



🏠 **Melbourn Parish Council**
Melbourn Community Hub
30 High Street
Melbourn
SG8 6DZ

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MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL – FINANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
(District of South Cambridgeshire)

A meeting of the Finance & Good Governance Committee held on Tuesday 22 April, at 7:30pm in the Austen Room, Community Hub, 30 High Street, Melbourn, SG8 6DZ

Present: Cllrs Alexander, Clark, Kanagarathnam (Chair)

Absent:

In attendance: Abigail Williams (Clerk), Shelley Coulman (RFO)

FINANCE & GOOD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Meeting started 19:32

FG045/25 To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Campbell, Hart and Kilmurray with acceptable reasons given. It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllrs Campbell, Hart and Kilmurray. Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour.

FG046/25 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Members are reminded that they are required to ensure their Declaration is updated within 28 days of any change in circumstances.

- a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
- b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)
- c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

None received.

FG047/25 Public Participation: (For up to 15 minutes members of the public may contribute their views and comments and questions to the Parish Council – 3 minutes per item). Written responses to questions raised will be made by the Parish Office within 14 days of the date of this meeting.

No members of the public present.

FG048/25 To approve the minutes of the Finance & Good Governance Committee meeting held on 16 December 2024

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Finance and Good Governance Committee Meeting held on the 16 December 2024 as an accurate record. Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

FG049/25 To report back on the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 16 December 2024

Nothing to report.

FG050/25 To review the Timetable for Recurring Agenda items

Timetable reviewed and accepted as presented.

FG051/25 To note VAT return / refund

It was noted that the February 2025 refund of £4,661.05 was received. The next VAT return will be submitted after year end.

FG052/25 To receive an update on the Asset Management Reserves

RFO reported no spend from Asset Management Reserves (AMR) – the £5,000 minimum spend is to be reviewed in item FG056/25j) to allow for smaller projects to be considered for the AMR. It was highlighted that the Croyland report would drive asset management but that independent review of the need for works should still be conducted. **ACTION:** Plan to renew the asset management report should be included for 2026.

FG053/25 To review Fixed Asset Register

The updated fixed asset register was noted.

Signed..... Date.....

FG054/25 To consider approving annual effectiveness of internal controls review.

The Clerk and RFO presented the completed annual effectiveness of the system of internal controls review and highlighted suggested actions.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the annual effectiveness of the system of internal controls review to Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour.

FG055/25 To consider moving F&GG meetings to Tuesday evenings going forwards.

It was RESOLVED to move F&GG meetings to Tuesday evenings going forwards.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour.

FG056/25 Policies

- a) To note new NALC Model Financial Regulations released 5 March 2025 – to be reviewed by RFO and considered at July F&GG Committee meeting.

It was noted.

- b) To consider approving draft Investment Strategy for 2025/26 (6 month review).

It was noted that the Investment Strategy for 2025/26 as presented in November 2024 under item FG031/24a) is still valid.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the Investment Strategy as stands to Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

- c) To consider approving changes to Document 4.04 Expenses Policy. *(review date and reference to petty cash removed)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.04 Expenses Policy.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour.

- d) To consider approving changes to Document 4.06 Gifts and Hospitality Policy. *(review date and formatting changes only)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.06 Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

- e) To consider approving changes to Document 4.08 Publication of information and request of information. *(review date and formatting changes only)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.08 Publication of information and request of information.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour

- f) To consider approving changes to Document 4.09 Modern Slavery Statement. *(review date and updates to definitions to reflect guidance updates)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.09 Modern Slavery Statement.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour

- g) To consider approving changes to Document 4.11 Records management and disposal policy. *(review date and minor additions only)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.11 Records management and disposal policy.

Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour

- h) To consider approving changes to Document 4.29 Policy and Procedure Bank Reconciliations. *(review date and removal of reference to pre-paid debit cards only)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.29 Policy and Procedure Bank Reconciliations.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour

- i) To consider approving changes to Document 4.35 Credit Card Policy and Procedure to reflect changes to credit card and pre-paid debit cards practices as agreed on item PC075 24a). *(review date and content changes to reflect current credit card use)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.35 Credit Card Policy and Procedure.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour

- j) To consider approving changes to Document 4.37 Asset Management Reserve Policy. *(review date and addition of reduction of £5,000 minimum spend)*

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.37 Asset Management Reserve Policy.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour

- k) To consider approving changes to Document 4.38 Subject Access Request Register. *(review date change only)*
It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 4.38 Subject Access Request Register.
Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour
- l) To consider approving changes to Document 6.10 Terms of Reference for Internal Audit. *(review date change only)*
It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 6.10 Terms of Reference for Internal Audit.
Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour
- m) To consider approving changes to Document 6.11 Futures Working Party Terms of Reference. *(review date and change only)*
It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 6.11 Futures Working Party Terms of Reference.
Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour
- n) To consider approving updates to Document 8.15 General Risk Register. *(full review required)*
It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to Document 8.15 General Risk Register.
Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour
- o) To consider approving updates to Document 2.00 Standing Orders as adapted from NALC Model Standing Orders 2025 Update. *(full review required)*
It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to accept the changes to 2.00 Standing Orders as adapted from NALC Model Standing Orders 2025 Update.
Proposed by Cllr Alexander, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour

FG057/25 To note the date of the next Finance & Good Governance Committee Meeting is Tuesday 22 July 2025 (assuming resolution to accept FG055).

The date of the next Finance & Good Governance Committee Meeting was noted as Tuesday 22 July 2025.

Meeting closed 20:02



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MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL – FINANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
(District of South Cambridgeshire)

A meeting of the Finance & Good Governance Committee held on Monday 16 December 2024, at 10:00 in the Austen Room, Community Hub, 30 High Street, Melbourn, SG8 6DZ

Present: Cllrs Campbell, Clark, Kilmurray (Chair)

Absent:

In attendance: Abigail Williams (Clerk), Alex Coxall (Deputy Clerk), Shelley Coulman (RFO)

FINANCE & GOOD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Meeting started at 10:02

FG033/24 To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Alexander, Hart and Kanagarathnam with acceptable reasons given.

It was RESOLVED to accept apologies from Cllrs Alexander, Hart and Kanagarathnam. Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Campbell. All in favour.

FG034/24 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Members are reminded that they are required to ensure their Declaration is updated within 28 days of any change in circumstances.

a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda

b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)

c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

Cllr Kilmurray declared an interest in items related to the Hub finances – dispensation was granted to stay for the discussion. No votes were needed specifically about the Hub.

FG035/24 Public Participation: (For up to 15 minutes members of the public may contribute their views and comments and questions to the Parish Council – 3 minutes per item). Written responses to questions raised will be made by the Parish Office within 14 days of the date of this meeting. No members of the public present.

FG036/24 To approve the minutes of the Finance & Good Governance Committee meeting held on 4 November 2024

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Finance and Good Governance Committee Meeting held on the 4 November 2024 as an accurate record.

Proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

FG037/24 To report back on the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 4 November 2024

Nothing to report.

FG038/24 To review the Timetable for Recurring Agenda items

a) To note Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Review was accepted in June 2024 (PC039/24d) – will be included as timetabled for 2025.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Timetable of Recurring Agenda items for 2024/25.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Campbell. All in favour.

FG039/24 To note VAT return / refund

It was noted that the September VAT refund of £6,194.39 has been received.

FG040/24 To consider a review of Little Hands rent

It was RESOLVED that the Little Hands rent be kept at £27,000 for the coming year – to be reviewed again in 12 months.

Proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

FG041/24 To consider actions in relation to Internal Audit

a) To receive the complete Internal Auditors report 2023/24.

Signed..... Date.....

The Internal Auditors report from CAPALC was formally received.

- b) To consider charges for internal audit to be completed by CAPALC

Charges for the internal audit by CAPALC were accepted.

Proposed by Cllr Kilmurray, seconded by Cllr Campbell. All in favour.

FG042/24 BUDGET 2025/26

- a) To consider draft estimate of income and expenditure for the forthcoming financial year for recommendation to full council.

Draft precept calculations were presented by the RFO and discussed, key points were:

- Income to remain at current levels – work should be done to increase income from held assets going forward.
- Work should be carried out to ensure that asset management reserves are spent as listed to avoid building reserves unnecessarily.
- Payroll costs were discussed noting the impact of addition of Youth Worker, NI costs and wage increases – it was noted that HR panel would review wages and pay brackets.
- A reduction of the Hub maintenance grant was proposed from £15,000 to £10,000.
- Discussion about precepted contribution to an LHI application for ‘Safety around the Primary School’ took place – it was decided that an LHI application would be made with a commitment to spend in a future precept if the application were successful – likely funding of around £20,000 would be required.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the draft budget for 2025/26 of £350,217.00, increased from 2024/25 by 6.28% (£7.59 per band D household) to full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Campbell, all in favour.

FG043/24 Policies

- a) To consider updates to Dispensation Procedure Guide for Parish Councils Policy (Document 3.06) and to recommend to Full Council.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the approval of the updated Dispensation Procedure Guide for Parish Councils Policy (Document 3.06) to Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

- b) To review Risk Management Policy (Document 4.19) and consider recommendation to Full Council.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the approval of the updated Risk Management Policy (Document 4.19) to Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Campbell. All in favour.

- c) To consider updates to Model Publication Scheme Policy (Document 4.07) and to recommend to Full Council.

It was RESOLVED to recommend the approval of the updated Model Publication Scheme Policy (Document 4.07) to Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Campbell. All in favour.

- d) To consider updates to the [Local Government Transparency - Melbourn Parish Council](#) page on website.

It was RESOLVED to approve all suggested updates to the Local Government Transparency - Melbourn Parish Council page on the website to Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Clark. All in favour.

FG044/24 To consider re-scheduling of meeting planned for Monday 17 March 2025 to Tuesday 22 April 2025 to reflect the updated timetable for recurring items as approved FG050/24).

It was RESOLVED to re-schedule the March meeting to April when changes to the Recurring Agenda changes were resolved under FG050/24.

Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Campbell. All in favour.

The date of the next meeting was noted as Tuesday 22 April 2025.

Meeting closed 11:47

Melbourn Parish Council – Finance and Good Governance Committee

Timetable for Recurring Agenda Item - Meeting dates July, November, December, April (additional meeting in Jan if extra time needed for Precept)

Task	Purpose	PC Meeting	FGGC meeting
Election of Chair of FGGC	Statutory		July
Internal audit report – year end Not in TOR	Consideration of recommendations		July
Annual review of Allotment Fees	For recommendation to PC prior to allotment renewals	Before September	July
Annual review of Pavilion hire /match fees	For recommendation to PC	Before August	July
Policy reviews/risk assessments – per Policy Review Schedule	Review policies delegated to FGGC		July
VAT return/refund	Quarterly check that VAT return/refund has been made		July
Future grant funding	Discuss future grant funding for when there is no longer money from the Solar farm		July
Review of Financial Risk Assessment	Recommendation to PC		November
Annual Review of burial fees	Recommendation to PC		November
Review of FGGC terms of reference	Recommendation to PC		November
Policy reviews/risk assessments – per Policy Review Schedule	Review policies delegated to FGGC		November
VAT return/refund	Quarterly check that VAT return/refund has been made		November
Policy reviews – investment strategy	Recommendation to PC	November (review 6 monthly)	November
Review of draft Precept for proposal to Parish Council	Recommendation to PC	Mid Jan	December
Internal audit report	Consideration of recommendations	Jan	December
Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit		Jan	December
Policy reviews/risk assessments – per Policy Review Schedule	Review policies delegated to FGGC	n/a	December
Annual review of Littlehands rent	For recommendation to PC in Jan and to allow Littlehands time to budget for changes in rental	By rent review date	December
VAT return/refund	Quarterly check that VAT return/refund has been made	n/a	December
Publication of information - Transparency Code 2015	Update statutory information	Jan	December
Review of Fixed Assets Register	Ensure it is up-to-date	Prior to AGAR	April
Policy reviews/risk assessments – per Policy Review Schedule	Review policies/risk assessment delegated to FGGC		April
VAT return/refund	Quarterly check that VAT return/refund has been made		April
Policy reviews – investment strategy	Recommendation to PC	April (review 6 monthly)	April
Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Controls	To allow PC to sign off AGAR	April	April
Review of Insurance Arrangements	Recommendation of changes to PC – renewal due Oct	September	April

Also Changes to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations – per Policy Schedule unless new versions are issued or changes needed

Timetable approved by F&GG April 2025

VAT refund / claim 2024/25

May 2024	REFUND	£4,594.17
July 2024	REFUND	£7,305.13
October 2024	REFUND	£6,194.39
February 2025	REFUND	£4,661.05

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: To evaluate the effectiveness of the system of internal controls

Purpose

Melbourn Parish Council is required to make proper arrangements for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge. It is responsible for ensuring that its affairs are managed in accordance with appropriate standards of financial conduct and that arrangements exist to prevent and detect fraud and corruption (internal controls). The purpose of internal controls is to manage risk by reducing it to a manageable level. MPC undertakes to review those arrangements at least once every financial year, or after any significant change in circumstances, to ensure that they are working in an adequate and effective way. By undertaking this review, MPC has assurance when answering assertion 2 on the Annual Governance Statement – “we maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.”

