUMENTS.**  
 i) Asset Register Policy - Approved  
 ii) Risk Register – will be monitored by the finance committee and reviewed annually by the council. - Approved  
 iii) Wheatley Community Emergency Plan 2023 - Approved.  
 Cllr Street suggested that the plan be tested at some point in the future.  
 Clerk to submit document to OCC.
65. **TO RECEIVE UPDATE/MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM**  
 i) Finance Committee –Terms of Reference approved. minutes circulated.  
 ii) Open Spaces Committee – next meeting 17<sup>th</sup> July.  
 iii) Planning Committee – next meeting 12<sup>th</sup> July.  
 Agreed to consider the retrospective application for Brookes, to utilise four buildings for temporary accommodation. **Asst Clerk to add this to the next meeting agenda.** Ast  
 Clerk  
 iv) Staffing Committee – meeting took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Items for discussion were moved to the end of the meeting, after resolution to exclude members of the public.  
 v) Communications Working Group – meeting to be arranged.  
 vi) Holton Pavilion Project – Initial meeting held with contractor and details being compiled.  
 vii) Littleworth Playing Fields Working Group – covered in item 60.  
 viii) Oxford Brookes Liaison Group – no update  
 ix) Oxford Brookes Residents groups – meeting 21<sup>st</sup> June. No updates relevant to Wheatley campus  
 x) Traffic Working Group – meeting scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> July.  
 OCC have contacted Cllr Ramsdale with a proposal for High St parking and OCC officer will be attending the traffic working group.  
 xi) Youth Club – Clerk met with OPA and ASDA to discuss additional funding. Plan to arrange meeting with interested parties to discuss opportunities.  
 xii) Youth Council – no progress, will wait until new term starts in September
66. **TO RECEIVE UPDATES/REPORTS FROM:**  
 i) Community Larder – move to URC has been cramped but successful.  
 ii) Good Neighbour Scheme – well attended party organised for clients.  
 iii) Howe Trust – meeting in September  
 iv) Maple Tree Centre – report circulated. First grant payment made.  
 v) Merry Bells Management Committee -  
 vi) Thames Valley Police – crime update circulated.  
 vii) Wheatley Charities – grant scheme remains open.

- viii) Wheatley Playing Field Trust – repairs to lower pavilion booked in over school holidays. An artificial cricket wicket being installed and floodlights to be installed on remainder of tennis courts.  
Regular meetings being held between WPFT and WPC, looking at ongoing work schedule for repairs.  
New signage to be installed on gable end of pavilion.
- ix) Wheatley Windmill Preservation Trust – meet in the week.

**67. CORRESPONDENCE AND ANY URGENT ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION INCLUDING:**

- i) NALC – newsletters, workshops, events, Chairman’s updates
- ii) OALC – June update circulated. Learning and development opportunities.  
Annual Meeting invite
- iii) OCC – various updates (unauthorised encampments, tree wardens,
- iv) SODC – various updates previously circulated (air quality policy, funding opportunities, upcoming events, Cllr register of interests, Brooke’s development)
- v) Healthwatch – update
- vi) Police and Crime Commissioner report.
- vii) TVP report

**68. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION – none**

**69. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING DUE TO THE PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED - approved**

- 65.iv** Members approved the staffing committee’s recommendation to award increases of between 5-6% to staff members and one additional day’s annual leave for 2023-24, back dated to 1st April 2023.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

- ix. Clerk has passed first Community Governance assignments and will be attending Study Days (5-6 Sep) and SLCC Branch meeting (7 Sep).
- x. Clerk booked to attend SLCC conference and AGM (10-12 Oct.).
- xi. Update on fly tipping on land at rear of Allotments.
- xii. Celebrating Volunteer Awards, nominations to be reviewed
- xiii. Councillor Development Day – date TBC.

