



# Stone

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## Town Council

**Town Clerk**

Les Trigg

**Tel: 01785 619740**

**Email: [clerk@stonetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stonetowncouncil.gov.uk)**

15 Station Road

STONE

ST15 8JP

26 March 2025

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 1 APRIL 2025 at 7:05pm**, or on the rising of the Council meeting, if later.

The agenda is set out below and I trust you will be able to attend.

Les Trigg  
Town Clerk

### **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence, and to consider the approval of any reasons given for absence under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**3. Requests for Dispensations Received**

**4. To receive a report from County Councillors representing Stone Town**

- County Councillor Mrs J. Hood
- County Councillor I. Parry

5. **To receive a report from Borough Councillors representing Stone Town**

6. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.

(Note: Due to this meeting taking place in the pre-election period for County Council elections, this item will not be considered).

7. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

- a) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 4 February 2025, Minute Numbers GP25/113 – GP25/133 (attached).
- b) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 18 March 2025, Minute Numbers GP25/134 – GP25/138 (attached)

8. **Minutes of Sub-Committees**

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 18 March 2025, Minute Numbers TTP25/035 – TTP25/041 (attached)
  - i. To consider the draft minutes
- b) Environment Sub-Committee held on 18 March 2025, Minute Numbers ENV25/036 – ENV25/045 (attached)
  - i. To consider the draft minutes
  - ii. To consider the recommendations contained in Minute Number ENV25/045
- c) Estates Sub-Committee held on 18 March 2025, Minute Numbers EST25/027 – EST25/034 (attached)
  - i. To consider the draft minutes

9. **Appointment of Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor Elect**

To consider the appointment of a Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor Elect and the arrangements for Mayor Making.

10. **Grant to Local Organisation**

To receive and, if appropriate, consider the following request for a grant from a local organisation:

NOTE: This application does not meet the Council's approved grants criteria, so will not be considered unless a motion is moved and seconded that the criteria is waived, and the application approved:

- a. **Organisation: Alleyne's Academy**  
**Amount Requested: £995**  
**Reason:** To support the purchase of shelving and furniture for the school library.
  - i. Turnover is over £100,000
  - ii. Value of grant requested is over £500

**11. Annual Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

To undertake a review of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in accordance with the attached report of the Town Clerk.

By convention, consideration of the attached Standing Orders and Financial Regulations document will be deferred until the next meeting of this Committee.

The appendix to the Town Clerk's report has only been included in the electronic version of the agenda.

**12. Review of Councillor Code of Conduct**

To undertake a review of the Council's Councillor Code of Conduct. A copy of the document, updated for dates only, is attached to the agenda.

The Code has been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who is not proposing any changes.

**13. Review of Scheme of Public Participation**

To undertake a review of the Council's Scheme of Public Participation.

The Scheme has been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who has made changes to clarify that the scheme is open to Stone Town residents only, and that the scheme will be suspended prior to all national and local elections, not just Town Council elections. An updated copy of the document is attached to the agenda.

**14. Review of Staffing Guidelines**

To undertake a review of the Council's Staffing Guidelines.

The Guidelines have been reviewed by the Town Clerk, who has made changes to clarify that in considering national pay awards, regard needs to be given to employees existing contracts of employment, to authorise the Town Clerk to implement nationally agreed changes to the living/minimum wage, and to remove reference to public sector exit payment caps, which were never implemented nationally.

An updated copy of the document with changes tracked is attached to the agenda.

**15. Heritage Centre**

To consider an update on the Stone Heritage Centre.

**16. Town Council Payments**

To receive a list of payments made by the Council during the period 1 January to 28 February 2025 (attached).

**17. Update from Working Groups:**

To receive updates from Working Group co-ordinators:

- a) Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group (Chairman: R. Kenney)
- b) Engagement with Young People Working Group (Co-ordinator: K. Dawson)

**18. To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings as a representative of the Town Council**

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group – Cllr J. Davies

Stone ATC – Town Mayor & one Cllr – Cllrs: P. Leason and J. Davies

Age Concern Stone & District – Cllrs: J. Davies and C. Thornicroft

Stafford & Stone Access Group – Cllr T. Kelt

Stone Common Plot Trustees – Cllrs: A. Burgess, J. Hood, T. Kelt, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group – Cllrs: J. Battrick, J. Powell and one vacancy

SPCA Executive Committee – Cllr T. Kelt

West Midlands Railway and other rail matters – Cllr T. Kelt

**19. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.**

**20. To consider the Confidential Minutes and recommendations of the undermentioned Sub-Committees:**

- a) Environment Sub-Committee Meeting held on 18 March 2025, Minute Numbers: ENV25/036 and ENV25/045 (attached).
  - i. To consider the draft minutes
  - ii. To consider the recommendations contained in Minute Number ENV25/045.
  
- b) Estates Sub-Committee Meeting held on 18 March 2025, Minute Numbers: EST25/027, EST25/033 and EST25/034 (attached).
  - i. To consider the draft minutes

Members of the public are welcome to attend the General Purposes Committee meeting as observers and/or to make representations to the committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation. Details of the scheme are displayed in the Council's notice boards and website.

Please access the Council Chamber from the rear of the building.

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 4 February 2025

**PRESENT:** Councillor I. Fordham in the Chair for agenda items 1 to 10 & 12 to 19 (Minute Numbers: GP25/113 to GP25/130),  
Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair for agenda items 11, 20 and 21 (Minute Numbers: GP25/131 to GP25/133), and,  
Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, J. Davies, J. Hood, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Metters and R. Townsend

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards and T. Williams

**ABSENT:** Councillors: A. Burgess, L. Davies, K. Dawson, R. Kenney (to GP25/130), A. Mottershead, J. Powell, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft

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### **GP25/113** Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: A. Burgess, L. Davies, R. Kenney ((to Minute Number GP25/130), due to his attendance at a Borough Council meeting), A. Mottershead and C. Thornicroft

Where a reason for absence is given, this reason was approved for the purposes of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **GP25/114** Declarations of Interest and Declarations under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

None made

### **GP25/115** Requests for Dispensations

None received

### **GP25/116** To receive the report of the County Councillors

The Chairman invited County Councillors to address the Committee:

#### **County Councillor Jill Hood**

Councillor Hood had no report to deliver on this occasion.

#### **County Councillor I. Parry**

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

### **GP25/117** To receive the report of Borough Councillors

The Chairman invited Borough Councillors to address the Committee but there were no reports.

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

**GP25/118 Representations from Members of the Public**

None received.

**GP25/119 Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 December 2024 (Minute Numbers GP25/095 – GP25/112), be approved as a correct record.

**GP25/120 Minutes of Sub-Committees**

RESOLVED:

- a) Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee held on 14 January 2025, (Minute Numbers TTP25/026 – TTP25/034), that the draft minutes be noted, and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP25/031 be adopted.

The recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP25/033 was considered as part of Minute Number GP25/130 (agenda item 10).

- b) Environment Sub-Committee held on 14 January 2025 (Minute numbers ENV25/027 – ENV25/035) that the draft minutes be noted.

The recommendation of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number ENV25/034 was considered as part of Minute Number GP25/130 (agenda item 10).

- c) Estates Sub-Committee held on 14 January 2025 (Minute Numbers EST25/017 – EST25/026), that the draft minutes be noted.

The recommendation of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST25/023 was considered as part of Minute Number GP25/130 (agenda item 10).

**The Vice Chairman, Councillor Fordham, deferred agenda items 9 (General Purposes Sub-Committee – Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28), 10 (225-26 to 2027-28 Budget Recommendation), 11 (Grants to Local Organisations) and 12 (Meeting Schedule for 2025-26) to a later point in the agenda, when the Chairman, Councillor R. Kenney, may be available to take the Chair.**

**GP25/121 Membership of Stone Community Hub Liaison Group**

The Committee considered the appointment of a new member to Stone Community Hub Liaison Group following the resignation of Councillor Jill Hood.