The review exercise will be carried out by the FGGC with reference to the RFO, Parish Clerk and the internal and external audit reports. The outcome will be reported to MPC and any weaknesses and areas for improvement acted upon.

Regulatory Framework and Governance

	Achieved Y/N	Comments
MPC has adopted NALC Standing Orders and these are regularly reviewed	Y	Latest version. Approved 20 May 2024 PC014/24a) To be reviewed annually at May meeting.
MPC has adopted NALC Financial Regulations and these are regularly reviewed	Y	March 2025 version due for review at July F&GG 2025.
The RFO is tasked with proper administration of MPC's financial affairs including implementing appropriate internal controls	Y	As stated within the job description.
Internal Audit reports are seen by the Parish Council	Y	Report received by Council (PC062/24a)
External Audit report is seen by the Parish Council	Y	Presented 25 November 2024 (PC132 24a)

Annual Review of Effectiveness

Internal Control Process/Objective	Evidence that controls are adequate/effective	Action Needed Y/N	Comments
Expenditure Approval/Ordering Orders are made by appropriately delegated persons.	Orders are made by the Clerk. Expenditure approvals are as per Financial Regs.	N	

Expenditure has been budgeted/appropriately approved. Value for money is obtained from suppliers through quote and tender procedures.	Checks against budget are made by RFO and presented to Council and relevant committees monthly. Approvals presented and voted by Council monthly. SOs set out tender / quote process.		
Payment controls Payments made are for goods/services that have been received/carried out and are supported by invoices. Payments are made to the correct payee for the correct amount. Physical controls exist over access to bank accounts. Cheques and bank transfers are signed off by two member signatories. Changes to bank payment details are appropriately approved.	Invoices for work done/goods received passed from Clerk to RFO. Invoices checked by RFO prior to payment. Invoice 'stamp' system used. Bank signatories check payees/payment amounts to approvals list. Bank accounts are password protected. Bank payments require 2 member signatories. Changes to payee details require 2 signatory approval.	N	
Prepaid Debit Cards Prepaid card expenditure is properly controlled, used for council purposes and reported to MPC.	Prepaid debit cards no longer in place (PC075 24a).	N	Prepaid debit cards are no longer used. Credit Cards with agreed limits have been implemented.
Payroll and Employment Payments are made to legitimate employees for pre-approved salary amounts. Changes to salaries and terms of employment are properly approved. MPC has complied with its duties under employment legislation and has met its pension obligations.	Payroll budget agreed by HR Panel & MPC approves precept budget. Gross salary calculations are checked to budget by signatories. Changes to salaries/employment agreed by HR/MPC. HR panel reviews employment legislation. RFO administers pension fund.	N	
Taxes – PAYE/NI & VAT Correct deductions are made for employee taxes and paid to HMRC on time. VAT is correctly accounted for and reclaimed regularly.	SAGE payroll software is used for deductions and uploaded to HMRC monthly. VAT is reclaimed quarterly.	N	
Income collection Income is invoiced, collected promptly and debtors are managed.	Invoices raised by Clerk and receipts monitored by RFO.	Y	It may be beneficial to look into a card reader for income collection. Cash is still offered on some

Receipts are properly recorded. Writing off of bad debts is appropriately authorised.	Receipts reviewed and recorded by RFO. Separation of duties. No significant bad debts to date 2024/25.		allotment renewals and a card machine may mitigate this.
Cash & banking Safe and efficient arrangements are in place for collection and banking of cash receipts.	Sequentially numbered receipts issued by Clerk and reconciled by RFO prior to banking. Unbanked cash locked away & insured.	Y	As above. Unity barcoded paying in book still not available so cash/cheque deposits are not easy.
Bank Accounts MPC has approved every bank mandate. There is a list of approved signatories for every bank account.	Yes. MPC approved bank signatories 22/07/24.	N	
Cash balances/investments Cash needs are monitored. Surplus cash balances invested appropriately. Measures are taken to reduce exposure to bank failure.	RFO monitors cash balances. Investment Strategy in place – ONGOING review.	N	
Bank reconciliations All bank accounts are regularly reconciled. Bank reconciliations are checked.	Policy in place. Bank recs carried out monthly & reviewed by a designated Cllr. Checks reported at MPC meetings.	N	
Assets MPC knows what assets it has, makes appropriate safeguarding arrangements and ensures they are adequately maintained and insured. Appropriate procedures are followed for asset disposal and use of resulting capital receipt	Asset register in place, regularly updated and reviewed annually by F&GGC. Maintenance committee ensure assets are maintained. Insurance is reviewed by MPC annually.	N	
Insurance MPC is satisfied that it's insurance cover is sufficient for its assets and risks.	Policy is a specialist Parish Council policy and is reviewed annually by MPC. Last renewed 04/10/24	N	
Budget setting Robust process for budget setting. MPC has adequate funds to cover its spending plans.	Budget is a multi-stage process and reviewed by F&GGC prior to being adopted by MPC. Spending plans are affordable.	N	
Budget monitoring	Finance reports are made to MPC and Maintenance	N	

MPC receives regular budget reports and explanations for budget variances.	monthly including explanations of variances.		
Reserves General Reserve is at an appropriate level. Ring-fenced reserves are for genuine purposes and are reviewed by MPC.	Reserve policy in place to aim to bring General Reserve to 6 months expenditure (currently 4.6mnths). Reserves reviewed annually by MPC. Asset Management Reserve Policy in place.	N	Current general reserves stand at 4.6mnths. Current general reserves to be confirmed after year end report.
Risk Assessments Risk assessments are produced, regularly reviewed and focus on the safety of the authority's assets.	Risk assessments are a standing item on MPC agendas and included in the Policy Review Schedule. Maintenance Committee carry out risk reviews and take actions.	Y	General Risk Register to be reviewed.
Loans and Long-Term Liabilities MPC is satisfied that loans have the proper approval and that repayments can be afforded.	MPC has three PWLB loans which have been properly approved. Repayments are included in precept budget and are affordable.	N	
Internal Audit Recommendations made by the Internal Auditor are acted on.	Reports shared with MPC and actions taken as required. Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit review carried out.	N	

Internal Controls are considered Adequate & Effective: Yes

Review carried out by: Abi Williams (Clerk) and Shelley Coulman (RFO)

Date of Review: 11 April 2025

Date of Review by F&GG Committee: 22 April 2025

Date reported to MPC: 28 April 2025

Document Approval:



(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting: 11 January 2021

Review Policy: Every 12 months

MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

This Model Financial Regulations template was produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in March 2025 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

Notes to assist in the use of this template:

- 1) This document is a model for councils of all sizes to use to develop their own financial regulations, suitable for the size of the council and the activities it undertakes.
- 2) Bold text indicates legal requirements, which a council cannot change or suspend.
- 3) For the rest, each council needs to adapt the model to suit its size and structure. For example, some councils have both a clerk and RFO, possibly with several more staff, while others have a single employee as clerk/RFO. Some councils have committees, some have a high level of delegation and some make all decisions at full council meetings. Many now use online payment methods, but others still rely on cheques.
- 4) Curly brackets indicate words, sentences or sections that can be removed if not applicable, or amended to fit the council's circumstances. An example of this is the phrase {or duly delegated committee}, which can be deleted if there are no committees.
- 5) Specific areas that may need adapting:
 - a) In 1.5 – is the Clerk the RFO?
 - b) In 3.3 and 3.4, the words "Governance and Accountability" do not apply in Wales
 - c) In section 4, does the council have committees and how many years are forecast?
 - d) In 5.6, does the council issue an open invitation to tender, or invite specific firms?
 - e) In 5.9, are online prices acceptable evidence?
 - f) In 5.13, 5.15 and 5.17, does the council have committees?
 - g) In 5.16, will a councillor ever be instructed to place an order?
 - h) In 5.20, is there a minimum level for official orders?
 - i) Section 6 includes several alternatives to cover delegation to committees or to officers, approval of invoices individually or in batches, or for approval of regular contractual payments at the beginning of the year.
 - j) Sections 7, 8 and 9 also includes several alternatives, including wording for where the clerk is a signatory. These are intended to allow a council's financial regulations to fit what they actually do, not to force any council to change what they do.
 - k) Section 10 gives two alternatives, with or without petty cash.
 - l) 13.6 has alternatives for VAT-registered and unregistered councils – only use one.
 - m) 13.7 and 13.8 are removable if they don't apply to the council.

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

[ENTER COUNCIL NAME] FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [enter date].

1. General

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

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of [£5,000];

2. Risk management and internal control

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual {Governance and Accountability} Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual {Governance and Accountability} Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by [the council] and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and

- has no involvement in the management or control of the council

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

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

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

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

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

4. Budget and precept

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

4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by [the council] at least annually in [October] for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the [Chair of the Council or relevant committee]. {The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft budgets.}

4.3. No later than [month] each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all [receipts and payments/income and expenditure] for the following financial year {along with a forecast for the following [three financial years]}, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

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

4.5. Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council {finance committee} not later than the end of [November] each year.

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

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT, the Clerk shall {seek formal tenders from at least [three] suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**

- 5.8. For contracts greater than [£3,000] excluding VAT the Clerk [or RFO] shall seek at least [3] fixed-price quotes;
- 5.9. where the value is between [£500] and [£3,000] excluding VAT, the Clerk [or RFO] shall try to obtain 3 estimates {which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.}
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, [the clerk] shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council {or relevant committee}. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- [the Clerk], under delegated authority, for any items below [£500] excluding VAT.
 - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council {or Chair of the appropriate committee}, for any items below [£2,000] excluding VAT.
 - {a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under [£5,000] excluding VAT}
 - {in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.}
 - the council for all items over [£5,000];
- Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.
- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order {unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council} or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council {or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference} except in an emergency.

- 5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to [£2,000] excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to [the council] as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless [the council] is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services {above [£250] excluding VAT} unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by [the RFO].

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with [name bank]. The arrangements shall be reviewed [annually] for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by [the RFO]. {Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO}.
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by [online banking/cheque], in accordance with a resolution of the council {or duly delegated committee}{or a delegated decision by an officer}, unless [the council] resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. {For each financial year [the RFO] may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance

contracts and similar items), which the council {or a duly delegated committee} may authorise in advance for the year}.

- 6.7. {A copy of this schedule of regular payments shall be signed by [two members] on each and every occasion when payment is made - to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.}
- 6.8. {A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee} for information only.
- 6.9. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments {only} in the following circumstances:
 - i. {any payments of up to [£500] excluding VAT, within an agreed budget}.
 - ii. payments of up to [£2,000] excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of [the council], where the [Clerk and RFO] certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council {or finance committee}.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of [£10,000], provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee].
- 6.10. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council {or finance committee}. The council {or committee} shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, [the RFO] shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify [a number of] councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. {The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.}
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent [by email] to [two] authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator [an authorised signatory] shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two [councillors who are] authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online {and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes}.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next [council] meeting {and appended to the minutes}.
- 7.9. With the approval of [the council] in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are [signed/approved online] by [two authorised members]. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.
- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of [the council] provided that each payment is approved online by [two authorised bank signatories], evidence is retained and any payments are reported to [the council] at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed {or approved online} by [two members], evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by [two of] the Clerk and [the RFO] [a member]. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every [two years].
- 7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.14. Remembered password facilities {other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification} should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

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

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to [the Clerk and the RFO] and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of [£500] unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by [the council]. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to [the council] and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of [the council].
- 9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk {and RFO} {specify other officers} and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used {under any circumstances.} OR {except for expenses of up to [£250] including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.}

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. {The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk [or RFO] (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.} **OR** {The RFO shall maintain a petty cash [float/imprest account] of [£250] and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.
 - a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
 - b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
 - c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on any schedule of payments presented for approval.}

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

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

11.2. Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.

- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council {or relevant committee}.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by [the finance committee] to ensure that the correct payments have been made.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

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

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. [The RFO] shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by [the RFO] and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. {The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date}. OR {Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made {quarterly where the claim exceeds [£100] and} at least annually at the end of the financial year.}
- 13.7. {Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall 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 record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.}
- 13.8. {Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.}

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by [the Clerk] to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. {[The officer in charge of each section] shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment [in that section].}

15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

15.3. {Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.}

15.4. {The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.}

16. Assets, properties and estates

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

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

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

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

16.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed [£500]. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

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

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

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

17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the

maximum risk exposure as determined [annually] by the council, or duly delegated committee.

18. [Charities]

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

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

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

Appendix 1 - Tender process

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

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: INVESTMENT PLAN 2025-26**2025-26 Investment Plan- (Sept 2024)**

The Investment Plan is reviewed annually, changes in the economic climate may give rise to half yearly reviews to ensure that the investments are making the best return for the Parish Council and are accessible when required.

Funds Available for Investing

MPC has approximately £ temporary surplus funds available during 2024/25 (see table below):

Source	Balance at 30.09.24	Comments
General Reserve	£354,856 of which £182,365 is equivalent to 6 months expenditure.	Easy access required in case of emergency need – We are only required to maintain 6 months trading, however this does not consider the remaining spend
Asset Management Reserve	£100,612	Projects to be reviewed
s106 Reserve	£194,453	Have looked at reserves and projects to be undertaken assumed bus shelters will be post 2025. Skate Park project funds to be redirected to other project – under investigation with s106 officer therefore assumed this will not be required in 2025.

Table of Fund investments to consider:

The table below shows how I believe we can prudently split the funds based on the reserves and the plans. This is not necessarily how it will be split taking into consideration the available accounts and risks.

Source	Instant Access	45 day notice	100 day notice	6 months	1 year
General Reserve	182,365	86,246	86,245		
Asset Management Reserve		30,000		10,000	60,612
S106 Reserve	31,906	22,428	22,428	22,428	95,263
Other Reserves – (£163,318)	30,000	25,547	35,924	35,924	35,923
Current Asses& Liabilities	(5,083)				
Total	239,188	164,221	144,597	68,352	191,798
Current Portfolio	593,293	120,536			94,327

Bank Account	Terms	Amount 30.09.24
Unity Trust Current	Instant Access	326,198
Unity Trust Savings	Instant Access	182,095
CCLA Public Sector Deposit fund	Instant Access	85,000
Charity Bank	1 year fixed	31,270
Cambs & County	1 Year Fixed	63,057
Nationwide 45 day saver	45 day notice	120,536
		808,156

This above Recommendation has considered the remaining 2024/25-year plan and potential spend in 2025/26 and is prudently placed.

- The majority of MPC's available funds should be kept readily accessible with a maximum of 100 days notice.
- It should be possible to invest for longer terms based on plans and obligations part of the AMR, s106 reserve and any reserves which are maintained for periods in excess of 1 year.
- The Investment Plan should be reviewed as MPC's plans for spending s106 and AMR and obligations are agreed to ensure that funds are available when required.

Economic Climate

Bank of England base rate is currently 5% the next review is the 7th November 2024 it is predicted that this will remain after the budget announcements made. It is expected to fall by the end of 2025. Current position – 30 September 2024

MPC has £299,863 invested in four accounts – see breakdown below.

Review of existing investment performance:

Institution	Product	Current Investment	Notice Period	Yield (at 28 Feb 2024)	FSCS Yes/No	Credit Rating
CCLA	Public Sector Deposit Fund* (money market fund)	£85,000	On demand	4.8%	n/a	AAAmf (Fitches) Unchanged
Nationwide (issue 1)	45 day Members Business Saver deposit account	£120,536	45 days	3.40%	Y	AA3 (Moody's) Unchanged
Charity Bank	40 day ethical notice	£31,270	40 day	3.26%	Y	-
Cambs & County	1 Year Fixed	£63,057	1 year	5.10%	Y	

*The Public Sector Deposit Fund is a money market fund specifically designed for the Public Sector. It invests in a diversified portfolio of high-quality sterling denominated deposits and instruments. Its primary aim is to maintain the net asset value of the fund at par. The purchase of shares in the PSDF is not the same as investing in a bank deposit account and is not a guaranteed investment. There is a risk that the value per share may fall below face value.

Investment Options for remainder 2024/25

A review of available investments, open to Parish Councils, which meet MPC's Investment Strategy requirements was undertaken

The **best yields** currently available to Parish Councils are:

Institution	Product	Minimum Investment	Notice Period	Yield (at Feb 2023) Fixed/Variable	FSCS Yes/No	Credit Rating
Charity Bank	Ethical 40 day notice	£1,000	40 days	3.26%V for bals>£25k 3.30%	Y	-
Charity Bank	Ethical 1-Year Business Fixed Rate	£10,000	Matures 1 Year	4.46% F	Y	-
Charity Bank	Ethical 100-day notice	£1,000	100 days	3.29% >£25,000 3.33%	Y	-
Cambridge & Counties Bank	1 yr fixed rate business bond	£50,000	Matures 1 yr	4.6% F	Y	-
Cambridge & Counties Bank	31 day notice	£10,000	31 days	4.05% variable	Y	
Cambridge & Counties Bank	95 day notice	£10,000	95 days	4.55% variable	Y	
Cambridge & Counties Bank	6 months fixed rate bond	£10,000	Matures 6 months	4.600% fixed	Y	

MPC currently has £299,863 invested.

The available additional funds for investment is approximately £275,576.

There are a number of accounts that are not suitable for parish councils so spreading the risk is difficult. We hold a large amount in Unity Trust Bank, looking at the deposit accounts these require a minimum of £85,000 investment.

Of MPC's existing investment accounts, CCLA is performing well and Nationwide is currently lower than compared to the best new offerings. The Cambs & County investment is performing well.

Cambridge & Counties Bank are offering good returns although one account requires 95 days they only do from 1 year fixed. CCLA offers instant access with a higher yield, however there is risk attached to this account. Cambridge & Counties 1- year fixed rate business bond is the best return currently available to Parish Councils.

Other High street banks do offer savings accounts and the interest rate is significantly lower. This will reduce the overall risk.

Investment Plan Recommended for remainder of 2024/25:

CCLA PSDF – this investment is currently performing well. MPC has an investment by of £85,000. Note that this investment is not the same as a bank deposit.

Nationwide 45 day business saver – MPC should reduce the amount held in the account to the FSCS limit of £85,000.

Charity Bank 40 days – This account holds £31,270 and should remain.

Cambridge & Counties Bank 1 year fixed bond – this investment was renewed in September 2024 with £63,057

For agreement:

Please note that we are overlooking the £85,000 protection due to a lack of banking available to parish councils, and balancing the need to deal with a number of accounts

We are proposing to bring the amount invested in Cambridge & Counties 6 month fixed rate bond up to £100,000.

We propose to increase the 100 day Charity Bank account investment to £100,000.

We are proposing moving the Unity Trust Bank savings account to the CCLA investment account.

We will then approach other banks to review the offerings to spread the risks.

We are proposing to explore the possibility of investing in an asset within the community. An example maybe (shop on high street). This would reduce the risk of the £85k and bring in a different type of revenue stream – possibly higher than bank interest rates.

Does reduce the liquidity of not being cash and exposure to more maintenance. Does allow the Parish to ensure it is used for the right reasons.

Liquidity breakdown of suggested investments:

	Instant Access	40-45 days	100 days	6 months	1 year
% of funds	30%	20%	18%	8%	24%

The proposed investment plan spreads investments between institutions and account types which spreads risk via diversification.

All investments should be reviewed in March 2025 subject to maturity of bonds or earlier if there is a significant change in interest rates, perceived risk of financial institution failure or economic climate.

Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.32

Version: 1

Date approved: November 2024

Review date: April 2025

Date of Parish Council meeting: 25th November 2024

Review: 6 months

POLICY: COUNCILLORS AND STAFF EXPENSES POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the reimbursement of expenses. It is the Parish Council's policy to reimburse all necessary and reasonable expenses directly incurred by persons whilst on approved* Parish Council business. The expectation is that Councillors and employees will neither gain nor lose financially and will exercise prudent judgement to keep expenses to a minimum.

Expenses that can commonly be reclaimed are detailed below. This is not an exhaustive list. If in doubt Councillors or Staff should consult the Clerk or RFO before incurring an expense.

Breach of this policy, or fraudulent expense claims, may result in disciplinary action.

Travel Expenses

Councillors and Staff may claim travel expenses when carrying out approved duties on behalf of the Council. Examples of such duties may include attending training courses or representing the Council at meetings held outside the parish.

Councillors and Staff should seek to choose a mode of transport that is both cost-effective and environmentally responsible, making an appropriate judgement between cost and convenience.

Own Vehicle – mileage can be claimed at the HMRC approved rates applicable at the time (currently 45p per mile for cars). The starting and finishing point for any journey made by a Councillor shall be their home and for Staff shall be either their home or the Parish Office, depending where they start the journey. If the journey is not made on an employee's usual working day the starting and finishing point will be their home. Should Councillors or Staff start and/or finish their journey from a place other than their home (or Parish Office), the claim shall be in respect of the lesser of the cost of either the journey to/from that other place or to/from their home (or Parish Office).

Councillors and Staff using their own vehicles must ensure they are adequately insured and must hold a valid licence.

Parking and toll charges – may be claimed providing they were necessarily incurred.

Public Transport – standard class return fare or any available cheaper fare.

Taxis – will only be paid in exceptional or urgent circumstances.

Hotels and accommodation – will not be paid without prior approval. Councillors and employees are expected to research hotel costs to ensure expenses are kept to a minimum.

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.04

Version: 2

Date approved: ~~28 September 2020~~ 28 April 2025

Review date: ~~September 2024~~ April 2026

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Other Expenses

Other approved expenses e.g. certain telephone calls, Time Banking costs or items where it is most efficient for the Councillor or member of Staff to purchase it can also be reclaimed.

Such expenses are likely to be rare as most approved purchases can be made by the Parish Office. Printing, photocopying and postage can also be arranged via the Parish Office.

Members of staff may also be able to claim certain expenses as per their contracts of employment. They should refer to their contracts for details.

Reimbursement Procedure

Expense claims can be made by completing the Expenses Claim Form, available from the Parish Office, within 3 months of the date the expenses were incurred. Claims, other than mileage, must be supported by the relevant VAT receipts or tickets. If it is not possible to produce a receipt, an explanation must be written on the claim form. The Council reserves the right not to reimburse an expense in the absence of a receipt.

Approved expense claims will be reimbursed ~~either from Petty Cash (for claims under £10)~~ or by bank transfer.

*Approval should be obtained in advance from the Parish Council, an appropriately delegated Committee or the Parish Clerk's delegated authority.



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting: ~~28 September 2020~~ 28 April 2025

Review Policy: Every 12 months

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

PURPOSE: To set out the procedure to be followed so that Melbourn Parish Council adheres to the requirements of good governance.

Criminal Law

It is a criminal offence to corruptly ~~to~~-solicit or receive any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement to doing, or forbearing to do anything, in respect of any transaction involving your parish council.

The onus would be on you to disprove corruption in relation to a gift from a person holding or seeking to obtain a contract from your parish council.

SCOPE: This guidance applies to Councillors only.

POLICY:

1. Principles

- 1.1 You are required to register any gifts or hospitality worth **£25 or over** that you receive in connection with your official duties as a member, and the source of the gift or hospitality. You must complete the registration within 28 days of receiving it.
- 1.2 As with other registered interests, you have a personal interest in any matter under consideration at a meeting if it is likely to affect a person giving you a gift or hospitality. You must declare the existence and nature of the gift or hospitality as an interest at the meeting. You will also need to consider whether your interest is prejudicial.
- 1.3 If in doubt, any gift or offer made in kind should be politely declined.
- 1.4 Gifts of any kind should not be deliberately solicited or requested.

2. General Caution

- 2.1 The receipt of gifts or hospitality can be misinterpreted. This guidance is intended to help you to consider the implications of receiving gifts and hospitality and to make an appropriate judgement.
- 2.2 Treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally which may possibly be perceived to be in connection with your position as a Parish Councillor.
- 2.3 Your personal reputation and that of your parish council can be seriously jeopardised by the inappropriate acceptance by you of gifts or hospitality.

2.4 The acceptance of gifts and hospitality is not always unlawful or inappropriate. The decision for you, in every case, is whether or not it is appropriate to accept any gift or hospitality that might be offered to you having regard to how it might be perceived.