**#75/2023-24. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

**#76/2023-24. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SODC DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

**#77/2023-24. TO CONSIDER RESPONSE TO PLANNING APPLICATION P23/S2384/O - LAND EAST OF J8A OF M40, WATERSTOCK [P23/S2384/O](#) *Toby Newman***

**#78/2023-24. TO CONSIDER REGISTERING INTEREST FOR 20MPH ZONES IN WHEATLEY**

*Peter Ramsdale*

**#79/2023-24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FOLLOWING VILLAGE PARKING SURVEY**

*Peter Ramsdale*

**#80/2023-24. TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR A GRIT BIN IN TEMPLARS CLOSE**

**#81/2023-24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM WHEATLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE**

**#82/2023-24. TO CONSIDER REGISTERING CHURCH RD REC WITH LAND REGSITRY *Clerk***

**#83/2023-24. TO CONSIDER RESPONSES TO CURRENT CONSULTATION**

- i. [SODC/VoWHDC Landscape Consultation](#)
- ii. [SODC/VoWHDC Tourism Consultation](#)

**#84/2023-24. TO APPROVE LETTER OF AUTHORITY FOR UTILITY AID AND REVIEW OF CONTRACT FOR 2024 AND BEYOND**

**#85/2023-24. TO APPROVE RECEIPT OF CIL SHARE FROM SODC**

**#86/2023-24. TO APPROVE INTERNAL AUDITOR LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT**

**#87/2023-24. TO RECEIVE EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT**

**#88/2023-24. TO APPROVE POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

- i. [Standing Orders 2023-24](#)
- ii. [Financial Regulations 2023-24](#)
- iii. [Employee Handbook \(Employment Policies\)](#)
- iv. [Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#)

**#89/2023-24. TO RECEIVE UPDATE/MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM:**

- i. Finance Committee – next meeting 16th October
- ii. Open Spaces Committee – next meeting 18th September
- iii. Planning Committee – next meeting 13th September, previous minutes circulated
- iv. Staffing Committee – minutes circulated
- v. Communications Working Group – meeting to be arranged
- vi. Holton Park Liaison Group -
- vii. Holton Pavilion Project - meeting with Gifted 31st Aug
- viii. Littleworth Playing Fields Working Group – on hold until school returns
- ix. Oxford Brookes Residents groups –



## WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL BRIEFING PAPER – 04.09.2023

### 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT PROJECT

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<b>Author:</b>	Cllr Peter Ramsdale
<b>Strategic Goal:</b>	Goal 2 Support our village to become vibrant, sustainable and a safe place.
<b>Strategic Aim:</b>	Investigate whether 20 is plenty should be implemented in Wheatley.
<b>Summary:</b>	Proposal from Cllr Ramsdale in support of working with OCC to investigate whether 20 is plenty should be implemented in Wheatley.
<b>Resolution:</b>	That Wheatley Parish Council approve the registration of the council's interest in joining the Oxfordshire 20mph Project.

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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The County Council is encouraging and funding the roll-out of 20 mph speed limits in all communities who seek them.
- 1.2 The introduction of 20 mph in the county 2021/2022 pilot areas has already reduced speeds by up to 4mph. This has really benefitted the local communities and it will help to reduce the frequency and severity of accidents.
- 1.3 We register our interest in joining the scheme and officers will then put Wheatley into the programme of work and contact the parish to work on the detail nearer the time of the implementation. It is planned that all schemes will be completed by the end of 2025.
- 1.4 OCC will fund the legal work and signing as well as 20 roundels on the road surface and 'dragon's teeth' markings at the start of each new limit.
- 1.5 If, after a period of time, the scheme is deemed as not working, then OCC can consider removing or amending it.

#### 2. Key information

##### *Safer Roads*

- 2.1 Research by the UK Transport Research Laboratory has shown that every 1mph reduction in average urban speeds can result in a six percent fall in the number of casualties. It's also been shown that you are seven times more likely to survive if you are hit by a car driving at 20mph, than if you are hit at 30mph.