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Robert Townsend as a member of Stone Community Hub Liaison Group.

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**GP25/122**    **Heritage Centre**

The Committee considered an update on Stone Heritage Centre.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre was now open, primarily for the purposes of the Heritage Centre Manager speaking to people who may be willing to loan their historic items to the Town Council as future exhibits.

The Heritage Centre Manager had reported that several people had come forward with interesting items. Rather than the Town Council building a large, owned collection of items, the preference was to compile a catalogue of artifacts that could be loaned from individuals or museums, supporting a constantly changing exhibition display.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heritage Centre Manager had spent the day (Tuesday 4 February) at the County Museum Collection Stores at Beacon Business Park, Stafford, to discuss the arrangements for loans and relevant pieces for Stone.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Council was about to put out a call for people who were in possession of WWII memorabilia that could be displayed on VE Day and VJ day, and individuals who had memories of VE Day and would be willing to have their recounts recorded, with a view to capturing the information as a permanent record for the future.

**GP25/123**    **Stafford District (B) Payphone Consultation**

The Committee considered a British Telecom consultation seeking views on its proposal to remove a public telephone box in Stone after research had shown that the payphone was no longer regularly used.

An email from Stafford Borough Council had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting along with a spreadsheet detailing the location of the telephone box (and others that were outside the boundary of the town) and a BT payphone notice.

The Committee noted that the total calls from the payphone on the Lichfield Road were 14, made over the last twelve months, with no calls to any recognised helplines. The site was not a high frequency accident or suicide location and there was no other evidence of need.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council raises no objections to British Telecom's proposal to remove the payphone on the Lichfield Road, Stone.

**GP25/124**    **Standards Consultation**

The Committee considered a government consultation seeking views on the introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England to ensure consistency of approach amongst councils investigating serious breaches of their member codes of conduct, including the introduction of the power of suspension.

Electronic links to full details of the consultation and the online survey had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

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The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the current standards and conduct framework for local authorities (established by the Localism Act 2011) required every local authority to adopt a code of conduct, the content of which must as a minimum be consistent with the seven Nolan Principles of standards in public life, and sets out rules on requiring members to register and disclose pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. Beyond these requirements, it was for individual councils to set their own local code which may or may not align with the Local Government Association's model code of conduct and guidance.

Every principal authority must also have in place arrangements under which it can investigate allegations of breaches of its code of conduct but there is no provision in current legislation for a sanction to suspend a councillor found to have breached the code of conduct. Sanctions are limited to less robust measures such as barring members from Cabinet, Committee, or representative roles, a requirement to issue an apology or undergo code of conduct training, or public criticism.

The Committee discussed whether the Council should respond to the consultation collectively (through compiling the responses of all Councillors or delegating the authority to respond) and/or suggest that each Town Councillor should respond to the consultation individually.

The Committee concluded that, as there would be very many opinions to document in response to the thirty questions in the survey if answered collectively as a Town Council, it was considered less cumbersome if each Town Councillor responded to the consultation individually.

RESOLVED: That Town Councillors respond individually to the Government's Consultation on Standards.

**GP25/125 Town Council Payments**

RESOLVED: To note the list\* of Town Council payments made during the period 1 November to 31 December 2024.

**GP25/126 Update from Working Groups:**

**Stone Heritage Centre Steering Group**

There was no additional update from the Steering Group.

**Engagement with Young People**

Councillor Dawson was not available to give a report.

**GP25/127 To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council**

**Stone Area Parish Liaison Group**

Councillor J. Davies briefed the Committee on a meeting of Stone Area Parish Liaison Group held on 29 January 2025 at the Heritage Centre, where attendees had been invited on a tour of the building with the Heritage Centre Manager.

The County Officer at Staffordshire Parish Council's Association was in attendance and the main topic of discussion, apart from the Heritage Centre, had been the potential impact of the government's proposed reorganisation of local government.

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Councillor Davies said the group provided a great opportunity to work in coordination with other parishes as the reorganisation and devolution of powers develop.

#### **Stone ATC**

Councillor J. Davies advised the Committee that a meeting of the Squadron's Civilian Welfare Committee would be taking place this evening (4 February 2025).

#### **Age Concern Stone & District**

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that no meeting had taken place.

#### **Stafford & Stone Access Group**

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a meeting of Stafford & Stone Access Group would be taking place on Monday 10 February 2025. He also informed the Committee that he and other members of the Access Group had recently visited the Heritage Centre to discuss access with the Heritage Centre Manager which had been a productive meeting.

#### **Stone Common Plot Trustees**

Councillor Hood advised the Committee that no meeting of Stone Common Plot Trustees had taken place.

#### **Stone Community Hub Liaison Group**

Councillor Battrick and Councillor Hood confirmed there was no new information to report.

#### **SPCA Executive Committee**

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that a meeting of the SPCA Executive Committee had taken place on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025. A lot of its content was procedural, but the reorganisation of local government had also been discussed. The Association was rooting for parish councils to play a full part in the devolution process.

#### **West Midlands Railway and other Rail Matters**

Councillor Kelt advised the Committee that he had been unable to attend a meeting held last month but didn't think any of its content impacted Stone town directly.

### **GP25/128 Meeting Schedule for 2025-26**

The Committee considered a proposed meeting and civic events schedule\* for the period May 2025 to April 2026 which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Committee noted that as Stafford Borough Council's 2025-26 programme of meetings was not yet available, some amendments may subsequently need to be made to avoid future clashes.

RESOLVED: To approve the meeting schedule for 2025-26 with any necessary amendments agreed in consultation with the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee Chairman.

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**GP25/129    General Purposes Committee – Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28**

The Committee received the report of the Town Clerk\* (which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting) examining the 2025-26 to 2027-28 budget requirements for the specific services managed directly by the General Purposes Committee, including those which had previously been the responsibility of the former Management Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee recommends for consideration later in the meeting alongside the proposals from Sub-Committees, the adoption of the standstill Committee budget for 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28, as detailed in the Clerk's report, with the following adjustments:

- a. In respect of the ongoing discussions with Stafford Borough Council, the provision of an additional £7,500 per annum from 2025-26 to allow the Council to occupy additional office space in the 15 Station Road building, plus an additional £5,000 in 2025-26 only for additional furniture etc.
- b. The provision of £1,000 in 2025-26 for the replacement of the wooden stand used for wreath laying at the war memorial.
- c. An allowance of £30,000 to support the introduction of ANPR in Stone High Street, partially funded by the removal of the £10,000 provision in the current year for Market square improvements.
- d. An increased inflation provision of £1,197 in 2025-26, £418 in 2026-26 and £656 in 2027-28 for the Council as a whole as a result of budget changes put forward by this Committee and all of the Sub-Committees.

**GP25/130    Budget 2025-26 to 2027-28 for recommendation to the Council**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk\* (which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting) alongside the budget proposals from Sub-Committees and from this Committee.

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Council that:

1. The Standstill Budget included in the Clerk's report to this meeting be recommended to the Council for adoption with the following amendments:
  - a. Estates:
    - i. An additional provision of £12,000 should be made in 2025-26 for repainting the Stone Station which should be funded from the Building Maintenance Reserve.