2.5 No hard and fast rules can be laid down to cover every circumstance as to what is appropriate or inappropriate. The following general principles will enable you to make your own decision.

3. Limits of Guidance

3.1 The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- Gifts and hospitality you may receive from family and friends (as birthday or other festival presents) that are not related to your position as a Parish Council Member. You should however question any such gift or hospitality offered from an unusual source;
- The acceptance of facilities or hospitality provided to you by your parish council;
- Gifts given to your parish council that you accept formally on your parish council's behalf and are retained by the parish council and not by you personally.

4. Meaning of Gifts and Hospitality

4.1 The expressions 'gifts' and 'hospitality' have wide meanings and no conclusive definition is possible.

Gifts and hospitality include:

- The free gift of any goods or services;
- The opportunity to acquire any goods or services at a discount or at terms not available to the general public;
- The opportunity to obtain goods or services not available to the general public;
- The offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event;
- The use of a free car.

4.2 Common gifts include pens, diaries, calendars and other business stationery, articles of clothing, books, flowers and bouquets. When making purchases you should be cautious if additional services, privileges, discount cards or other advantages are offered which might be related to your position as a Member of your parish council.

5. Appropriate Gifts and Hospitality

5.1 There are some circumstances where you may accept gifts and hospitality as being in the normal course of your duties as a Member:

- Civic hospitality provided by another public authority;
- Normal and modest refreshment in connection with any meeting in the course of your work as a parish council member (e.g. tea, coffee and other normal beverages and biscuits);

- Tickets for sporting, cultural and entertainment events which are sponsored or promoted by your parish council or bodies to which you have been appointed by your parish council, and the tickets are offered in relation to that sponsorship or promotion;
- Small low value gifts (below £25 such as pens, calendars, diaries, flowers and other mementos and tokens);
- Drinks or other modest refreshment received in the normal course of socialising arising consequentially from parish council business (e.g. inclusion in a round of drinks after a meeting);
- Modest meals provided as a matter of courtesy in the office or meeting place of a person with whom your parish council has a business connection;
- Souvenirs and gifts from other public bodies intended as personal gifts (e.g. arising from twin-town and other civic events).

6. Principles to Apply in Relation to Gifts and Hospitality

6.1 In deciding whether it is appropriate to accept any gift or hospitality you must apply the following principles:

- Do not accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything you do as a parish council member. If you have any suspicion that the motive behind the gift or hospitality is an inducement or reward you must decline it.
- "Reward" includes remuneration, reimbursement and fee.
- Do not accept a gift or hospitality of significant value or whose value is excessive in the circumstances.
- Do not accept a gift or hospitality if acceptance might be open to misinterpretation. Such circumstances will include gifts and hospitality:
 - From parties involved with your parish council in a competitive tendering or other procurement process.
 - From applicants for planning permission and other applications for licences, consents and approvals in which your parish council has an involvement.
 - From applicants for grants, including voluntary bodies and other organisations applying for public funding from your parish council.
 - From parties in legal proceedings with your parish council.
- Do not accept a gift or hospitality if you believe it will put you under any obligation to the provider as a consequence.
- Do not solicit any gift or hospitality and avoid giving any perception of so doing.

7. Gifts Received and Donated to a Chair's Appeal

- 7.1 It may be customary for some members on receiving gifts of value not to retain these personally but to pass them to the Chair for use in relation to a charity appeal.
- 7.2 Members may continue to do this, but should indicate this intention to the provider and make this clear on the registration form.

8. Reporting of Inappropriate Gifts and Hospitality offered

- 8.1 It is a criminal offence for a person corruptly to give or offer any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement or reward to you for doing or forbearing to do anything as a member of your parish council.

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.06

Version: 3

Date approved: ~~27-June-2022~~28 April 2025

Review date: ~~June-2023~~April 2026

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8.2 You must immediately report to the Monitoring Officer any circumstances where an inappropriate gift or hospitality has been offered to you.

8.3 You may thereafter be required to assist the Police in providing evidence.

9. How to report gifts and hospitality

9.1 Complete the registration form.

9.2 Send it to the Parish Clerk who will maintain a register.



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: ~~27-June-2022~~28 April 2025

Review Policy: Every 12 months

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.06
Version: 3
Date approved: 27-June-202228 April 2025
Review date: June-2023April 2026

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MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL
Gifts and Hospitality Registration Form

To: The Parish Clerk

(EMAIL-ADDRESS)

Notification of Receipt of Gifts or Hospitality

What was the gift or hospitality? (Give full description)	
What is your best estimate of its market value or cost?	
Who provided it?	

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.06
Version: 3

Date approved: ~~27-June-2022~~28 April 2025
Review date: ~~June-2023~~April 2026

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When and where did you receive it?	
Signed	
Name in Capitals	
Dated	

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION AND THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO REQUEST INFORMATION

PURPOSE: This document summarises the information which Melbourn Parish Council will routinely make available to the public and tells you how to request information which you would like to see.

SCOPE: This document brings together the duties put on a Parish Council through the:

- Freedom of Information Act
- Council Accounts – A Guide to your rights
- Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

The Model Publication Scheme is a separate document (Doc. No. 4.07 ver 1).

Policy: Our aim is to make all key information available on the Melbourn Parish Council website in a way that is easy to find and to understand. We will provide summaries of information where possible. If you cannot find the information on the website or wish to see if other information is available, we will deal with your request as set out in the procedures in this document.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Publication of Information
3. Retention of records
4. Making a request for information
5. Timeliness of requests
6. Responding to your request
7. Non-disclosure of information
8. Charges for providing information
9. Repeated requests for information
10. Complaints
11. Requests to inspect the accounts

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Melbourn Parish Council (MPC) has a strong commitment to openness and transparency. It complies with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, which came into force on 1 January 2005 which gives everyone a statutory right of access to information held by public bodies.
- 1.2 MPC adopted the revised model publication scheme issued by the Information Commissioner's Office from 12 November 2012. This is document 4.07.

2. Publication of Information

- 2.1 The MPC website is the Council's main vehicle for publication of information. The Parish Notice Boards and social media are used to alert people to the publication of the Council's agendas, minutes and supporting documentation, and other items of particular interest. Recordings of Council meetings are also available on the website.
- 2.2 If you want information on a particular issue, then please check whether it is there before contacting the Clerk. Section 21 of the FOIA provides an exemption if the information requested is already accessible to the requester. This applies whether the information is on the Parish Council website or in another place. If you need the information available on the website in a different format, please contact the Parish Clerk.
- 2.3 Supporting documents for forthcoming meetings are published at the same time as the agenda whenever possible. However, there are sometimes good reasons why this cannot be done and then paper copies will be supplied at the meeting.

3. Retention of records

- 3.1 Recordings of meetings remain on the website for 1 month. After that time, copies are available from the Clerk for a further 11 months. Recordings will be destroyed after 12 months.
- 3.2 Clerks' notes of Council meetings will be destroyed 3 months after agreement of the minutes by Council or Committee.
- 3.3 There is a separate policy for retention of all other records.

4. Making a request for information

- 4.1 Requests for information will always be dealt with in line with the Freedom of Information Act. If you wish to emphasise this point, you should say that you are making the request under the provisions of the Act.
- 4.2 You may wish to consult 'Plain English Guide to Freedom of Information' available on the Office of the Information Commissioner's website for guidance on making a request and about how the Parish Council will deal with it.
- 4.3 Requests for information must be in writing and you must include your name and a valid address for correspondence.
- 4.4 You must also provide a clear description of the information you are seeking. We may ask you to be more precise about your requirements if we feel the initial request is too broad. If a summary of the information is available, we can provide it but the Act does not require us to prepare or present information in a different way. Neither does the Act require information which is not (at the time of the request) written down to be put on paper in order to answer the request.
- 4.5 You may state a preference of how you want the information communicated to you: a hard copy, electronic copy or an opportunity for inspection.

5. Timeliness of requests

- 5.1 There is no time limit on the request for information although the requester must be aware that the older the information, the more difficult it may be to locate it and make it available, potentially incurring a cost (see 8.2 below)
- 5.2 However, the use that was made of that information in Council decisions and actions is only open to question during the lifetime of that Parish Council¹ until after the date of the next election.

6. Responding to your request

- 6.1 As set out on the website, correspondence to the Parish Office will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt. If the reply requires further

¹ Advice from the Cambridge and Peterborough Association of Local Authorities.

information, it is the aim of the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to respond within 20 working days of acknowledging the initial communication. This does not include statutory holidays or days when the office is closed.

- 6.2 For requests specifically made under the FOI Act, we will inform you in writing whether we hold the information you have requested and, if so, provide it not later than 20 working days from receiving the request.

7. Non-disclosure of information

- 7.1 The Act identifies a number of categories of information which the Parish Council is not required to disclose under the Act. In this case, we will write to tell the exemption which provides the basis for refusal within the Act and why it applies to the information you requested. We will communicate this to you within 20 working days.
- 7.2 In addition to the Exemption which applies if the information is already publicly available (see 2.2 above), information intended for future publication is also exempt. A publication date does not have to be identified at the time of responding to the request.

8. Charges for providing information

- 8.1 Whenever possible, we will provide the information free of charge. However, if the information is not readily available in the form in which you are seeking it, the Parish Council may charge you a fee based on the costs associated with providing the information.
- 8.2 Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Parish Council may refuse your request if we estimate² it will cost us in excess of the cost limit set by the Information Commissioner to fulfil your request. This is currently £450.
- 8.3 In the situation described in 8.1 and 8.2, the Clerk will write to you within 20 working days of receipt of your request advising you of the fee required. This is known as a 'Fees Notice'. When you are issued with a Fees Notice, the 20 working day limit for responding stops, and will then start again when payment is received. If the Clerk does not receive payment within 3 months, the Council is not obliged to comply with the request.

² Estimated according to the procedure set out in 'Requests where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. 20150909 Version 1.2'.

9. Repeated requests for information

- 9.1 The Council aims to reduce the number of requests it receives by putting as much information as possible into the public domain at the relevant time. For each request received, there is a demand on the Clerk's time to deal with it and hence a cost to the Council. Please assure yourself that the information is not already available on the website before you make a request (see 2.2 above).
- 9.2 If an individual makes repeated requests for similar information or otherwise abuses the system, MPC's Policy and Procedure for Persistent, Vexatious or Abusive Complaints ([Document 4.18](#)) will be implemented.

10. Complaints

- 10.1 If you are dissatisfied with the way MPC has responded to a request for information, please follow the procedure for 'Complaints Procedure: Council staff, Service Providers, Administration and Procedures ([Document 1.02](#))' in the first instance.
- 10.2 The Information Commissioner's Office is responsible for enforcing the operation of the Act and you may raise issues with them at any time. More information can be found on the ICO's website (www.ico.org.uk) or by writing to:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

11. Requests to inspect the accounts.

- 11.1 As an interested person³, you can inspect a council's accounts and related documents. These include a balance sheet and summary of income and expenditure along with supporting documents, and any report the auditor made in that financial year. In addition if you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate, you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them.
- 11.2 There is a period of 30 working days during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounts. This right is not retrospective. The period will be advertised by the Council on its website.

³ These are persons who have a connection to the area even if they are not a local elector.

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.08

Version: 2

Date approved: ~~28-June-2021~~ 28 April 2025

Review date: ~~June-2023~~ April 2027

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11.3 Further information on these rights is given in 'Council Accounts: A Guide to your Rights' published by the National Audit Office.

11.4 You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the Council form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.



Document Approval:

(Chair to the Parish Council)

Date of Parish Meeting: ~~28-June-2021~~ 28 April 2025

Review Policy: Every 2 years

Modern Slavery Statement

Introduction

This Statement sets out what steps Melbourn Parish Council has taken and what steps it will take in future to ensure that it will never knowingly allow modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of the Council's business.

What is Modern Slavery?

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour, and human trafficking. Traffickers and slave drivers coerce, deceive and force individuals against their will into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment (HM Government Modern Slavery Strategy, 2014).

Modern slavery is an umbrella term encompassing slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission provides the following definitions:

- Slavery is when someone actually owns you, like a piece of property.
- Servitude is similar to slavery – you might live on the person's premises, work for them and be unable to leave, but they don't own you.
- Forced labour means you are forced to do work that you have not agreed to, under the threat of punishment.