##### *Congestion*

- 2.2 Research shows that slower speeds encourage a smoother driving style with less stopping and starting which helps traffic to flow. Evidence from other areas shows that slower speeds encourage more people to walk and cycle.

##### *Air Pollution*

- 2.3 Driving at 20mph causes some vehicular emissions to rise slightly (mainly Heavy Goods Vehicles) and some (car) to fall. Reduced acceleration and braking will help to reduce fuel consumption and the associated particulate emissions from items such as tyres and brakes.

*Would the limits be village wide?*

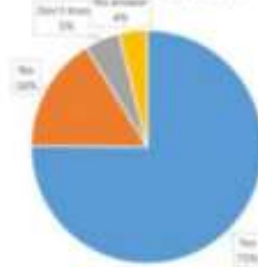
2.4 Not all roads may suit 20 mph speed limits and we may need to permit faster progress on some more strategic routes such as London Road. OCC will work with us to identify the best solution in each case.

*Do Wheatley residents want a 20mph speed limit?*

2.5 In Autumn 2022 a survey was carried out, by our District Councillors, to all houses in the village which included a question to understand the attitude of Wheatley residents to a 20mph speed limit. 205 households responded with the following results:

The local residents in Wheatley who responded to the survey strongly supported the idea of a 20mph speed limit. In the survey, there was a great deal of concern about speeding through the village ('rat running', inconsistent speed limits in village, safety concerns) and the desire to find ways to slow traffic down. A very strong majority (75%) felt that 20mph would be an improvement in the area.

Do you support the idea of a 20mph speed limit in our residential areas?



n=205





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# Financial Regulations

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To be approved at Full Council  
September 4, 2023  
Minute Ref:

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## Wheatley Parish Council Standing Orders

These Financial Regulations are based on the 2019 Model published by NALC and were adopted by the council at its meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### 1. General

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders<sup>1</sup> and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk. The Council may set up a standing committee to act as the Finance Committee with responsibility for carrying out some of the Council's financial management functions if deemed appropriate.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - for the timely production of accounts.
  - to provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money.
  - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - to identify the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Councillors are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office and this council has appointed the Clerk as RFO and these regulations will apply accordingly.
- 1.9. The RFO;
  - acts under the policy direction of the council;
  - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
  - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;

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<sup>1</sup> Model Standing Orders for Councils (2018 Edition) is available from NALC (©NALC 2018)

- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.14. In addition, the council must:

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

- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or ‘the regulations’ shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.16. In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

## **2. Accounting and Audit (internal and external)**

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a councillor other than the Chairman of the council or a cheque signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The councillor shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity, including any exceptions, shall on conclusion be reported to and noted by the council or Finance Committee as appropriate.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
  - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
  - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, and be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.

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

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employee has been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

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

2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

### **3. Annual Budgets and Forward Planning**

3.1. Each standing committee (if any) shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of September each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.

3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than November, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the council or Finance Committee as appropriate.

3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.

3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and the relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each councillor with a copy of the approved annual budget.

3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

## **4. Budgetary Control and Authority to Spend**

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

- the council for all items over £8,000;
- a duly delegated committee of the council for items over £1,000 but under £8,000; or
- the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £1,000.

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

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

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or Finance Committee as appropriate. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October by the Staffing Committee or the Finance Committee for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee as appropriate. The RFO will inform the council or relevant committee of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement, or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £2,000. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose, "material" shall be in excess of £500 or 15% of the budget, whichever is the less.

4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. Banking Arrangements and Authorisation of Payments**

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to the council or the Finance Committee as appropriate. The council / committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council or Finance Committee. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council or Finance Committee meeting.
- 5.5. The RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
  - a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of council, where the RFO certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee;
  - b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee; or
  - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee.
- 5.6. For each financial year the RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as, but not exclusively, Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like) for which council, or a duly authorised committee, may authorise payment for the year, provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee.
- 5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and signed by two councillors on each and every occasion when payment is authorised, thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.



- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by the council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by the council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall, before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.9. Councillors are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a councillor.

## **6. Instructions for Making of Payments**

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council or Finance Committee or, if so delegated, the RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be affected by BACS, cheque or other instruction to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of the council or Finance Committee.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to the council or Finance Committee shall be signed by two councillors who are bank signatories and countersigned by the RFO. If a councillor who is a bank signatory has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, or has any other interest, in the matter in respect of which the payment is being made, that councillor shall be required to consider standing orders, and thereby determine whether it is appropriate and/or permissible to be a signatory to the transaction in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or Finance Committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council or Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two councillors and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported

to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which councillors approved the payment.
- 6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of the council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all councillors immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a councillor's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.
- 6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or Finance Committee as appropriate.
- 6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking, may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by the RFO. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

- 6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by the council or Finance Committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.19. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council or Finance Committee. Transactions and orders made will be reported to the council or Finance Committee as appropriate and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council or Finance Committee as appropriate.
- 6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of councillors or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.21. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk, RFO or Assistant Clerk (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

## **7. Payment of salaries**

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by the council or Staffing Committee as appropriate.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available meeting of the council or Finance Committee as appropriate as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or Finance Committee as appropriate.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - b) by the internal auditor;
  - c) by the external auditor; or
  - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.

- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

## **8. Loans and investments**

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

## **9. Income**

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.

- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

## **10. Orders for Work, Goods and Services**

- 10.1. An official request email or letter) shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. All councillors and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.
- 10.3. A councillor may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.4. The RFO or staff authorised by the RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and, in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

## **11. Contracts**

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

- a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
  - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
  - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

- iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
  - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
  - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b) Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations<sup>2</sup>.
  - c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)<sup>3</sup>.
  - d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
  - e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
  - f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one councillor.
  - g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18(d) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
  - h) When the council is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £10,000 and above £5,000 the RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.
  - i) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quote or estimate.
  - j) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated, and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit

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

<sup>3</sup> Thresholds currently applicable are:

a) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£213,477)

b) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£5,336,937)

a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

## **12. Payments under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works**

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

## **13. Stores and equipment**

- 13.1. The Clerk or employee of the council authorised by the Clerk shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment of the council.
- 13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

## **14. Assets, Properties and Estates**

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £1,000.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants)

together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to the council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

## **15. Insurance**

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers [in consultation with the Clerk].
- 15.2. The RFO will be promptly notified of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. All appropriate councillors 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 by the council or Finance Committee as appropriate.

## **16. Charities**

- 16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the 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 RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.



## **17. Risk management**

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

## **18. Suspension and Revision of Financial Regulations**

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all councillors.



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# Standing Orders

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To be approved at Full Council

September 4, 2023

Minute Ref:

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# Wheatley Parish Council Standing Orders

These Standing Orders, including the Financial Regulations were formally adopted by resolution of the council on Monday ~~6<sup>th</sup> June 2022~~ 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## 1. Rules of debate at meetings

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including any amendments) 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 Chairman 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 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 Chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his/her 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 Chairman.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l The mover of an amendment 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 is carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the Chairman of the meeting, any person may speak only once in the debate on a motion except:
  - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another person;
  - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
  - v. in exercise of a right of reply.
- p During the debate of a motion, a person may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the person who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A person raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he/she considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he/she is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman of the meeting and his/her 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 requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chairman 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 his/her right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r) above, the contributions or speeches shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the Chairman of the meeting.