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b. Environment:

- i. The £1,560 in the current year's budget for Hedgerows is used instead for improvements to the paths at Crown Meadow in 2025-26 with an additional contingency of £1,000.
- ii. £300 is added in the current year for cutting back Willow trees.
- iii. An Environment Initiatives budget of £810 for 2025-26 is added to the anticipated carried forward sum of £1,190.

c. Tourism and Town Promotion:

- i. An allowance of £1,000 should be made for the additional costs of VE Day and VJ Day events. These events would be in addition to VJ Day themed High Street event on 16 August 2025, which would be funded from the existing Tourism and Town Promotion budget.

d. General Purposes:

- i. In respect of the ongoing discussions with Stafford Borough Council, the provision of an additional £7,500 per annum from 2025-26 to allow the Council to occupy additional office space in the 15 Station Road building, plus an additional £5,000 in 2025-26 only for additional furniture etc.
- ii. The provision of £1,000 in 2025-26 for the replacement of the wooden stand used for wreath laying at the war memorial.
- iii. An allowance of £30,000 to support the introduction of ANPR in Stone High Street, partially funded by the removal of the £10,000 provision in the current year for Market Square improvements.
- iv. An increased inflation provision of £1,197 in 2025-26, £418 in 2026-27 and £656 in 2027-28 for the Council as a whole as a result of budget changes put forward by this Committee and all of the Sub-Committee.

As a consequence of the above, the precept on Stafford Borough Council for 2025-26 would be £409,788, with Local Council Tax Support Grant of £26,210 to be added. This would result in a 2025-26 Council Tax for this Council's purposes of £63.99 for a Band D property, an increase for the year of £2.99, with indicative Council Tax levels of £67.13 and £70.42 for the following two years.

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After arriving at the meeting during the deferred agenda item 10 (Minute Number GP25/0130), Councillor R. Kenney took the Chair for the remaining items on the agenda.

**GP25/131 Grants to Local Organisations**

The Committee considered requests for grant aid from local organisations. Before consideration, the Town Clerk reminded the Committee that £2,600 remained within the Grants budget.

The following organisations met the eligibility criteria within the Council's grants policy:

a. **Organisation: Big Top Musical Adventures**

**Amount Requested:** £500

**Reason:** To offer sound hearing sessions to support the mental and emotional well-being of Stone residents.

RESOLVED: To decline the award of a grant to Big Top Musical Adventures.

b. **Organisation: Bromfield Court Residents Focus Group**

**Amount Requested:** £250

**Reason:** To purchase plants and shrubs for a spring and summer display at Bromfield Court.

This application was withdrawn as no accounting information had been provided.

c. **Organisation: Stone Lions Club**

**Amount Requested:** £500

**Reason:** Prostate screening.

RESOLVED: To award a grant of £500 to Stone Lions Club.

d. **Organisation: Stone Gang Show**

**Amount Requested:** £500

**Reason:** To support Stone Gangshow

RESOLVED: To award a grant of £500 to Stone Gang Show.

The following organisations did not meet the eligibility criteria within the Council's grants policy for the reasons stated, and no proposer or seconder came forward to instigate a discussion about making an award of a grant. The applications were therefore not considered due to their ineligibility.

e. **Organisation: Stafford & District Bereavement & Loss Support**

**Amount Requested:** £500

**Reason:** To support the 'Circle of Friends' group who meet fortnightly at Coop Funeral Care in Stone.

i. Level of reserves

f. **Organisation: Douglas MacMillan Hospice**

**Amount Requested:** £200

**Reason:** To support Dramatherapy sessions in the children's hospice.

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- i. Turnover is over £100,000
- ii. Level of reserves

**GP25/132 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.**

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next items of business.

**GP25/133 Confidential Minutes Sub-Committees**

- a) Estates Sub-Committee Meeting held on 14 January 2025, Minute Numbers: EST25/017, EST25/025 and EST25/026.

RESOLVED: To note the draft minutes.

**CHAIRMAN**

# Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 18 March 2025

**PRESENT:** Councillor J. Metters in the Chair, and  
Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Best, A. Burgess, J. Davies, L. Davies, K. Dawson, T. Kelt,  
B. Kenney, N. Powell, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards and T. Williams

Note: Prior to the start of the meeting, in the absence of the Committee Chairman and the Committee Vice Chairman, the Town Clerk invited nominations for Chairman and Deputy Mayor, Councillor Metters, was appointed to take the Chair for the meeting.

**ABSENT:** Councillors: J. Hood, I. Fordham, R. Kenney, P. Leason, A. Mottershead and J. Powell

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### **GP25/134** Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: J. Hood, R. Kenney, P. Leason, A. Mottershead and J. Powell

Where a reason for absence is given, this reason was approved for the purposes of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **GP25/135** Declarations of Interest

None made

### **GP25/136** Requests for Dispensations

None received

### **GP25/137** Representations from Members of the Public

Due to this meeting taking place in the pre-election period for Town Council elections, the Town Council's Scheme of Public Participation had been suspended.

### **GP25/138** Annual Review of Risk Management

The Committee received the report\* of the Town Clerk on the Annual Review of Risk Management. The report had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Council was required to consider risks on an annual basis and the report had been updated to take account of the Heritage Centre and a few other smaller details which included retention of Covid-19 references as a mitigation against the general risks of pandemic.

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The Town Clerk said that he would review the items relating to European law next year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Review of Risk Management be accepted by the Committee.

**CHAIRMAN**

# Stone Town Council

## Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 18 March 2025

**PRESENT:** Councillor A. Best in the Chair and  
Councillors: A. Burgess, J. Davies, L. Davies, K. Dawson and B. Kenney

Co-opted Member: J. Cook

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards and T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: T. Kelt and R. Townsend

Note: Prior to the start of the meeting, and in the absence of the Sub-Committee Chairman and the Sub-Committee Vice Chairman, the Town Clerk invited nominations for Chairman and Councillor Andrew Best was appointed to take the chair for the meeting.

**ABSENT:** Councillors: J. Hood, R. Kenney, A. Mottershead, P. Leason and J. Powell

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**TTP25/035** Apologies

Councillors: J. Hood, R. Kenney, A. Mottershead, P. Leason and J. Powell

**TTP25/036** Declarations of Interest

None made.

**TTP25/037** Requests for Dispensations

None received.

**TTP25/038** Representations from Members of the Public

Due to this meeting taking place in the pre-election period for County Council elections, the Scheme of Public Participation had been suspended.

**TTP25/039** Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Tourism & Town Promotion Sub-Committee meeting held on 14 January 2025 (Minute Numbers TTP25/026 – TTP25/034), were approved as a correct record.

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## TTP25/040 Calendar of Events

The Sub-Committee considered the Town Council's Calendar of Events for 2025-26 and gave updates on events that had taken place:

### 2025 – Taken Place

- Texas Flag Raising, marking Texas State's independence from Mexico (Saturday 1 March 2025)  
Councillor Davies gave a report on the Texas Flag Raising in the High Street, which had generated a lot of interest in the town and was well supported. Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that some sections of the Texas State Song were pared down which worked well given the song is lengthy.

### 2025/2026 – Upcoming/Agreed

The following events to be hosted by the Town Council, and their agreed dates, were noted by the Sub-Committee:

- St George's Day Re-enactment (Saturday 26 April 2025)  
The arrangements for this event were in progress.
- VE Day Commemoration (Thursday 8 May 2025)  
Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that he would provide a progress report on the planning arrangements for this commemoration later in the meeting (under Working Groups).
- Mr BuzzKing's Puppet Things (30 May to 2 June 2025)  
The arrangements for this event were in progress by the organiser.
- Floating Market/Waterside Events (31 May to 1 June 2025)  
The arrangements for this event were in progress by the organiser.
- Children's Summer Event (to be confirmed)  
The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that a date for a summer children's event had not been set but the Town Council was considering arranging a space themed event.
- Classic Car Event  
The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that he was awaiting confirmation of the date for a Classic Car Event from the organiser.
- VJ Day Commemoration (Saturday 16 August 2025)  
A music event would be held on Saturday 16 August with an 'End of WWII theme'.
- Music Event/Street Party (Saturday 16 August 2025)  
The music event will be linked with the VJ Day Commemoration.