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According to the Local Government Association (LGA), the term 'Modern Slavery' includes a range of different types of exploitations, that may or may not occur together. The different types of exploitations include but are not limited to:

- ~~sexual exploitation~~
- ~~domestic servitude~~
- ~~forced labour~~
- ~~child exploitation~~
- ~~criminal exploitation~~
- ~~other forms of exploitation, such as: organ removal; forced begging; forced benefit fraud; forced marriage and illegal adoption~~
- sexual exploitation
- labour exploitation
- forced criminality
- domestic servitude
- debt bondage
- organ harvesting
- other forms of exploitation. Such as: financial exploitation, welfare benefit fraud, identity fraud, forced or sham marriages and illegal adoption

The Role of Local Authorities

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.09

Version: 21

Date approved: 27 September 2021 28 April 2025

Review date: September 2022 April 2026

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Within their [Tackling Modern Slavery: A Council Guide \(2017\)](#) Council Guide to modern slavery (October 2022) document, the LGA highlight the following roles of local authorities in tackling modern slavery:

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1. Identification and referral of victims
2. Supporting victims – this can be through safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs and through housing/homelessness services
3. Community safety services and disruption activities
4. Making best that the supply chains councils procure from are free from modern slavery.

Existing Policies and Procedures

Melbourn Parish Council has a range of policies, processes, procedures and practices which help to ensure that we are acting ethically and with integrity to prevent slavery and human trafficking, including the following:

- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **Whistleblowing Policy**
- **Employment Policy**
- **Equality and Diversity Policy**
- **Recruitment Process**
- **Code of Conduct**
- **Appointment of Contractors and Procurement Policy and Procedure**

Due Diligence Processes

- **Procurement**
- Melbourn Parish Council will, through its procurement procedures, use its best endeavours to ensure that suppliers of goods and services share its commitment to prevent modern slavery.

— **Safeguarding Training:** This includes how to spot the signs of modern slavery and how to make a referral. Melbourn Parish Council's Safeguarding Officer has undergone safeguarding training. ~~Claire Littlewood is the Safeguarding Officer –~~ parishclerk@melbournpc.co.uk ~~The Clerk is the Safeguarding Officer~~ parishclerk@melbournparishcouncil.gov.uk

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- **Reporting for Council employees:** Any Melbourn Parish Council employee affected by modern slavery, or who suspect someone may be at risk are advised to contact the Safeguarding Officer – parishclerk@melbournpc.co.uk. parishclerk@melbournparishcouncil.gov.uk

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- **Reporting for residents and communities:** The advice to anyone affected by slavery, or who may suspect someone is at risk, is to:
 - Call 999 if it is an emergency
 - Call 101 for non-emergencies

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Doc. No.: 4.09

Version: 21

Date approved: 27 September 202128 April 2025

Review date: September 2022April 2026

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- Call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111
- Call the Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700
- Report online via the [Modern Slavery Helpline](#)



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting : 27 September 202128 April 2025

Review every 12 months

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: WRITTEN RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL

PURPOSE: The Council recognises that its records are an important public asset, and are a key resource to effective operation, policy-making and accountability. Like any asset, records require careful management and this policy sets out the Council's responsibilities and activities in respect to this.

SCOPE: All employees of Melbourn Parish Council have a responsibility to manage effectively Council records in accordance with specified legislation and guidelines¹. A record is defined as any information held by the Council regardless of medium (including paper, microfilm, electronic, audio-visual and record copies of publications), which is created, collected, processed, used, stored and/or disposed of by Melbourn Parish Council organisations, employees, as well as those acting as its agents.

POLICY: The aim of this policy is to define a framework for managing the Parish Council's records to ensure that the Council:

- Creates and captures accurate, authentic and reliable records
- Maintains records to meet the authority's business needs
- Disposes of records that are no longer required in an appropriate manner
- Protects vital records
- Conforms to any legal and statutory requirements relating to record-keeping
- Complies with government directives.

PROCEDURE:

1. Identification of roles and responsibilities

- 1.1 The Clerk or Deputy Clerk will be responsible for compliance with Freedom of Information legislation and will be responsible for Data Protection, the publication scheme and legal advice relating to any of the above. The Clerk or Deputy Clerk will ensure that all employees are aware of record keeping issues.

¹ Public Records Act 1958 and 1967; • Local Government (Records) Act 1962; • Local Government Act 1972; • Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985; • Data Protection Act 1998; • Freedom of Information Act 2000 • Records Management Society of Great Britain - Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities 2003:1

- 1.2 All Council employees will be responsible for creating and maintaining records in relation to their work that are authentic and reliable. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk haves specific responsibilities for records management and this responsibility should be clearly defined in their job description.

2. Training and Awareness

- 2.1 It is vital that all Council employees involved in creating, maintaining and using records, understand their record management responsibilities as set out in this policy. The Clerk will ensure that staff responsible for managing records are appropriately trained or experienced and that all staff understand the need for records management.

- 2.2 A training programme will be established to ensure that all staff are aware of their obligations regarding Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Records Management.

3. Records Creation and Record Keeping

- 3.1 The Parish Council should have in place a record keeping system (paper or electronic) that documents its activities and provides for quick and easy retrieval of information. It must also take into account the legal and regulatory environment specific to the area of work. This system will include:

- Records arranged and indexed in such a way that they can be retrieved quickly and efficiently.
- Records are linked with the Parish Council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

4. Record Maintenance

- 4.1 The record keeping system must be maintained so that the records are properly stored and protected, and can easily be located and retrieved. This will include:
- Ensuring that adequate storage accommodation is provided for the records.
 - Tracking and monitoring the movement and location of records so that they can be easily retrieved (This provides an audit trail).
 - Controlling access to the information.
 - Identifying vital records and applying the appropriate protection, including a business recovery plan.
 - Ensuring non-current records are transferred in a controlled manner to a designated records centre rather than stored in offices.

5. Record Retention and Disposal

- 5.1 With increasing public access to our records, it is important that disposal of records happens as part of a managed process and is adequately documented. Therefore, the Parish Council must have in place clearly defined arrangements for the assessment and selection of records for disposal, and for documenting this work.
- 5.2 The system should ensure that:
- The appropriate records are reviewed and disposed of /transferred to storage as set out in Appendix 1.
 - Documentation of the disposal/transfer of records is completed and retained.
 - Records selected for permanent preservation are transferred to Cambridgeshire Archives.
 - An intended disposal/review date must be captured when creating electronic records.
 - Records subject to a Freedom of Information request are not destroyed



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting: ~~28-June-2024~~28 April 2025

Review Policy: Every 2 years

APPENDIX 1

Retention Guidelines for Written Parish Council Records

Records	Retention period	Action	Reason
Administrative			
Signed council and committee minutes	In perpetuity	Bind and archive	Requirement
Draft minutes	Until the date of confirmation of the minutes	Destroy	Operational
Clerks' notes of meetings	3 months after agreement of minutes by Council or Committee	Destroy	Operational
Agendas	In perpetuity	Bind and archive	Recommendation by Internal Auditor
Reports and other documents circulated with agendas	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement. Destroy these reports if copies are already included with signed minutes	Review	Common practice
Councillors' declarations of office	4 years or until they vacate office	Destroy	Operational
Register of electors	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Copies already in existence
Grouping orders	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Byelaws and orders	Preserve one of each copy and transfer to storage once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Policy documents	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Title deeds more than 100 years old	Transfer to archive once they become inactive but not deeds still needed to prove title	Preserve	Common practice
Title deeds less than 100 years old	Transfer to archive for review once they become inactive. Archives will not	Review	Common practice

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Doc. No.: 4.11

Version: 2

Date approved: ~~28-June-2024~~28 April 2025

Review date: ~~June-2023~~April 2027

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	accept deeds still needed to prove title		
Property registers and terriers	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Maps, plans, and surveys of property owned by the council or meeting	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Village/parish appraisals, plans, millennium projects and supporting papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Planning applications and related papers for major controversial developments	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review with the view to destroy	Operational
Planning applications for minor works where permission is refused	6 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980
Leases, agreements, contracts and wayleaves	12 years or until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Quotations and tenders (successful)	12 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980
Quotations and tenders (unsuccessful)	2 years	Destroy	Operational
Routine correspondence and papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review with the view to destroy	Operational
Scale of fees and charges	Until superseded by new charges	Destroy	Operational
Employers' liability insurance policies	40 years after expiry date	Destroy	Employers' Liability Act 1969 Employers' Liability Regulations 1998

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Doc. No.: 4.11

Version: 2

Date approved: ~~28-June-2024~~28 April 2025

Review date: ~~June-2023~~April 2027

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Risk assessments (to include completed inspection sheets and record of actions taken)	21 years	Archive in PC premises	Insurance claims against the Council can be made for up to 21 years.
Personnel files	See separate policy	Destroy	Risk of investigation regarding any future litigation

Financial			
Receipt and payment books	Transfer to storage once they become inactive	Preserve	
Rate books	Transfer to storage	Preserve	
Annual audited accounts	7 years.	Destroy, but preserve if the receipt and payment books have not survived.	
Accounts and statements	7 years	Destroy	
Vouchers before 1950	7 years	Destroy	
Cash and petty cash books and rent books	7 years	Destroy	
Receipt books of all kinds	7 years	Destroy	
Postage and telephone books	7 years	Destroy	
Bank statements including deposit/saving accounts	7 years	Destroy	
Paid invoices	7 years	Destroy	
Paid cheques	7 years	Destroy	
VAT records	7 years	Destroy	VAT Act 1994
VAT claims	7 years	Destroy	VAT Act 1994

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Doc. No.: 4.11

Version: 2

Date approved: 28-June-202428 April 2025

Review date: June-2023April 2027

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Time sheets	Last completed Audit year	Destroy	
Wage books	12 years	Destroy	Statute of Limitation
Members' allowances register	6 years	Destroy	Statute of Limitation
Records relating to parish halls, centres and recreation grounds, applications to hire, letting diaries, copies of bills to hirers and records of tickets issued	7 years	Review with the view to destroy	
Miscellaneous			
Maps created under the provision of the Rights of Way Act 1932	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Papers concerning Rights of Way	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Community magazines or newsletters	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Charity papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Press cuttings	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Photographs	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Any records predating the establishment of Parish Councils (1894), e.g. poor law, surveyors of the highway, tithe maps and apportionments,	Transfer to archive immediately	Preserve	Common practice

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Review date: June-2023April 2027

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enclosure awards etc.			
Records of other bodies such as burial boards, charities, fire brigades, Home Guard unit, local society or ad hoc committee	Transfer to archive once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Reports, guides, handbooks etc received from other organisations	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational

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POLICY and PROCEDURE: Verification of Bank Reconciliations

PURPOSE: To Define the Policy and Procedure for Verifying Bank Reconciliations

SCOPE: Bank Accounts operated by Melbourn Parish Council

POLICY: Bank reconciliations are a key financial control. The process compares MPCs financial records with those of their banks to ensure that there is agreement between the sums of money in the different accounts. It is the responsibility of the RFO to produce a reconciliation for each bank account at the end of every month. The Councillor who has been nominated by MPC to verify the bank reconciliations should follow the procedure below.

RESPONSIBILITIES: It is the responsibility of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to ensure that bank account reconciliations are properly verified. Verification will be monthly. Councillors will be nominated and approved at full Parish Council meetings to serve a term as the person delegated to verify bank account reconciliations. A normal period of such service is one year, although this time period can be flexible at the discretion of the RFO. It is the responsibility of the nominated Councillor to report anomalies or concerns to Parish Council if these cannot be resolved by discussion with the RFO.

PROCEDURE:

1. Bank and Building Society Accounts

- 1.1 Check that a reconciliation has been produced for each account every month
- 1.2 Ensure that the opening cash book balance agrees with the closing balance from the previous month's reconciliation
- 1.3 Confirm agreement between the bank statement balance and an original (or on-line) bank statement
- 1.4 Check that any reconciling items appear genuine. Query any over three months old with the RFO or Clerk
- 1.5 For the main current account randomly select a small number of items from the bank statement and agree them to the Edge bank statement report. Randomly select a few items from the Edge report and agree them to the bank statement.