## 2. Disorderly conduct at meetings

- a All persons must observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022, a copy of which is annexed to these standing orders.
- b No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- c If any person disregards the request of the Chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- d If a resolution made under standing order 2(c) above is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

## 3. Meetings generally

■ Full Council meetings   ■ Committee meetings   ■ Sub-committee meetings

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**  
Meetings of the Council shall normally be held at The Merry Bells at 7.30 pm unless the Council decides otherwise, or due to unforeseen circumstances.  
Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.
- b **The minimum 3 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 a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum 3 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 giving reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- ■ e Members of the public may make representations solely in answer to questions

and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

- ■ f The period designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed 30 minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- ■ g Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes at a meeting unless otherwise directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- ■ 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 Chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and may stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Chairman 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 his comments to the Chairman of the meeting.
- ■ ■ k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chairman 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 reporting 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 Chairman of the Council may, in the absence of the Chairman, be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman if present, shall**

preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman 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 or non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
  
- ■ ■ r **The Chairman of a meeting may cast an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and, in the case of an equality of votes, may exercise his casting vote whether he cast an original vote.**  
*See standing orders 5(h) and (i) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman 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 or non-councillor with voting rights present and absent;
  - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - iv. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - v. if there was a public participation session; and
  - vi. 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 his 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 4f (vii) below for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*



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

#### **4. Committees and sub-committees**

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
  
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee that regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
  
- c **Unless the committee determines otherwise, all 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 and sub-committees as may be necessary, and:
  - i. shall determine the terms of reference of the committee;
  - ii. shall determine the number and times of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
  - iii. shall permit the committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee, to determine the number and times of its meetings;
  - iv. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee.
  - v. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the Chairman of the standing committee;
  - vi. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee to appoint its own Chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
  - vii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee or sub-committee, such quorum being no less than three;
  - viii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of the committee;
  - ix. 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;
  - x. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - xi. may dissolve a committee or sub-committee.

## **5. Ordinary council meetings**

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new 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 may 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 Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he/she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he/she resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He/she may cast an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:
  - i. **in an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms (unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.) and, in a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his/her 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 any committee;
  - iv. consideration of the recommendations made by any committee;

- v. review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - vi. review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - vii. appointment of members to existing committees;
  - viii. appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4 above;
  - ix. review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - x. review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
  - xi. review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
  - xii. in an election year, making 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 assets including buildings and office equipment;
  - xiv. confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
  - xv. review of the Council's and/or subscriptions to other bodies;
  - xvi. review of the Council's complaints procedure;
  - xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
  - xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
  - xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
  - xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
  - xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.
- k. No councillor may be elected as Chairman of the Council for more than 3 years consecutively.

## **6. Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees and sub-committees**

- a The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to 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 must be signed by the two councillors.
- c The Chairman of a committee or sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.
- d If the Chairman of a committee or sub-committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee or sub-committee, any two members of the committee or sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee.

## **7. Previous resolutions**

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

## **8. Voting on appointments**

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

## **9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 3 working days before the meeting. Working days in this context 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) above, 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) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least five working days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman 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 on the agenda or rejected.
- f Subject to standing order 9(e) above, 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 for their rejection.

## **10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice**

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
  - i. to correct an inaccuracy in, the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - ii. to move to a vote;
  - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
  - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
  - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
  - vi. to change to 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 sensitive 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. suspension of a particular standing order (unless it concerns mandatory statutory requirements);
  - xvi. to adjourn the meeting;
  - xvii. to close a meeting

## **11. Management of information**

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which**

information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g., the Limitation Act 1980).

- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

## **12. Draft minutes**

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors before or 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(i) above.
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendments made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he/she shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:  
“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

### 13. Code of conduct and dispensations

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council subject only to the following dispensations.
- b Unless he/she/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 he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she/they had the interest
- c Unless he/she/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 he/she has another interest if so, required by the Council's code of conduct. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered such matter.
- 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 and such a decision is final.  
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 in 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.
- f Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f) above, dispensation requests 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
- g **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) above if, having regard to all relevant circumstances, any of the following applies:**
  - 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, or**
  - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area, or**
  - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**



## 14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by a District or County Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of the Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below.
- c The Council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by the District or County 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 such councillor or non-councillor with voting rights. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