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- Florence Brass Band Concert & Burma Star Commemoration (17 August 2025)  
The Florence Brass Band will perform in Stonefield Park on Sunday 17 August 2025.
- Vegan Market (20 September 2025)  
The arrangements for this event were in progress by the organiser.
- Christmas Lights Switch-On (Thursday 20 November 2025)  
The usual arrangements will apply.
- Texas Flag Raising, marking the anniversary of Texas joining the Union on 29 December 1845 (Monday 29 December 2025)  
The usual arrangements will apply.
- Any other suggested new events for 2025/26  
The Chairman invited Sub-Committee members to put forward new ideas for events in 2025.

#### **TTP25/041 Reports from Working Groups**

The Chairman invited co-ordinators from each Working Group to address the Sub-Committee:

##### **Remembrance Plaques Working Group**

Councillor L. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the Remembrance Plaques were continuing as a work in progress.

##### **Market Strategy Working Group**

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that a Market Strategy Working Group meeting had recently taken place and the markets, and their future management had been discussed. The main outcome of the meeting was a decision to offer market tables free of charge from 1 April 2025.

##### **Friendship Agreement Working Group**

Councillor J. Davies advised the Sub-Committee that the Friendship Agreement Working Group was working on two threads. The first was to compose a Town Council policy on friendship agreements and to define the structure on how these should be managed.

Meanwhile the group was continuing to encourage the links and friendship between Stone and Bagnacavallo and was pleased to put the Scouts in the two towns in contact.

Councillor Davies said the proposals for local government reorganisation and the loss of Stafford Borough Council with its own twinning agreements, may provide the Town Council with an opportunity to extend its international links for the benefit of the people and businesses in the town.

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

## **VE/VJ Day Working Group**

Councillor Davies thanked members of the VE/VJ Day Working Group for their input which had provided useful information enabling the Town Council to develop a detailed plan for VE Day.

He said that the Town Council will be observing the national commemoration timetable on the actual anniversary of VE Day (on Thursday 8 May 2025) including the raising of the VE Day flag in the High Street at 9.30am, and in the evening, participating in the lighting of the beacons at 9.30pm.

Councillor Davies advised the Sub-Committee that several local organisations were keen to participate in the commemoration including Stone Scout & Guide Band, Stone Choral Society, Florence Brass Band, and local scout, guiding and cadet groups. A plan for the day was currently in draft and a public announcement will follow.

The arrangements for the celebration of VJ Day had already been made firm through the organisation of a Music Festival on Saturday 16 August 2025 and the Florence Brass Band Concert & Burma Star Commemoration on Sunday 17 August 2025.

Councillor Davies reminded the Sub-Committee that it was important to remember that WWII was not over on VE Day and that a nasty war was still going on in the Far East until August of 1945.

As the working group's work was now done, it was likely it would not need to meet until after the events when a review meeting would take place.

**Chairman**

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

# Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 18 March 2025

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. Townsend in the Chair and  
Councillors: J. Battrick, A. Burgess, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, J. Metters, N. Powell and  
C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards and T. Williams

By Chairman's Invitation: A. Best

**ABSENT:** Councillors: R. Kenney, P. Leason and J. Powell

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**ENV25/036 Apologies**

Councillors: R. Kenney, P. Leason and J. Powell

**ENV25/037 Declarations of Interest**

None made.

**ENV25/038 Request for Dispensations**

None received.

**ENV25/039 Representations from Members of the Public**

Due to this meeting taking place in the pre-election period for Town Council elections, the Town Council's Scheme of Public Participation had been suspended.

**ENV25/040 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on 14 January 2025 (Minute Numbers ENV25/027 – ENV25/035), were approved as a correct record.

**ENV25/041 Environmental Sub-Committee Works Update**

The Chairman drew the Sub-Committee's attention to the Grounds Maintenance Works Update which had been enclosed with the agenda for the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

### Asbestos Removal

Although not under any time pressure, the Town Council had reached an impasse with the main allotment holder in respect of what was needed to be done to replace the asbestos (to provide ground support) when it was dug up. A solution was needed to be negotiated.

### Woodend Footbridge

The Grounds Maintenance Contractor has cleaned the foot bridge and confirmed that it would be treated and painted by the end of March 2025.

### Scrape One

The Grounds Maintenance Contractor has completed work on Scrape One. He has cut back a third of the grasses to promote new growth and biodiversity.

The Grounds Maintenance Contractor has removed Willow saplings ahead of time and before the nesting season commences. The saplings have been reduced to stumps (which will regrow) to prevent the Willow seeds they produce, from germinating in the scrape.

### Plant Borders

The Sub-Committee Chairman, Deputy Town Clerk and Grounds Maintenance Contractor, have undertaken a walkabout to look at the town's borders, including Walton roundabout, identifying the current issues and considering their future maintenance and improvement.

A number of tasks were noted including pollarding some taller Willow trees, general pruning work and some replanting. The Grounds Maintenance Contractor now has a clear idea of what needs to be done, which should be covered by the existing budget.

### New Items

Footpath improvement works on Crown Meadow, to alleviate surface water flooding, is a new item added to the list.

### Anglers Car Park

The planned work to Angers Car Park is in the Grounds maintenance Contractors sights to complete before the end of the financial year.

### Scrape Two

The restoration of Scrape Two involving the digging out of hundreds of unwanted Willow saplings and grasses has been done. The area currently looks unsightly but will regenerate with replanting of the wanted grasses and flowers, still to do.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Town Clerk for her input on these projects.

**ENV25/042 Crown Meadow**

The Chairman provided the Sub-Committee with a further update on Crown Meadow which included the following:

Volunteer Groups

Dates have been suggested for a volunteer litter picking meet, now confirmed to be taking place on Saturday 29 March 2025, with several Councillors advising they plan to attend.

Himalayan Balsam Removal sessions were also proposed for April and June.

Biodiversity Officer

A site meeting with Stafford Borough Council's Biodiversity Officer was planned to take place soon to look at the work undertaken on Crown Meadow and to receive advice on further improvements and positive projects to enhance the site.

**ENV25/043 Reports of Working Groups**

Environmental Working Group

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Environmental Working Group was looking at getting some volunteer dates, and if it proves popular, the setting up of another WhatsApp group, to share information on volunteer sessions and related environmental updates.

**ENV25/044 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.**

**ENV25/045 Crown Meadow**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk which had been attached to the agenda for the meeting.

RECOMMENDED: That the General Purposes Committee authorises the publication of a series of articles on Crown Meadow as described in the Town Clerk's report.

**Chairman**

# Stone Town Council – Estates Sub-Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 18 March 2025

**PRESENT:** Councillor A. Best in the Chair and  
Councillors: J. Battrick, L. Davies, N. Powell and C. Thornicroft

Officers: L. Trigg, R. Edwards and T. Williams

By Chairman's invitation: J. Davies, K. Dawson, T. Kelt and R. Townsend

**ABSENT:** Councillors: I. Fordham, J. Hood, R. Kenney, P. Leason, A. Mottershead and  
J. Powell

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**EST25/027**    **Apologies**

Councillors: I. Fordham, J. Hood, R. Kenney, P. Leason, A. Mottershead and  
J. Powell

**EST25/028**    **Declarations of Interest**

None made.

**EST25/029**    **Requests for Dispensations**

None received.

**EST25/030**    **Representations from Members of the Public**

Due to this meeting taking place in the pre-election period for County Council  
elections, the Scheme of Public Participation had been suspended.

**EST25/031**    **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on the 14 January  
2025 (Minute Numbers EST25/017 – EST25/026), be approved as a correct  
record.

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting.  
They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

**EST25/032**     **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.**

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

**EST25/033**     **Confidential Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on the 14 January 2025 (Minute Numbers EST25/017, EST25/025 and EST25/026), be approved as a correct record.