1.6 Query any unusual items

1.7 Sign the bank reconciliations and bank statements.

2. ~~Prepaid debit cards~~

~~Note: MPC operates an imprest system for the prepaid debit cards. The balance on the debit cards plus the purchases made should total the amount agreed by MPC to be loaded on the cards (currently £600).~~

~~2.1 Ensure that a prepaid debit card reconciliation has been produced by the RFO~~

~~2.2 Check the opening balance to the previous month's reconciliation~~

~~2.3 Agree the statement balance per the reconciliation to the debit card statement~~

~~2.4 Ensure that the total of purchases made plus the statement balance is £600~~

~~2.5 Query any differences or unusual items~~

~~2.6 Sign the prepaid debit card reconciliation and debit card statements~~

3.2. Petty Cash

Note: MPC operates an imprest system for petty cash. The balance in the petty cash tin plus the petty cash vouchers should total the agreed float (currently £30)

~~3.12.1~~ Ensure that a reconciliation has been produced by the RFO

~~3.22.2~~ Check the operating balance to the previous reconciliation

~~3.32.3~~ Ensure that the total of the petty cash vouchers and the cash in the petty cash tin totals £30

~~3.42.4~~ Query and differences or unusual items

~~3.52.5~~ At random, carry out occasional check audits of the balance of petty cash in the tin

4. Reporting

Report that bank reconciliation checks have been completed to Melbourn Parish Council. Bring any concerns, or absence of bank reconciliations, to the attention of the Council or the Finance and Good Governance Committee.

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 4.29
Version: 1
Date approved: 28 September 202028 April 2025
Review date: September 2024April 2027

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Document Approval: 
(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: 28 September 202028 April 2025

To be reviewed every two years

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POLICY AND PROCEDURE : Credit Card

PURPOSE: Melbourn Parish Council recognises that cost savings may be made by purchasing some goods online. The vast majority of online purchases require payment by either credit or debit card. ~~MPC's prepaid debit cards are best suited to purchases of relatively low value so that the agreed balance on the cards is not exceeded and the cards do not require constant topping up. Therefore,~~ Melbourn Parish Council authorises the use of a Parish Council credit card, by designated individuals, for online and physical purchases. The expenditure must be approved Parish Council expenditure and must not exceed a maximum balance of £5,000.

1. Card Holder

- 1.1. A credit card will be issued for use by selected Parish Office employees~~the Parish Office (for use by the Clerk). No other individuals may use the card.~~
- 1.2. The limit on the credit card, agreed by the Parish Council, held by Clerk and Deputy Clerk is currently £5,000 with a £1,000 single purchase limit applied.
- ~~1.2.1.3.~~ The limit on the credit card, agreed by the Parish Council, held by Wardens is currently £1,000 with a £100 single purchase limit applied.

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2. Spending Procedures

- 2.1. The credit card can be used for approved Parish Council expenditure only. The credit card must not be used for non-Parish Council or personal expenditure.
- 2.2. Cash withdrawals are not permitted on the credit card.
- 2.3. Purchases on the credit card must comply with the approval limits set out in the Council's Financial Regulations. Purchases up to £200 can be made under the Clerk's delegated authority for items required for the Parish Office or to carry out their statutory duties. Expenditure over £200, or not relating to the Parish Office or statutory duty, must be approved by the Clerk and Chair of the Council, or

appropriate committee, before the purchase is made. Expenditure is limited to a maximum of £15,000 in any single transaction.

2.4. Receipts or invoices must be kept for every credit card transaction for approval by the RFO. The Clerk and Assistant Deputy Clerk are responsible for obtaining and submitting receipts.

2.5. The RFO will check receipts against the credit card statements and will investigate any discrepancies.

2.6. The RFO will be responsible for carrying out the monthly reconciliation of the credit card. The credit card balance will be cleared automatically in full each month.

2.7. Details of credit card transactions will be reported at the next Parish Council meeting.

3. Card Security

3.1. The Parish Office card must be kept in the Parish Office. If it is necessary to take the card from the Parish Office to make a purchase, the card must be signed out and returned as soon as possible after the purchase has been made.

3.1.3.2. Wardens carry the card on their person and are responsible for ensuring the card is kept secure at all times.

3.2.3.3. The credit card PIN number must be kept confidential at all times. Unauthorised individuals will not be permitted to use the cards.

3.3.3.4. Lost and stolen cards must be reported to the card issuer immediately upon discovery that it is missing. The RFO must also be informed immediately and will, in turn, advise the Chair.

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Doc. No.: 4.35
Version: 32
Date approved: ~~24-October-2022~~ 28 April 2025
Review date: ~~October-2023~~ April 2027

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3-4-3.5. The Clerk and RFO must have suitable access to the on-line credit card account (capable of adding and removing users, blocking cards and reporting lost and stolen cards).

3-5-3.6. In the event of termination of a card holder's employment, the RFO will immediately inform the card issuer with a request that a new card is issued.

4. Misuse of a Credit Card

4.1. If a cardholder misuses or fraudulently uses the credit card this may result in disciplinary action.

4.2. Failure of provide a receipt may result in the card holder being held liable to repay this sum.



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting: ~~24-October-2022~~ 28 April 2025

Review Policy: Every ~~12~~ 24 months

ASSET MANAGEMENT RESERVE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out how Melbourn Parish Council (MPC) will determine and review the level of its Asset Management Reserve (AMR).
- 1.2 This policy should be considered in conjunction with MPC's Reserves Policy (Doc. No 4.14)

2. JUSTIFICATION

- 2.1 MPC recognises the need to look after the assets in its safekeeping.
- 2.2 The AMR is an earmarked reserve that will be used to build up funds to finance a programme of long-term repairs and replacements of assets and equipment owned or leased by MPC.
- 2.3 The AMR is a mechanism to smooth expenditure without the need to significantly vary the precept budget when major expenditure on asset repairs or renewals is required.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 Expenditure from the AMR will be on items included in MPC's Asset Management Schedule (AMS).
- 3.2 The Asset Management Schedule will be drawn up in conjunction with a suitably qualified asset management professional e.g. a quantity surveyor. The professional will advise which items should be included in MPC's long-term asset repair and maintenance programme, the frequency of replacement/renewal and the approximate cost.
- 3.3 The AMR will be used to fund significant repairs or renewals of assets owned or leased by MPC. Expenditure in excess of **£5,000** (net) will usually be considered significant.
- 3.4 Repairs or renewals financed from the AMR will generally be expected to recur on an infrequent basis (less frequently than every three years) and would not be classified as normal 'wear and tear' maintenance expenditure.
- 3.5 In cases of emergency the AMR may be used to fund asset repairs or replacements that are not included in the AMS or that fall under the £5,000 expenditure subject to approval by MPC.

4. LEVEL

- 4.1 The Finance Officer will calculate the funding requirement for the AMR based on the items included in the AMS and using the time period advised.
- 4.2 It may be necessary to further assess the cost estimates used in the professional AMS report e.g by getting quotes - and to adjust the AMR calculation as required.

- 4.3 The Finance Officer should ensure that there will be sufficient funds available in the AMR at the end of the period covered by the AMS to take forward to the start of the next cycle of works.
- 4.4 The funding model should make appropriate adjustments for inflation. The items included in the AMS and the forecast expenditure included in the AMR will be approved by MPC.
- 4.5 MPC will precept for contributions to the AMR to keep it funded to the appropriate level.

5. ADMINISTRATION

- 5.1 When expenditure is to be funded from the AMR, a budget will be approved by MPC.
- 5.2 Quotes/tenders and expenditure approval will be obtained in accordance with MPC's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.
- 5.3 Approved expenditure funded from the AMR will be administered by the Clerk/~~R~~FO in conjunction with the Maintenance Committee.
- 5.4 The Clerk will arrange for a new AMS to be drawn up by a professional, for the next time period to be covered, at least one year before the end of the current AMS. This should allow sufficient time for appropriate financial planning.

6. REVIEW

- 6.1 The AMS will be reviewed every 5 years or when there is a significant change in asset ownership. It is anticipated that the services of a suitably qualified professional will normally be required to assist in this exercise.
- 6.2 The level of contributions to the AMR will be reviewed by MPC every year when the precept is agreed.
- 6.3 The AMR reserve movements and balance will be agreed by MPC at the end of each Financial Year.
- 6.4 Any changes to the agreed use of the AMR must be agreed by MPC.

Document Approval:



(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: ~~27-February-2023~~ 28 April 2025

Review Date: ~~February-2024~~ April 2026

Subject Access Request

Process to Action		
Name of requester (Method of communication) Email Address Phone number Postal Address		
Date Subject Access Request made		
Is the request made under the Data Protection Legislation	Yes	No
Date Subject Access Request action to be completed by (One month after receipt time limit)		
Extension to the date of reply requested (An extension of another two months is permissible provided it is communicated to the subject within the one month period)	Yes	No
Extension date advised to the Subject Requester and method of contact		
Identification must be proven from the below list: Current UK/EEA Passport UK Photo card Driving Licence (Full or Provisional) EEA National Identity Card Full UK Paper Driving Licence State Benefits Entitlement Document State Pension Entitlement Document HMRC Tax Credit Document Local Authority Benefit Document State/Local Authority Educational Grant Document HMRC Tax Notification Document Disabled Driver's Pass Financial Statement issued by bank, building society or credit card company Utility bill for supply of gas, electric, water or telephone landline A recent Mortgage Statement A recent council Tax Bill/Demand or Statement Tenancy Agreement Building Society Passbook which shows a transaction in the last 3 months and their address		
Verification sought that the Subject Access request is substantiated	Yes	No
Verification received	Yes	No
Verification if the Council cannot provide the information requested	Yes	No
Is the request excessive or unfounded?	Yes	No
Request to be actioned	Yes	No
Fee to be charged (Subject Access requests must be undertaken free of charge to a requester unless the legislation permits a reasonable charge)	Yes	No
If the request is to be refused, action to be taken and by whom.		

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Doc. No.: 4.38
Version: 1

Date approved: ~~25-March-2024~~28 April 2025
Review date: ~~March-2025~~April 2027

Changes requested to data/ or removal	
Complaint Process (Where a requestor is not satisfied with a response to a SAR, the council must manage this as a complaint)	
Completion date of request	
Date complaint received by requested and details of the complaint	
Date complaint completed and outcome	

Categories of Data to Check

Data	Filing Cabinet	Laptop	Checked	Corrected/Deleted	Actioned by
HR					
Democracy					
Statutory Function					
legal					
Business					
Legal requirement					
General Data					
Consultation Data					

Document Approval:



(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: ~~25-March-2024~~28 April 2025

Document Review Policy: ~~1-2~~ Years from last approval

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: Terms of Reference for Internal Audit

PURPOSE: The primary objective of Internal Audit is to review, appraise and report upon the adequacy of internal control systems operating throughout the Council and to ensure that they are in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

PROCEDURE: The Internal Audit will adopt a predominantly systems-based approach, covering the whole network of systems established within the Council to provide reasonable assurance that the Council's objectives will be achieved, with particular reference to:

- The effectiveness of operations
- The economic and efficient use of resources
- Compliance with applicable policies, procedures, laws and regulations
- The safeguarding of assets and interests from losses of kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity and corruption
- The integrity and reliability of information, accounts and data

Scope of Internal Audit Activity

There are no limitations on Internal Audit's scope of activities. It allows for unrestricted coverage of the Council's activities, including both financial and non-financial systems of internal control.

Melbourn Parish Council expects the following aspects to be part of the audit:

- Carry out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year in order to be able to complete Section 4 (Annual internal audit report) of the Annual Return
- Review the reliability and integrity of financial information and the means used to identify, measure, classify and report such information
- Review the means of safeguarding assets and, as appropriate, verify the existence of such assets
- Appraise the economy and efficiency with which resources are employed, identify opportunities to improve performance and recommend solutions to problems
- Review the established systems to ensure compliance with those policies, procedures, laws and regulations which could have significant impact on operations, and determine whether the Council is compliant
- Review operations and activities to ascertain whether results are consistent with objectives and whether they are being carried out as planned

Independence

The main determinant of the effectiveness of Internal Audit is that it is seen to be independent in its planning and operation. To ensure this, IA will operate within a framework that allows:

- Unrestricted access to officers of the Council
- Reporting in its own name
- Segregation from the day to day operations of the Council

Every effort will be made to preserve objectivity by ensuring that the Internal Auditor is free from conflicts of interest and do not undertake any non-audit duties on behalf of the Council.

Rights of Access

There are no limitations on IA's access to records. The IA has the authority to:

- Access Council premises at reasonable times agreed in advance
- Access all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems
- Receive any information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under consideration
- Require any employee of the Council to account for cash, stores or any other Council asset under their control
- Access records belonging to third parties such as contractors when required

Reporting

The Internal Auditor will formally report the results of audits and the recommendations made to Council and will follow up at subsequent Internal Audits to make sure that corrective actions are taken.

Council's Responsibilities

The existence of Internal Audit does not diminish the responsibility of the Council to establish systems of internal control to ensure that activities are conducted in a secure and well ordered manner.