## 15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Parish Clerk or (ii) other person(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Parish Clerk is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
  - i. **at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council**, a committee or a sub-committee,
    - **serve on councillors a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda of the meeting, either by delivery or post at their residences or by email where a councillor has elected to receive such a summons 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 above, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his 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 the Freedom of Information legislation and rights exercises 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 22 below*)
- xii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;
- xiii. record every planning application notified to the Council and the council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xiv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Planning Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning Committee;
- xv. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvi. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect. (*See also standing order 22 below*)

## **16. Responsible Financial Officer**

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

## **17. Accounts and accounting statements**

- a. "Proper practices" in these standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide.
- b. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
  - i. the Council's income and expenditure for the quarter being reported, or more frequently as agreed by council;
  - ii. the Council's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
  - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and including a comparison with the budget for the financial year highlighting 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 for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
  - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual 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 applying the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The annual return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

## 18. Financial controls and procurement

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) 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 payment; and
  - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** 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 **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement)**
- d 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 drawn up;
  - ii. an invitation to tender to include (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to tenders and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - iii. an invitation to tender in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
  - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - v. the opening of tenders by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the time and date for submission of tenders has passed;

- vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibilities
- e Neither the Council nor committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

## 19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Council or Staffing committee is subject to standing order 11 above.
- b Subject to the council's policy regarding absences from work, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of the Council, or, the Chairman of the Staffing committee, or, if he/she/they is not available, the vice-chair, of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.
- c The Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of the Staffing committee , if Council shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Proper Officer. The review and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution of the Staffing Committee.
- d Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Proper Officer shall contact the Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of the Staffing committee, in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by the Staffing committee.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Proper Officer relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g In accordance with standing order 11a, only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 19(f).

## **20. Responsibilities to provide information.**

See also standing order 21.

- a In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b If the gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000 The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

## **21. Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation**

(Below is not an exclusive list). (See also Standing Order 11.)

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

## **22. Relations with the press/media**

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

## **23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds**

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

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

## **24. Communicating with District and County councillors**

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

## **25. Restrictions on councillor activities**

- a Unless authorised by the council or any committee, no councillor shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue any orders or instructions.

## **26. Standing orders generally**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory 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 requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least five 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 after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the Chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

2023-2027

# Wheatley Parish Council Strategic Plan



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89a High St, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1XP





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# Executive Summary

## Summary

The role of local and parish councils are ever changing, with increasing demands on its resources to maintain and improve the lives of its community.

Wheatley Parish Council have written this strategic plan that highlights key challenges and how its plans to address them.

As the council embark on a new term, 2023-2027 councillors acknowledges that it can only achieve its objectives, by working in collaboration with existing organisations and groups from within the community and beyond.

## Our Vision

To create a vibrant and strong community that supports the needs of residents, businesses and groups.

## Our Values

Our values are:

1. Community & environmental focus
2. Fairness
3. Leadership
4. Openness
5. Problem Solving

# The Council



**Alison Sercombe**

Chairman

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Alison is responsible for leading 'Team Wheatley', delivering projects to enhance and develop our community. Alison spent 20+ years in public service at a senior level and her family has been in the village for many generations.



**Toby Newman**

Vice Chairman

---

Explain what they do for the business. How much experience do they have? Where did they study? What are their achievements? You may also add a fun fact about them.