**EST25/034**     **Update on Stone Station**

The Town Clerk provided an update on Stone Station in respect of the extended use of the lease.

He advised the Sub-Committee that he was still awaiting a response from the landlord's legal department on the proposals the Town Council had made.

**Chairman**

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\* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.



# Application for Grant Aid



Name of organisation: Alleyne's Academy	
Purpose of organisation:  Education	
Amount of grant requested:  £995	Total cost of project (if appropriate):
Reason for grant request:  <p>The staff and students at Alleyne's Academy are striving to re-instate the school library. The impact on students' progress, health and wellbeing would be impressive if there was a functioning library in school where they can read for pleasure and for information. Not to mention the impact it could have on their future prospects if they are further supported in becoming a confident reader.</p> <p>We have a passionate library committee of students and staff who are already working hard on collecting books from generous donations from within and around the school community.</p> <p>We also have had time and expertise generously donated by contacts at local libraries who have supported staff with designing a library database and loaning system.</p> <p>Now we require some help in making the library a functioning space and require some shelving and other furniture, which is what this grant would serve to do.</p>	
Benefits to Stone residents:  <p>Initial links have already been forged between the school and Stone Library, as we take students to visit and use the resources there, however we would love to have a library of our own to share books across the two sites.</p> <p>We would love this to become a community space where extra-curricular activities can be held and the resources could be shared with all students, parents etc. within the local community.</p>	
Environmental Impact of proposals:  <p>Resource Sharing – reduces the needs for individuals to purchase new books and as mentioned these resources would be shared with Stone Library.</p> <p>A library would provide access to information about climate change and sustainability issues, enabling students to learn about eco-friendly practices.</p>	

Other sources of funding secured or being explored (with amounts where known):

We have already gone to great lengths to try to fund as many aspects of the library as we have at our disposal:

- We have curated an Amazon 'wishlist' of books that students have requested for the library and the local community have been invited to purchase a book as a 'gift' to the library.
- As far as possible we have used the school budget.
- The vast majority of the books and other resources that are being put to use are from generous donations from the school community.
- We are running our own competitions and fundraising events in school.

Is this an "exceptional" request (see notes)? If so, please explain why the Council should treat it as an exception:

Without this grant it could delay the opening of the library.

1000 books have now been donated and students are giving up their free time to sort through them

Grants awarded by the Council in the last two years, and the uses made of the funding:

Climate Change Grant 24-25 £900

Climate Change Grant 23-24 £1,495

Statement of support from Council appointed representative (if applicable):

**Please Ensure that your Latest Accounts are Included with your Application  
Attached**

**Alleyne's Academy**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2024**  
**(including income and expenditure account)**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted pension fund £'000	Restricted general funds £'000	Restricted fixed asset funds £'000	Endowment Funds £'000	Total 2023/24 £'000	Total 2022/23 £'000
<b>Income from :</b>								
Donations and capital grants	2	12	-	-	198	-	210	91
Charitable activities :	3							
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations		272	-	5,930	-	-	6,202	5,833
Other trading activities	4	25	-	-	-	-	25	22
Investments	5	-	-	-	-	2	2	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>309</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,930</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6,439</b>	<b>5,946</b>
<b>Expenditure on :</b>								
Raising funds		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities:								
Academy trust educational operations	7	309	(21)	5,498	309	-	6,095	5,810
<b>Total</b>		<b>309</b>	<b>(21)</b>	<b>5,498</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,095</b>	<b>5,810</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before transfers</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>(111)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>136</b>
Transfers between funds	15	-	-	(228)	228	-	-	-
<b>Net income/(expenditure) after transfers</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>								
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	15, 25	-	225	-	-	-	225	319
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>455</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>								
Total funds brought forward	15	311	(301)	351	8,737	66	9,164	8,709
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>311</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>8,854</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>9,733</b>	<b>9,164</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.  
All of the Academy's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

**Alleyne's Academy**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Company number : 08611863  
Balance sheet as at 31 August 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	11		8,736		8,620
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	12	199		199	
Investments	13	68		66	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,437		1,369	
		<u>1,704</u>		<u>1,634</u>	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14(a)	<u>652</u>		<u>789</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			1,052		845
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>9,788</u>		<u>9,465</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	25		(55)		(301)
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u><u>9,733</u></u>		<u><u>9,164</u></u>
<b>Funds of the academy trust :</b>					
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund	15	8,854		8,737	
Restricted income fund	15	555		351	
Pension reserve	15	<u>(55)</u>		<u>(301)</u>	
<b>Total restricted funds</b>			9,354		8,787
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>	15		311		311
<b>Endowment funds</b>	15		68		66
<b>Total funds</b>			<u><u>9,733</u></u>		<u><u>9,164</u></u>

The financial statements on pages 21 to 43 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 26 November 2024 and are signed on their behalf by:



S.M. Crookshank - Chair of Governors

**Alleyne's Academy**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 August 2024**

	Notes	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	19	293	618
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
	20	(225)	(62)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
	21	-	(2)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>		<hr/> 68	<hr/> 554
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2023		1,369	815
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2024</b>	22	<hr/> <b>1,437</b>	<hr/> <b>1,369</b>

## **Introduction**

1. This report reviews the Council's current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and makes recommendations for changes, where necessary.
2. In accordance with normal practice, this report should stand deferred at today's meeting and be considered in full at the May 2025 meeting of the Committee, to allow Committee Members sufficient time to consider the documents as a whole and the changes proposed in this report.

## **Standing Orders**

3. The Council's Standing Orders were last reviewed by the Committee in April 2024. Since then the only item that has changed sufficiently to prompt a change in the document is the replacement of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with the Procurement Act 2023, the main provisions of which came into force in February 2025.
4. A copy of the proposed updated Standing Orders is attached to this report. All proposed changes have been marked using the Microsoft Word "track changes" facility.
5. The changes related to procurement are included in Section 19 of the regulations. There are a number of other small changes proposed to improve drafting or add clarity which are also marked in the attached document.
6. The Committee is asked to consider the updated Standing Orders for adoption, subject to any further changes that may be suggested by the Committee.

## **Financial Regulations**

7. The Council's Financial Regulations were last reviewed by the Committee in April 2024, though in October 2024 the new NALC set of model Financial Regulations were presented to the Committee for information. As part of this year's review, the provisions of the new NALC model regulations, have been considered. A further copy of these model regulations is attached to this report.

8. Following a full review of the new regulations, it is my view that they should not be adopted by the Council, and that the current regulations should continue to be used, subject to the changes proposed later in this report.
9. Much of the new regulations document is procedural, rather than just setting out rules, and those procedures seem much more aligned to the needs of a small parish than a town council the size of Stone. In my view the adoption of these, or similar, procedures would be administratively inefficient for the Council, and would significantly increase Councillor involvement in administrative tasks.
10. I would, however, encourage Committee Members to read the new regulations and compare them to the updated regulations (also attached) that I am proposing for adoption. The Committee needs to be satisfied that financial controls are appropriate and meet their needs.
11. The attached draft Financial Regulations have been updated for the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023, with the changes shown as “tracked” in the same way as for Standing Orders. These changes are included in Section 10 of the Regulations.
12. There are also a number of other small changes proposed to improve drafting or add clarity which are marked in the updated Regulations.
13. The Committee is asked to consider the updated Financial Regulations for adoption, subject to any further changes that may be suggested by the Committee.

### **Recommendations**

14. The Committee is asked to:
  - a. At today’s meeting – defer this item for consideration at the next ordinary meeting of this Committee in May.
  - b. At the next ordinary meeting of this Committee in May – to consider the proposed updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for adoption, subject to any further changes agreed by the Committee.