Audit Responsibilities in Relation to Fraud

Melbourn Parish Council recognises that it is not the specific responsibility of the IA to detect fraud. However, tests and reviews carried out during the IA are expected to be designed to identify failures, weaknesses or breaches in internal controls which could expose the Council to risk of fraud.

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Doc. No.: 6.10

Version: 2

Date approved: March 2023/28 April 2025

Review date: March 2024/April 2026

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In the event that fraud is suspected by the Internal Auditor, this should be reported to the RFO, Clerk, Chair, or the Council as deemed most pertinent to the situation. It may also be appropriate for the Internal Auditor to advise or assist with an investigation including liaison with the police if necessary.

Choosing an Internal Auditor

Melbourn Parish Council appoints an Internal Auditor annually. The effectiveness of the audit is assessed each year as set out in the policy and procedure 'To evaluate the effectiveness of the system of internal audit'.

In principle, Melbourn Parish Council endorses the need to change Internal Auditors regularly. In practice, a decision will be taken in the light of availability of suitable auditors.

The following criteria will be used to assess an auditor's suitability (taken from CAPALC guidance):

- Has the applicant had some formal audit training?
- Does the applicant understand how to structure an internal audit report?
- Has the applicant any formal training in parish council law and powers?
- Has the applicant any formal training in parish council procedures?
- Has the applicant had any formal training in accounting practice?
- Has the applicant had any formal training on matters relating to local councils and VAT?
- Has the applicant had any formal training in Pay as you earn and National Insurance
- Does the applicant have the necessary skills to identify issues relating to the above areas in this size of council?

Document Approval: 

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council meeting: 28 April 2025

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Review Policy: Every 12 months

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No.: 6.11

Version: 4

Date approved: 24 October 2022 28 April 2025

Review date: October 2023 April 2026

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TERMS OF REFERENCE: MELBOURN FUTURES WORKING PARTY

PURPOSE: To set out the responsibilities, restrictions and limitations of operation of the Melbourn Futures Working Party

1. Membership & Organisation

- 1.1 The Working Party will consist of a minimum of 3 Parish Councillors in addition to 1 District Councillor and 1 County Councillor (if they wish to serve) and up to a maximum of 5 members of the public who are residents of Melbourn. The Parish Councillors, County Councillor and District Councillor will be standing members of the Working Party.
- 1.2 Non Parish Councillor Members will have Working Party voting rights.
- 1.3 The Parish Clerk will, through the Parish magazine, Parish website and social media, request residents interested in getting involved to contact the Parish office to receive information on how they may join the Working Party and get involved with future projects and initiatives.
 - a) Residents who express an interest in joining the Working Party will be forwarded a questionnaire to complete. Subject to this being completed and returned to the Parish office, the individual will be added to a data base which will be maintained by the Parish Office, ensuring that privacy laws are adhered to and with the full consent of the individual.
 - b) When a specific project and/or initiative is being undertaken by the Working Party, the Parish Office will contact residents from the data base. They will be asked if they wish to join the Working Party. This invitation will be project specific.
 - c) Once the project or initiative is completed the Resident's responsibilities will be finished. (They may of course elect to stay on the database for future projects and/or remain on the Working Party.)
- 1.4 The Working Party will meet as required on an informal basis.
- 1.5 The Working Party may invite non-members to attend meetings.
- 1.6 The Parish Council may dissolve the Working Party in favour of an alternative organisational structure following an assessment of effectiveness at the Annual Parish Council Meeting.
- 1.7 The Council will formally review the continued need for the Working Party annually at the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

2. Reporting

- 2.1 Meeting notes will be made available to the Parish Council and published on the Parish Council's website.

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Version: 4
Date approved: ~~24 October 2022~~28 April 2025
Review date: ~~October 2023~~April 2026

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2.2 An annual summary report shall be given to the Annual Parish Meeting covering the previous years activities.

3. **Terms of Reference**

- 3.1 Standing members of the working party in conjunction with the Parish Council and in consultation with the community where appropriate will identify projects and initiatives requiring action by the Working Party.
- 3.2 For each project and or initiative identified, the Working Party will aim to enlist where possible and practicable up to 5 members of the public, from the list of interested residents. The recruitment will be handled through the Parish office.
- 3.3 To consult, on behalf of the Parish Council with relevant third parties to ensure the best outcome is achieved.
- 3.4 To undertake where necessary, negotiations with service providers and statutory bodies.
- 3.5 To make recommendations to the Parish Council for action.



DOCUMENT APPROVAL :

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Meeting: ~~24 October 2022~~28 April 2025

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Review Policy:Every 12 months

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Doc. No.: 8.15
Version: 1
Date approved: April 2025
Review date: April 2026

Doc: 8.15
Review Date: March 2024

General Risk Register – Melbourn Parish Council

Likelihood Scores : Low (unlikely) = 1 Medium (possible) = 2 High (highly likely) = 3

Impact Scores : Low (negligible) = 1 Medium (moderate) = 2 High (Severe) = 3

Risk Rating Scores (Likelihood x Impact) : Low = 1,2 Medium = 3, 4 High = 6,9

Risk Ref Key: F= Finance, POS = Public Open Spaces,
G= Governance, C= Cemeteries, A = Allotments, B= Parish Buildings.

Risk Ref.	Description of risk	Impact of risk on MPC	Likelihood Score (1-3)	Impact Score (1-3)	Risk Rating (high, Medium, Low)	Response
F1	Expenditure is incurred or grants awarded without proper legal Authority.	Potential for complaints, fines, qualified audit report.	1	2	Low (2)	Qualified staff. Record of power under which grants are awarded is minuted.
F2	The PC has insufficient General Reserves so is at risk of administration if the precept is not paid on time.	Inability to provide services or pay staff salaries and other contractual liabilities.	1	3	Medium (3)	MPC holds 6 months of running costs in general reserve in line with its Reserves Policy.
F3	An adequate record of the Council's assets is not maintained.	Potential theft or misappropriation of assets. Assets could fall into disrepair. Assets may be inadequately insured.	1	3	Medium (3)	Asset register in place and reviewed annually. New acquisitions and disposals recorded. Periodic inventory checks carried out. Insurance cover linked to asset register. Professional insurance valuation of buildings undertaken and to be done undertaken every 5 years.

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F4	The PC has insufficient money ring-fenced in Asset Replacement/Maintenance Reserves. The PC does not have a maintenance plan so the budget for maintenance will be insufficient	Assets could fall into disrepair. Potential H&S concerns as well as adverse service delivery and rental income impact.	2	3	High (6)	Full asset register in place. Ongoing maintenance spend requirements included in precept. MPC building up Asset Management Reserve and linking it to asset renewal programme. (Action) Maintenance Committee prioritise and monitor maintenance spend monthly. <u>MPC to create maintenance plan based on Asset Management Schedule created from survey carried out every five years.</u>
F5	Cash is lost through theft/misappropriation.	Funding shortfall. Adverse publicity.	1	1	Low (1)	Limited cash held and banked promptly. Controls over dealing with cash. Small petty cash float. Petty cash procedure. Fidelity Guarantee (insurance).
F6	Failure to ensure proper use of funds under S137.	Total S137 expenditure could exceed statutory limit for MPC.	1	1	Low (1)	Qualified Clerk (studying) and RFO. Powers for grant approvals minuted.
F7	Proper financial records are not kept.	Inadequate understanding of financial position of the authority. Potential qualified audit.	1	3	Medium (3)	RFO in place. Regular finance reports submitted at meetings. Two internal audit visits per year.
F8	Poor Financial Management	MPC could run out of funds before the financial year end. Risk to service delivery.	1	3	Medium (3)	RFO in place. Regular budget progress reports/monitoring. Reserves of over 5-6 months running costs.
F9	Failure to set a precept within sound budgeting arrangements.	Inadequate funds to effectively carry out planned services. Unjustified precept charge to parishioners.	1	3	Medium (3)	RFO in place. Rigorous precept setting process followed. Adequacy of reserves considered when setting precept. Regular budget monitoring throughout the year.

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F10	Failure to maintain an effective bank payments system.	Loss of funds from bank due to staff error or fraud.	1	2	Low (2)	Controls in place over bank payments – proper separation of duties. All payments approved by council and minuted. Review of bank reconciliations by PC member. Regular budget monitoring. Fidelity Guarantee (insurance).
F11	Loss of funds due to bank failure.	Any funds above FSCS guarantee limit could be lost. Impact on ability to deliver services and projects and meet contractual payments.	1	3	Medium (3)	Guarantee limit of £85k per financial institution. Investment policy in place. Spread of investments among different institutions.
F12	Failure to collect income from customers.	Funding shortfall which needs to be met from elsewhere.	1	1	Low (1)	Responsibility for collection of debts defined – separation of duties. Budget monitoring. Procedures to chase outstanding debts.
F13	Loss of tenant for Little Hands Nursery building	Funding shortfall which needs to be met from elsewhere.	1	3	Medium (3)	Longstanding tenant. Reserves of 6 months to cover income shortfall. <u>Opportunity to develop parish asset for other uses.</u>
F14	Claims will be made on insurance due to accidents in, on or around Council property (includes maintenance of public open spaces).	Adverse publicity – Failure in duty of care to parishioners. -Increased insurance premiums.	2	2	Medium (4)	Wardens regularly inspect and mend things. Cllr inspections. Maintenance Committee oversees and monitors. Process over awarding of major Maintenance Contracts. Risk assessments carried out. Public Liability Insurance held.

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F15	New employees in key officer roles.	Loss of funds through staff error or fraud.	1	2	Low (2)	Staff continuity in key officer roles. Recruitment processes and references. Separation of staff duties/RFO separate from Clerk. Internal controls in place over bank payments and cash handling. Staff training and performance reviews. Fidelity guarantee (insurance).
F16	Melbourn Community Hub Management Committee might not be able to make the Hub financially viable.	The Hub might need to be managed and run by MPC. Potential adverse impact on reserves and increase in precept.	1	3	Medium (3)	MPC works closely with the Hub Management Group and several Cllrs are directors. Regular finance reports provided to MPC. Financial assistance via grant given by MPC.
F17	SCDC and CCC are unable to perform their delegated tasks and these get pushed down to Parish Council level.	The Precept would need to be increased to enable MPC to carry out additional duties.	2	3	High (6)	MPC works closely with its District and County Cllrs and should get warning of any proposed changes so that it can make appropriate plans. MPC must continue to do this (Action) .
F18	Damage or loss by fire, weather or vandalism of Councils assets	Potential adverse service disruption and unbudgeted outlay for replacements/repairs.	2	2	Medium (4)	Asset register is linked to MPC's insurance policy. Wardens and regular Maintenance Contractors report damage to assets. Asset inspections programme. Risk assessments and fire prevention measures in place.

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F19	Lack of financial controls when appointing contractors and lack of monitoring of contractors following Appointment.	MPC may not get the best value from its contractors and may not get the service that it has paid for. Contractors may go out of business with an adverse impact on services.	2	2	Medium (4)	Policy for appointment & management of contractors. Policy includes financial checks. The Financial Regulations have controls around tender procedures and quotes. Maintenance Committee/Clerk monitors contractor performance.
F20	Inadequate financial controls around ordering goods and services.	The Council may not get best value for goods and services and may commit to expenditure without the necessary budget being available.	1	3	Medium (3)	Financial Regulations/Standing Orders detail procedures for authorisation of orders. It is potentially a disciplinary offence not to follow Financial Regulations. Extra checks on approvals for ordering introduced. MPC policy for awarding contracts.
F21	Loss of Financial Records.	Inability to access financial information. Failure to meet statutory requirements regarding record keeping.	1	3	Medium (3)	Financial accounting system is on a cloud-based system that is backed up remotely. Computerised finance records are regularly backed up.
F22	Investments made by MPC lose money.	The council would have to make the shortfall up from Elsewhere.	1	3	Medium (3)	Investment strategy in place – low risk investments made and reviewed Annually.
F23	Covid-19 pandemic (such as Covid-19) may have an unforeseen impact on MPC finances.	Additional unbudgeted costs may fall on the parish council which could impact planned service delivery and projects.	2	24	Medium (4)	Position kept under review. Reserves in place of 6 months. It may be possible to move funds from other ring-fenced reserves in an emergency.