**Michelle Legg**

Clerk

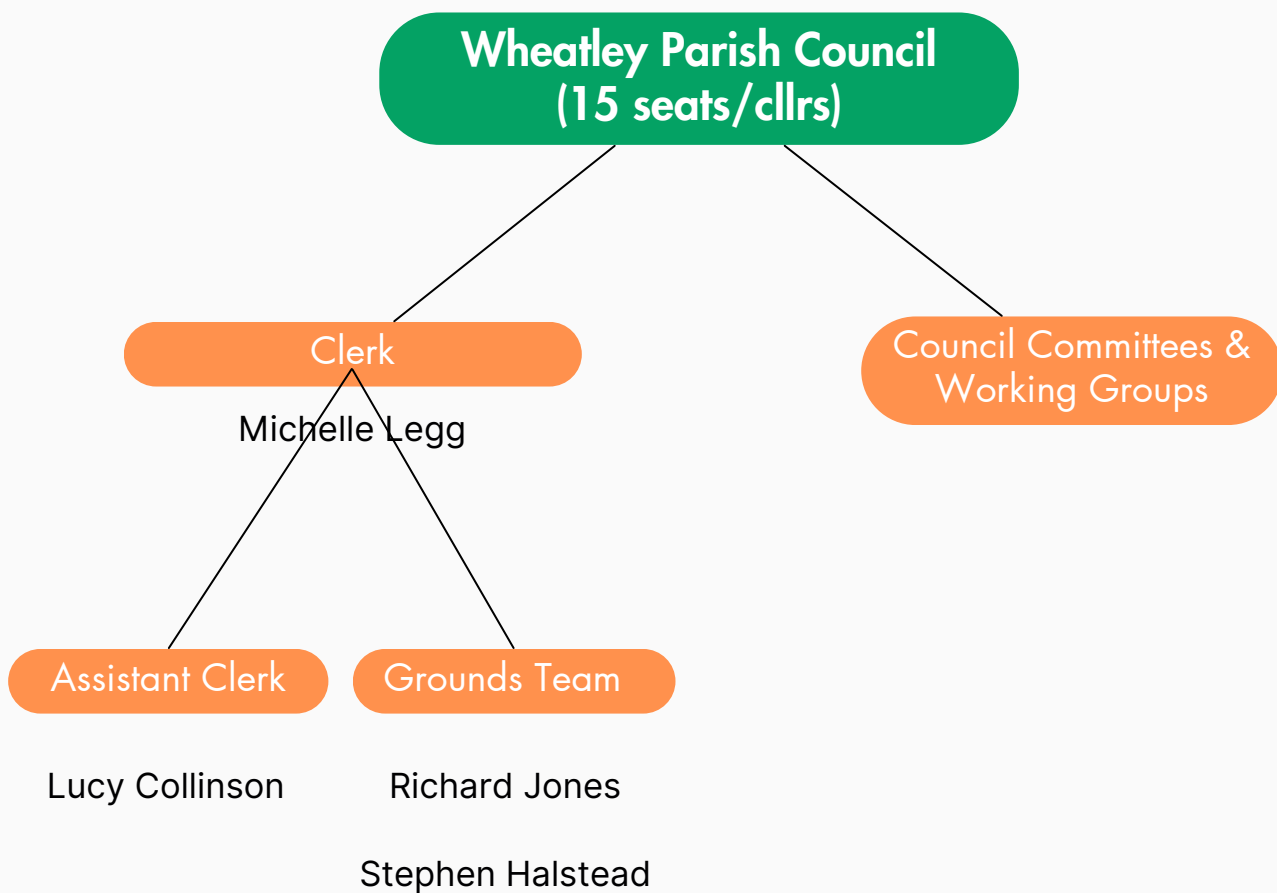
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Manages the Council's property as well as the daily running of Council administration and staff. She also provides the council with guidance and support, to assist the wider council in making decisions.

Michelle has been with the council since 2017

# Our Structure

Who is who



## Councillors 2023-2027

Richard Barrett, Andrew Cooper, Paul Gregory, Les Mara, Toby Newman, Peter Ramsdale, Alison Sercombe, Anthony Shepherd, Richard Street, Lizzie Tully, Paul Willmott

# What we do



## Our facilities & services

We own and manage :

- Church Rd Rec
- Cullum Rd Rec
- Farm Close Rd Rec
- Littleworth Allotments
- several footpaths
- Village Square (High St)
- two village greens
- numerous trees

We own Wheatley Playing Fields and lease these to Wheatley Playing Fields Trust.