# Stone

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## Town Council



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### **Standing Orders**

### **Related to Council Business**

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April 2025



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# 1 GENERAL

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- 1.1 These standing orders govern the conduct of the business of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Should there be a clash between the provisions of this document and those within other documents which prescribe the activities of the Council, the order of precedence shall be:
- a. National Legislation
  - b. The Council's Standing Orders (this document)
  - c. All other documents
- 1.3 All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution **at the meeting** in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda **for a meeting**. *(NOTE: Where a standing order incorporates a mandatory statutory requirement, the requirement and the circumstances in which the requirement applies is indicated in brackets following the relevant standing order below. This does not indicate that the application of the standing order is limited only to those circumstances, but just indicates the extent to which the standing order can be suspended by this provision).*
- 1.4 A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least three councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 10 below.
- 1.5 The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor as soon as possible after they have delivered their acceptance of office form.
- 1.6 The decision of the chairman<sup>2</sup> of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

## 2 RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

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- 2.1 Items on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- 2.2 A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- 2.3 A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer will be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to "the Council" in this document shall also be considered to refer to the General Purposes Committee for functions which have been delegated to that Committee.

<sup>2</sup> All references to "Chairman" and "Vice-Chairman" shall be considered to refer to the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor in respect of a full Council meeting unless specifically stated otherwise.

- 2.4 If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder.
- 2.5 The mover of a motion shall have a right to reply, not exceeding five minutes, at the conclusion of the debate immediately before the motion is put to the vote. No further debate shall take place once this right to reply has been exercised.
- 2.6 An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- 2.7 If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the amendment becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- 2.8 An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- 2.9 A councillor may make an amendment to their own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall require the consent of the seconder.
- 2.10 Subject to standing order 2.11 below, if there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- 2.11 In exceptional circumstances, several amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- 2.12 A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- 2.13 The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- 2.14 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.
- 2.15 Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
  - a. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - b. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
  - c. to make a point of order;
  - d. to give a personal explanation; or
  - e. in exercise of a right of reply.
- 2.16 During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.

- 2.17 A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting, whose decision shall be final.
- 2.18 When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
- a. to amend the motion;
  - b. to proceed to the next business;
  - c. to adjourn the debate;
  - d. to put the motion to a vote;
  - e. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - f. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - g. to exclude the public and press;
  - h. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - i. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.
- 2.19 Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that sufficient information is available to make a sound decision, the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- 2.20 Excluding motions moved under standing order 2.18 above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed five minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

### **3 DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

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- 3.1 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- 3.2 If these person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- 3.3 If a resolution made under standing order 3.2 above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

### **4 MEETINGS GENERALLY**

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- 4.1 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. (*Mandatory: Council only*)
- 4.2 Public notice of the time and place of a meeting shall be given by posting it outside the Council's offices at least clear three days before the meeting. 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. *(Mandatory: Council. For committees, 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. There are no mandatory requirements for sub-committees)*

- 4.3 Meetings of the Council, committees and sub-committees 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. *(Mandatory: Council and Committees)*
- 4.4 Subject to standing order 4.3 above and the provisions of the Council's scheme of public participation, members of the public are permitted to:
- a. Make representations or raise issues at any ordinary Council meeting in relation to the work of the Council.
  - b. Raise issues at any ordinary committee or sub-committee meeting related to items of business on the agenda.
  - c. Present petitions at any ordinary Council meeting on issues within the Council's remit.
- 4.5 Subject to standing order 4.4, no more than two members of the public are entitled to speak at any full Council meeting, and shall each speak once only, for not more than 10 minutes. Where more than two members of the public have requested to speak, the Proper Officer shall determine which requests shall have preference, based on their relevance to the meeting, the urgency of the matter to be raised and the time that the request was received.
- 4.6 In accordance with standing order 4.4 above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a full Council meeting shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question.
- 4.7 In accordance with standing order 4.6 above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response, to a committee or sub-committee for further consideration or to an employee for a written or oral response.
- 4.8 Subject to standing order 4.4 above, no more than four members of the public are entitled to speak at any committee or sub-committee meeting, and shall each shall speak once only, for not more than three minutes (five minutes if there are two or less speakers). Where more than four members of the public have requested to speak, the Proper Officer shall determine which requests shall have preference, based on their relevance to the meeting, the urgency of the matter to be raised and the time that the request was received.
- 4.9 No response shall be made to a public submission made under paragraph 4.8 above, nor any debate entered into, as the item will be fully debated when the agenda item itself is considered.
- 4.10 A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.

- 4.11 A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- 4.12 A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- 4.13 Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- 4.14 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. *(Mandatory: Council and Committees)*
- 4.15 Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council. *(Mandatory: Council)*
- 4.16 The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting. *(Mandatory: Council)*
- 4.17 Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting. *(Mandatory)*
- 4.18 The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote. *See standing orders 6.8 and 6.9 below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council. (Mandatory)*
- 4.19 Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, their own vote will be recorded in the minutes. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- 4.20 In addition, any councillor may request that 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.
- 4.21 The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
- a. the time and place of the meeting;
  - b. the names of councillors present and absent;
  - c. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - d. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - e. if there was a public participation session; and
  - f. the resolutions made.

- 4.22 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.
- 4.23 No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council, committee or sub-committee are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.
- 4.24 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.
- 4.25 A meeting shall not exceed a period of 1.5 hours, nor any group of meetings held on the same evening exceed 2.5 hours without a resolution of the meeting to continue beyond this limit.

## 5 COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

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- 5.1 The council may appoint standing committees or other committees and sub-committees as may be necessary, and:
- a. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - b. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full council;
  - c. shall permit a committee and sub-committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - d. shall appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee or sub-committee;
  - e. shall, after it has appointed the members of a committee or sub-committee, appoint the chairman of that committee or sub-committee;
  - f. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - g. 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;
  - h. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - i. may dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- 5.2 Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee or sub-committee may appoint one or more working groups whose coordinator, terms of reference and members shall be determined by the appointing committee or sub-committee.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding any appointments made to sub-committees and working groups under standing orders 5.1d and 5.2 above, the Town Mayor, t6he chairman of the General Purposes Committee and the chairman of the parent committee shall be ex-officio members of all sub-committees and working groups with full voting rights.

- 5.4 The members of a committee, sub-committee or working group may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.
- 5.5 Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.

## 6 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

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- 6.1 In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
- 6.2 In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.
- 6.3 All meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees shall take place at 15 Station Road, Stone, with the first meeting commencing at 7:00pm, unless:
- a. it is specifically agreed otherwise at a previous meeting, or,
  - b. it is anticipated, prior to the dispatch of meeting notice(s), that there would be a good reason that the meeting(s) should not be held in this or another previously agreed location, wherein the Town Clerk would be authorised to arrange an alternative location for the meeting(s). This includes the calling of an online meeting where permitted by law, or the conversion of a previously planned online meeting to a physical one **and vice versa**.
- 6.4 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 directs.
- 6.5 The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.
- 6.6 The Town Mayor, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.
- 6.7 The Deputy Mayor, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the council.
- 6.8 In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 6.9 In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Town Mayor has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.



- 6.10 Following the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting may include:
- a. In an election year, delivery by the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor 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 Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
  - b. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
  - c. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
  - d. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
  - e. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - f. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - g. Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - h. Appointment of any new committees;
  - i. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - j. Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
  - k. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
  - l. 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;
  - m. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
  - n. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
  - o. Review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
  - p. Review of the council's complaints procedure;
  - q. Review of the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
  - r. Review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media; and
  - S. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next annual meeting of full council.

## **7 EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

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- 7.1 The Town Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.
- 7.2 If the Town Mayor does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice

giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

7.3 The chairman of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.

7.4 If the chairman of a committee or a sub-committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested by to do so by two members of the committee or the sub-committee, any two members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee or a sub-committee.