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F24	<u>Inadequate controls over salaries and associated costs.</u>	<u>Salaries paid incorrectly or fraudulently. Incorrect deductions made and potential fines by HMRC.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Low (2)</u>	<u>HR Panel approve salary budget. Amendments to pay rates/hours are approved by HR/MPC. Signatories check salary amounts paid. Budget monitoring. Payroll software package used for deductions and returns to HMRC.</u>
F25	<u>Increased financial burden following impact of proposed Local Government reorganisation.</u>	<u>Increase to precept. Increased demand on staff resources. Risk of not fulfilling duties of Council.</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Medium (4)</u>	<u>Council to keep up to date with proposals and work with SDCDC and CCC when required to ensure Parish requirements are considered in reorganisation plans. Membership of NALC and CAPALC provides advice and information about relevant changes.</u>
POS1	Injury of user at one of the playparks.	Poor public perception of the council. The injured party could sue MPC.	1	2	Low (2)	Wardens inspect play parks weekly and report any maintenance issues to the council for repair. Play parks are also inspected annually by RoSPA who assess the risk and highlight any necessary repair works. MPC has insurance to reduce any monetary impact.
POS2	Damage to play park equipment.	Pay for repairs or replacement of equipment.	2	2	Medium (4)	Any damage is recorded on the weekly inspections and reported to council. All items of equipment in the playparks are recorded on the asset register and are insured. MPC could claim for any damages to the insurance so there would be little/no impact to council finances.

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POS3	Trees on boundaries	Falling branches / debris. Cost of Clearance. Injury / Loss of life. Impacted party could sue MPC.	2	2	Medium (4)	Weekly inspection of open spaces by wardens. Trees of concern reported to parish office and inspected as soon as practicable. Bi-Annual annual inspection by tree inspector. Insurance.
POS4	Benches	Vandalism. Cost of replacement.	2	2	Medium (4)	Vandalism is recorded and reported monthly to council. Some unplanned expenditure is budgeted for unplanned maintenance/replacement. <u>Wardens to complete minor repairs as needed.</u>
POS5	Bins	Vandalism. Impact of damage to environment. Cost of replacement.	2	2	Medium (4)	Vandalism is recorded and reported monthly to council. Unplanned expenditure is budgeted for unplanned maintenance/ replacement. Report issued to SCDC to clear rubbish.
POS6	Pests	Uneven ground/ trip hazards could cause injury. Injured party could sue council.	1	2	Low (2)	Regular pest control is carried out. Wardens monitor the open spaces and fill in holes which are pose high risk. Football team required to check pitches prior to use. MPC has public liability insurance.
G1	Failure to attract sufficient candidates for member vacancies.	Reduced representation of neighbourhoods. Lack of resource. Possible meeting inquorate.	1	3	Medium (3)	Actively publicise MPC's activities. Seek candidates from groups within village. Publicise vacancies in an eye-catching manner on noticeboards, social media, website, and in the press.

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G2	Failure to achieve quorum at meetings.	Business not transacted. Decisions not made.	1	3	Medium (3)	Issue annual meeting calendar to all councillors and officers. Issue agendas promptly. Check which councillors will be attending before the meeting. Contact councillors who miss meetings.
G3	Failure to correctly identify local needs or wishes due to lack of public consultation by Council.	Council does not represent the people. Resources not applied. Democratic deficit. Decisions not based on evidence. People disenfranchised.	1	2	Low (2)	Ensure meetings are publicised on the notice boards and website. Maintain close contact with local residents, with working parties, surveys, public consultations etc. Publicise plans and invite comments. Act on residents' feedback.
G4	Failure to respond to electors wishing to exercise right of inspection	Complaints received. Not transparent. Non-compliance.	1	2	Low (2)	Advertise how electors can exercise right of inspection and respond to requests.
G5	Members acting alone outside meetings.	Members outside compliance. Indemnities invalid. Personal risk.	1	2	Low (2)	Councillors attend training session and read "Good Councillor Guide". Do not make agreements outside of meetings.
G6	Council decisions not Implemented.	Confidence undermined. Reputation risk arises. Possible losses.	1	2	Low (2)	Actions from last meetings to be discussing reported to relevant meeting / committee. at next meeting to assess progress.
G7	Inaccurate, untimely, improper minutes.	Poor decisions in future. Poor evidence for decisions.	1	2	Low (2)	Draft minutes publish. Draft minutes to be approved at following meeting.

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G8	Inadequate document control.	Poor evidence. Poor support to Members.	1	2	Low (1)	Establish an appropriate filing and retrieval system. Produce a document version control calendar.
G9	Failure to recognise and address conflict of interest. Inaccurate register of members' interest.	Lack of transparency. Open to complaints of fairness or bias nature.	2	2	Medium (4)	Councillor to review Standards regime and comply with requirements. <u>Register of Interests to be reviewed by Councillors at Annual Parish Council Meeting.</u>
G10	Failure to complete and submit Annual Return.	Poor Auditors report. Public confidence Suffers.	1	2	Low (2)	Maintain a diary for the annual return process.
G11	Loss of data on PC due to system fault.	Interruption to effective administration. Possible financial loss.	1	3	Medium (3)	Hard drive back up. <u>Cloud based system implemented.</u> Cloud back ups.
G12	Loss of services of Parish Clerk.	Interruption to effective administration.	2	2	Medium (4)	Assistant to the Parish Clerk to take on role. <u>Deputy Clerk in place.</u> Locum Clerk to come in. Councillors to undertake some financial and administrative tasks. SLCC to assist in emergency.
G13	Non-compliance with data Protection.	Litigation. Poor reputation.	1	2	Low (2)	Clerk to monitor and act in accordance with the data protection policy.
C1	Injury caused by poor management of burial grounds e.g. fallen headstone	Poor public perception of the council. The injured party could sue MPC.	1	3	Medium (3)	Wardens to carry out fortnightly inspection. Immediate action taken when high risk issues are identified. The council has public liability insurance.

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						<u>Memorial checks training to be undertaken (action).</u>
C2	Loss or theft of burial records.	Loss of records would create more work for officers, which would increase the workload and therefore increase wages.	1	3	Medium (3)	Burial records are kept in a fireproof safe or archived. Copies of records from 2011 are also kept digitally to limit the risk of loss.
C3	Burial administration error.	Opening a grave incorrectly or exhuming an incorrectly buried interment would incur additional cost to MPC.	1	2	Low (2)	The burial plot is checked by the assistant clerk Clerk on the map and then verified by the wardens at the cemetery, who mark the plot prior to the interment. The grave digger/funeral director also has a copy of the map to check the grave.
A1	Overgrown and abandoned allotments.	If plot is overgrown and impacting neighbouring plots, the council pay for the clearance, if the previous holder will not, which is an additional cost.	1	1	Low (1)	The plots are regularly inspected so that the council can identify plots of concern and act before clearance is needed.
A2	Bonfires	Damage to the allotments could cause loss to the council and holders. Damage to surrounding land and property.	2	3	Medium (6)	Holders must take out insurance to have a plot. The rental agreement states allotment holders must not leave bonfires unattended.
A3	Poorly constructed sheds and greenhouse.	Damage caused to holders. Damage caused to plots	2	2	Medium (4)	Holders must take out insurance to have a plot. Holders must comply with the shed specification. Any shed that does not comply with the shed specification will be removed.

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A4	Asbestos uncovered	Cause health issues for users of allotments. Impacted party could sue the council.	1	2	Low (2)	Regular inspections and clearance carried out by council. Asbestos survey carried out ranks risk as "very low". Holders to act in accordance with council's management plan.
B1	Fire	Injury or loss of life. Impacted party could sue the council. Damage to building and assets. Rebuilding costs.	1	3	Medium (3)	Council buildings are insured. Council has public liability insurance. Annual servicing of fire safety equipment. Building specific risk assessments reviewed annually.
B2	Electricity issues	Injury or loss of life. Impacted party could sue the council. Damage to building and assets. Rebuilding costs.	1	3	Medium (3)	Council building are insured. Council has public liability insurance. Annual PAT Testing. Regular inspections where faults can be identified and reported.
B3	Poor hygiene	Cause health issues. Impacted party could sue the council. Damage to building (mould, damp etc.) Repair cost.	1	3	Medium (3)	Users must remove any food from the premises after use. Cleaning is carried out regularly (at least weekly). Issues reported to the council and addressed.
B4	Legionella	Cause health issues/disease. Impacted party could sue the council. Cost of remedial works to clear legionella. Cost of closing premises during work.	1	3	Medium (3)	Annual legionella risk assessment and water testing. Remedial works reported to council. Wardens carry out the legionella control regime. Any issues reported to council.

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Review date: April 2026

~~Doc: 8.15~~
~~Review Date: March 2024~~



Document Approval: _____

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: 28 April 2025

Document Review Policy: Annually



MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2025 UPDATE (ENGLAND)

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

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STANDING ORDERS

PURPOSE: Standing Orders are the written rules of a Parish Council. The SOs confirm the statutory requirements (items in bold).

SCOPE: Standing Orders are used to confirm the council's internal, organisational, administrative and procurement procedures and procedural matters for meetings.

Standing Orders do not include financial regulations. These regulations have been adopted separately by Melbourn Parish Council.

Standing Orders are not the same as policies. Policies are adopted separately.

The Clerk is the Proper Officer (see section 15) of the Council. The **Assistant Deputy** Clerk may be nominated to perform the role in the absence of the Clerk.

Section 19 refers to the Clerk rather than the Proper Officer because the **Assistant Deputy** Clerk cannot perform the function as defined.



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Meeting: 19 May 2025

Review Policy: Every 12 months

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INTRODUCTION

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

HOW TO USE MODEL STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

DRAFTING NOTES

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

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

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

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

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

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

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

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

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. Members of the public who raise matters not on the agenda should be asked to put the matter before the Clerk in writing for future consideration.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless

directed by the chair of the meeting.

- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chair of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r **The chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their**

- **casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**
See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.
- s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.
- u **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- v **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**
See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.
- w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours.
- y The Council shall make a audio recording of the Council or Committee meetings.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

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

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

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

~~xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;~~

~~xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;~~

~~xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence;~~

~~xxi-xiv.~~ xxi-xiv. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council;

~~xxii-xv.~~ xxii-xv. The code of conduct shall be signed by all Councillors;

~~xxiii-xvi.~~ xxiii-xvi. Agreement of Committee structures for the forthcoming year in accordance with standing order 4 above.

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

- a **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chair of a committee ~~{or a sub-committee}~~ may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee ~~{or the sub-committee}~~ at any time.
- d If the chair of a committee ~~{or a sub-committee}~~ does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee ~~{or the sub-committee}~~, any 2 members of the committee ~~{or the sub-committee}~~ may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee ~~{or a sub-committee}~~.

7. **PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 8 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of,

no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS AND CO-OPTION

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

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 7 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- h Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.

- i Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.
- j It is the responsibility of the mover to provide supporting arguments and documentation in time for publication with the agenda. If this is not done, the Proper Officer will remove the motion from the agenda.

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

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - viii. to require a written report;
 - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
 - xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xvii. to close the meeting.

11. **MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

See also standing order 20.

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

12. **DRAFT MINUTES**

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

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

"The chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the

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

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

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(u).

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

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

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a **Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(b) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council of this fact, and the Chair 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(a).
- c The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;

15. PROPER OFFICER

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

- b The Proper Officer shall:
- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**
- See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;*
- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
 - iii. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
 - iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
 - v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
 - vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
 - vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
 - viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
 - ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
 - x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
 - xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);

- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(see also standing order 23);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the next meeting of the Planning Committee. If the next meeting of the Planning Committee is too late, the Proper Officer consults with the Chair of the Planning Committee as to the necessity of holding an Extraordinary Planning Committee meeting;
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(see also standing order 23).

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

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

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's income and expenditure for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's income and expenditure for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below £60,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19. **HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the HR Panel is subject to standing order 11.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chair of HR Panel or, if they are not available, the vice-chair of the HR Panel of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the HR Panel at its next meeting.
- c The chair of HR Panel or in their absence, the vice-chair shall conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing to the HR Panel for approval by resolution.
- d Appraisal of other staff will be carried out by the Clerk, and reported in writing to the HR Panel for approval by resolution.
- e Any recommendation for pay progression arising from the appraisal (for any

member of staff) shall be subject to approval by resolution by the Council.

- f Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chair of HR Panel or in their absence, the vice-chair of the HR Panel in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of HR Panel.
- g Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by any employee relates to the chair or vice-chair of HR Panel, this shall be communicated to another member of HR Panel, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of HR Panel.
- h Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- i In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

See also standing order 21.

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b. **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 may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
- c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**

- d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

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

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

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

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

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

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

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

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

25. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to

inspect; or

- ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. **STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 8 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.