We have a small parish office, at 89a High St.

We administer a community grants scheme, providing support to local organisations, or organisations that support residents of Wheatley.

### Not sure who is responsible?

- Visit [Fixmystreet.org](https://www.fixmystreet.org) and report it
- Check out Wheatley News
- Contact the parish office

# Strategic Plan

We have set out our key priorities and objects for the next four years and beyond

## Our goals and objectives:

### Goal 1 Action against Climate Change to protect our environment

Lead Cllr: Alison Sercombe

- Replace the existing sports pavilion with a carbon neutral building
- Identify sites to plant more shrubs and trees, particularly native species
- Develop wildflower/long grass areas along roadsides
- Scope a green route through the village
- Work with primary and secondary schools to support the delivery of projects that will improve community access and facilities

### Goal 2 Support our village to become a vibrant, sustainable and safe place

Lead Cllr: Peter Ramsdale

- Actively work with OCC on better maintenance of our roads, tackling dangerous and inappropriate parking
- Investigate whether '20 is plenty' should be implemented in Wheatley
- Work with OCC on solutions for parking on High St and surrounding roads
- Write and implement a Community Emergency Plan
- Actively promote businesses in our village
- Actively source goods and services from local traders
- Support community events

### Goal 3 Enhancing councillors learning and skills to ensure that the council is accessible to the community and promoting inclusivity and wellbeing

Lead Cllr Toby Newman

- Develop a Youth Council, to contribute to the development of facilities for young people
- Develop channels of communication to reach the wider community
- Continue to support wellbeing within our community
- Encourage and promote sport and recreation in Wheatley

# Our Budget

Details of our budget for  
2023-24

## Capital Requirements

In this section, give a breakdown of the income we plan to receive and how we plan to spend this, to support the community:

	Income
Newsletter	13,590
Open Spaces	£1,685
Grants & Precept	£1,99,733
Other Income	£940
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£215,948</b>

	Expenditure
Staff Costs	£55,120
Utilities	£1,252
Meeting & Office Costs	£18,450
Professional Fees	£14,098
Open Spaces Maintenance & Projects	£51,080
Community & Grants	£64,235
Other Costs	£4,012
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£215,948</b>

# Future Plans

We have some ambitious plans that we hope to deliver within the next four years

## Littleworth Playing Fields

We are working with Wheatley Primary School, Oxford Diocese School Trust and Oxfordshire County Council to make a large part of Littleworth Playing Fields accessible to the community.

## Wheatley Cadet Hut

We are working with the Ministry of Defence and Oxfordshire County Council to bring an under used building back into the community.

## Youth Club

Working in partnership with Oxfordshire Play Association we plan to have launch Wheatley Youth Club in 2023.





# Contact us for further inquiries

**Wheatley Parish Council**  
The Parish Office,  
89a High St,  
Wheatley,  
OX33 1XP  
01865 875615  
[Clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
[www.wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter



- x. Traffic Working Group –
- xi. Youth Club – meeting to be arranged between OPA, WPC and interested persons
- xii. Youth Council

**#90/2023-24. TO RECEIVE UPDATES/REPORTS FROM:**

- i. Community Larder –
- ii. Good Neighbour Scheme -
- iii. Howe Trust –
- iv. Maple Tree Centre –
- v. Merry Bells Management Committee
- vi. Oxford Brookes Residents Association
- vii. Thames Valley Police
- viii. Wheatley Charities –
- ix. Wheatley Playing Field Trust –
- x. Wheatley Refugee Support Group
- xi. Wheatley Windmill Preservation Trust

**#91/2023-24. CORRESPONDENCE AND ANY URGENT ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION**

**#92/2023-24. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**#93/2023-24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING Monday 3rd October 2023**

**#94/2023-24. REPORTS PACK**