7.4.5 The Town Clerk may call a meeting of the Council or any committee or sub-committee.

## **8 PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

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8.1 A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least six councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 10 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

8.2 When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 8.1 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

## **9 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

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9.1 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 chairman of the meeting.

## **10 MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

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10.1 A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for 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.

10.2 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 ten clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice, the day of the meeting, Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.

- 10.3 The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 10.2 above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- 10.4 If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 10.2 above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least ten clear days before the meeting.
- 10.5 If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- 10.6 Subject to standing order 10.5 above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- 10.7 Should any urgent business arise between scheduled meetings of the Council or any standing committee or sub-committee, the Proper Officer will call a special meeting to deal with the issue.
- 10.8 Where urgent planning business occurs between ordinary meetings of the Council's Planning Consultative Committee, the Proper Officer shall circulate details of the business to Members, asking for comments. Where the view of Members is clear, and where no Member has requested that a special meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee should be arranged to discuss the business, those views shall be conveyed to the Borough Council by the Proper Officer following consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee or other appropriate Member(s) in the absence of the Chairman.
- 10.9 Where any matter is so urgent that it is not reasonable to call a special meeting with the legally required notice periods, the Council's Proper Officer is authorised to take any decision on behalf of the Council which can legally be delegated by the Council to an officer. Before taking such a decision, the Proper Officer shall take reasonable steps to consult with Council Members, and shall report the decision and the reason for its urgency at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or one of its committees if the decision would normally have been taken there.

## **11 MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

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- 11.1 The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
- a. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - b. to move to a vote;
  - c. to defer consideration of a motion;
  - d. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
  - e. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;

- f. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- g. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- h. to require a written report;
- i. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- j. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- k. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- l. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- m. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- n. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- o. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
- p. to adjourn the meeting; or
- q. to close a meeting.

## **12 HANDLING CONFIDENTIAL OR SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

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- 12.1 The agenda, papers that support the agenda, and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- 12.2 Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

## **13 DRAFT MINUTES**

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- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 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 11.1a above.
- 13.3 The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- 13.4 If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

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

- 13.5 Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

## 14 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

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*See also standing order 4.22 above.*

- 14.1 All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- 14.2 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- 14.3 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall not take part in any debate or vote at a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a personal interest, though they would be permitted to take part in a public participation item in the same way as any member of the public.
- 14.4 Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer before the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- 14.5 A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the meeting of the council, committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- 14.6 A dispensation request shall confirm:
- a. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - b. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - c. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding the remaining time to the next Council election) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - d. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- 14.7 Subject to standing orders 14.4 and 14.6 above, dispensation requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the council, committee or a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- 14.8 A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 14.5 above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:
- a. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business, or

- b. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area, or
- c. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

## 15 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

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- 15.1 Upon formal written notification from Stafford Borough Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 12 above, report this to the council.
- 15.2 Where the notification in standing order 15.1 above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Town Mayor of this fact, and the Town Mayor 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 15.4 below.
- 15.3 The council may:
- a. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - b. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- 15.4 Upon notification by the District or Unitary 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. *(Mandatory)*

## 16 PROPER OFFICER

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- 16.1 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 or otherwise unable to act.
- 16.2 The Proper Officer shall:
- a. at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on councillors, by email (where agreed) or by delivery or post at their residences, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda. *(Mandatory for council and committees. See standing order 4.2 above for the meaning of clear days.);*
  - b. give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them); *(Mandatory for council and committees. See standing order 4.2 above for the meaning of clear days.);*

- c. subject to standing order 10 above, include on the agenda all motions put forward by councillors unless withdrawn by the councillor themselves at least six clear days before the meeting;
- d. convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in the office (*Mandatory*);
- e. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
- f. receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities (*Mandatory*);
- g. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- h. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- i. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act ~~2018~~<sup>1998</sup>, in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
- j. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- k. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the council in paper and electronic form;
- l. arrange for legal deeds to be executed; See also standing order 23 below.
- m. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;
- n. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority;
- o. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
- p. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used for the sealing of legal deeds without a resolution to that effect. See also *standing order 23 below*.

## 17 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

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- 17.1 The Town Clerk shall undertake the role of responsible financial officer, unless there is a council resolution appointing a different officer. The council shall appoint an appropriate staff member to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

## 18 ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

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- 18.1 "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England)
- 18.2 All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council's financial regulations.
- 18.3 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise the Council's income and expenditure compared with the approved budget and an explanation of significant variances.

- 18.4 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide each councillor with a statement summarising the council's income and expenditure for the year and the full council the accounting statements for the year in the form of the annual return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- 18.5 The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices for a year to 31 March. The annual return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June or any other such date as specified in regulations.

## 19 FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

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- 19.1 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:
- a. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
  - b. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;
  - c. 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;
  - d. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
  - e. procurement policies (subject to standing orders 19.3 to 19.8 below).
- 19.2 Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly for fitness of purpose.
- 19.3 The letting of contracts by the Council must be in accordance with the ~~Public Contracts Regulations 2015~~ [Procurement Act 2023](#), or subsequent replacement/supplementary legislation.
- 19.4 Contracts ~~expected to be~~ below the value of £~~3025,000~~ [\(including VAT\)](#) are outside the scope of standing orders, but may be governed by the provisions within the Council's financial regulations.
- 19.5 Contracts above the value prescribed in the ~~Public Contracts Regulations 2015~~ [Procurement Act 2023](#) of £~~214,904 (goods and services)~~ [189,330](#)<sup>3</sup> or £~~4,733,2525,372,609 (works)~~<sup>3</sup>, ~~(including VAT)~~, which have "detailed and complex" requirements will be undertaken in partnership with the ~~Borough or~~ County Council, who will be able to ensure that these complex regulations are adhered to.
- 19.6 Between these ~~se two~~ figures [in paragraph 19.4 and 19.5](#), the Council may:
- a. Advertise the contract or otherwise offer it on the open market. In this case ~~the provisions of the 2015 regulations apply, and~~ the contract must also be published on the "Contract Finder" website.

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<sup>3</sup> ~~September 2024~~ values. These figures may vary from time to time.



~~b.—Offer the contract to a closed list of contractors, or whereby the provisions of the 2015 regulations do not apply.~~

~~e.b. Offer the contract to its “preferred contractor” identified for that area of work. In this case the requirement to, where the 2015 regulations regarding advertising on the “Contracts Finder” website would also not apply, although the award of the contract would still need to be posted on the site.~~

19.7 Subject to any 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 under standing orders 19.6a and ~~1.1a above~~~~19.6b above~~ where the value is anticipated to exceed £60,000 shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- a. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
- b. 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;
- c. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and/or other manner that is appropriate (standing order 19.6a only);
- d. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
- e. 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;
- f. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

19.8 Neither the council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value, or any, tender.

## 20 STAFFING MATTERS

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20.1 The Town Clerk shall act as employer for of the Council’s paid employees and voluntary staff.

20.2 All written records in respect of staffing matters shall be kept confidential and secure. Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records if so justified.

20.3 Appointments, dismissals, performance, disciplinary issues and grievances shall be considered in accordance with the Council’s Staffing Guidelines.

## 21 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

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21.1 Requests for information held by the council shall be handled in accordance with the council’s policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act ~~2018~~~~1998~~.

- 21.2 Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee. The said committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

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- 22.1 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**

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*See also standing orders 16.2l and 16.2p above.*

- 23.1 A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.
- 23.2 Subject to standing order 23.1 above, the council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.

## **24 RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

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- 24.1 No Councillor shall purport to represent the Council, or make any suggestion that they have the authority to make a binding decision on behalf of the Council, unless previously authorised by a properly minuted resolution.
- 24.2 Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
- a. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - b. issue orders, instructions or directions.

# MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

[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]; and

## **2. Risk management and internal control**

- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk [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 their 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 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council {or relevant committee}.

## 5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT, the Clerk 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<sup>1</sup> regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**
- 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 into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
  - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
  - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
  - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council {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];

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

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 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

written be 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 software and that any VAT Return required is submitted form 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).

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.

# Stone

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## Town Council



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## Financial Regulations

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April 2025

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# 1 GENERAL

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- 1.1 These regulations govern the conduct of the financial activities of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council or the General Purposes (GP) Committee<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Should there be a clash between the provisions of this document and those within other documents which prescribe the activities of the Council, the order of precedence shall be:
  - a. National Legislation
  - b. The Council's Standing Orders
  - c. Financial Regulations (this document)
  - d. All other documents
- 1.3 The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.4 The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - a. for the timely production of accounts;
  - b. that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
  - c. to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - d. identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.5 These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.6 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7 Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Town Clerk shall be the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), and as such shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to "the Council" in this document shall also be considered to refer to the General Purposes Committee for functions which have been delegated to that Committee.

The terms “Town Clerk” and “RFO” are, however, used separately throughout this document to allow for a situation where this may not be the case.

- 1.9 The Town Clerk and/or RFO may delegate items ascribed to them within this document to another employee, but will still remain accountable to the Council for those items.
- 1.10 The RFO;
  - a. acts under the policy direction of the council;
  - b. administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
  - c. determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - d. ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
  - e. maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
  - f. assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - g. produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.11 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council’s transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.12 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
  - a. entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
  - b. a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
  - c. wherever relevant, a record of the council’s income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.13 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
  - a. procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
  - b. procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;

- c. identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
  - d. procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
  - e. measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.14 The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular, any decision regarding:
- a. setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
  - b. approving accounting statements;
  - c. approving an annual governance statement;
  - d. borrowing;
  - e. writing off bad debts;
  - f. declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
  - g. the consideration of any report from the Council's internal or external auditors,
- shall be a matter for the full council only.
- 1.15 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.16 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

## 2 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

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- 2.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2 The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts

shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 2.3 The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.4 The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.5 The internal auditor shall:
  - a. be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
  - b. report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
  - c. ~~to~~ demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - d. have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.6 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
  - a. perform any operational duties for the council;
  - b. initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
  - c. direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the ~~internal~~ auditor.
- 2.7 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.8 The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.9 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any report from internal or external auditors.



### 3 ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

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- 3.1 The Council's budget shall be prepared on an "Income and Expenditure" basis.
- 3.2 The GP Committee shall consider a report of the RFO setting out the prospects for the following three years' capital and revenue budgets no later than ~~January~~ the first week of February each year. Each Sub-Committee shall be asked to formulate its proposed budget for the next three years based on policy guidelines determined by the GP Committee, and to submit these proposals to the Committee for further consideration.
- 3.3 After considering the Sub-Committees' proposals, the GP Committee shall determine a balanced and affordable budget to be recommended to the Council for the following three financial years.
- 3.4 The Council shall review the GP Committee's recommendations not later than the end of February each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year and determine indicative precepts for the following two years.
- 3.5 The annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

### 4 BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

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- 4.1 The Town Clerk is authorised to seek tenders/quotations, place orders and make payments in accordance with the approved annual budget, the Council's policies, and these Financial Regulations. Where the annual budget identifies specific items for which no expenditure should be incurred without the express approval of the Council, the Clerk should refer proposed spending for approval before that spending is incurred. In all other cases, the Clerk is authorised to proceed without specific approval.
- 4.2 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a budget monitoring statement comparing actual expenditure against that planned for each approved budget head.
- 4.3 The Town Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure. Where there is no available budget, the Clerk shall, wherever possible, discuss the issue with the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee or, in their absence, the Vice Chairman or Town Mayor before incurring the expenditure. Where no or insufficient budget provision existed, the Town Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4 In general, unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Where a budget has been agreed by the Council as a "rollover budget", then unspent amounts may be rolled-over into the subsequent financial year by making

use of a rollover reserve. This provision may also be used on a one-off basis for specific items, subject to agreement of the Council.

- 4.5 All expenditure and income of the Council shall be included within its revenue account unless a specific Council resolution has determined that it shall be treated as capital. Once such a resolution has been passed, no expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any such capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained, to meet the full projected costs of the project.
- 4.6 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.7 Changes in earmarked reserves, other than the rollover reserve, shall require approval by council.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding the provisions above, all expenditure and income related to the Town Mayor's charity will, in the interests of transparency, be accounted for by the use of a specified reserve account for each Town Mayor.

## 5 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND PAYMENTS

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- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed.
- 5.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk. The Clerk shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received or carried out in accordance with the needs of the Council.
- 5.3 The RFO shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Clerk shall settle invoices promptly.
- 5.4 All cash received must be banked intact.
- 5.5 No petty cash account shall be maintained.
- 5.6 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance, pension contributions or other reasons, should be made from the Council's bank account.
- 5.7 A schedule showing payments from the Council's bank accounts shall be prepared by the RFO and presented:
  - a. To the Council on a quarterly basis in respect of payments over £250, and,
  - b. To the General Purposes Committee at each ordinary meeting.

- 5.8 For the purposes of the schedules referred to in paragraph 5.7 above:
- a. Staff salary and related payments should not be included, but total figures for a period should be made available to any Member on request. Details of payments to individual employees will only be made available in accordance with paragraph 6.4 below.
  - b. Payments in respect of the Mayor's Charity Fund will not be included, but should be made available to any Member on request.
- 5.9 The Council acknowledges that the commitment to make a payment occurs at the time an order is placed or similar arrangement made, not at the time a payment itself is made. It does not, therefore, consider that excessive controls on payments which may hamper the efficient operation of the Council need to be applied, providing that adequate controls over ordering and reporting are in place in accordance with these regulations.
- 5.10 Payments may be made by way of cheque, direct debit, bank transfer, purchasing card, PayPal, internet banking, BACS or CHAPS, provided that:
- a. All cheques shall be signed by two individuals included within the bank mandate, at least one of which shall be a Member of the Council and not more than one shall be an officer.
  - b. Transfers between Council bank accounts may be authorised by the RFO.
  - c. Payments via purchasing card can be made by a single authorised officer, and are limited to £1,000 in any single transaction, with a maximum of £5,000 outstanding at any one time.
  - d. Electronic payments and direct debits, including payments via PayPal and internet banking, can be made by a single authorised officer, but the supporting paperwork should also be signed by a second officer. All such payments should be included within the report to the General Purposes Committee required by regulation 5.7b above, subject to the exceptions set out in paragraph 5.8 above.
- 5.11 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted. Officers authorising payments will be required to follow these same arrangements in respect of pecuniary or other interests.

## 6 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

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- 6.1 As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.

- 6.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 6.3 Once an employee's salary and conditions has been determined by the Council or an authorised Appointments Panel and a contract of employment has been signed, no changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council, except where required for the payment of overtime, absence cover, incremental progression or similar matters.
- 6.4 Payments to individual employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall not be open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a. by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - b. by the internal auditor;
  - c. by the external auditor; or
  - d. by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 6.5 Any termination payments beyond those required by law shall require the approval of the Council.

## 7 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

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- 7.1 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 7.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the council in the first instance, though the renewal and extension of existing leases for the same or similar items may be authorised by the Town Clerk providing that there is provision within the Council's budget and that he/she is satisfied that the arrangement represents value for money for the Council.
- 7.3 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 7.4 The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

- 7.5 All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 7.6 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 7.7 Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 above.

## 8 INCOME

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- 8.1 The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 8.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied by the Council shall be considered annually by the council as part of the budget process, and notified to the RFO who shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 8.3 The council will undertake a full review of all fees and charges periodically, following a report of the Clerk.
- 8.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 8.5 All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers or their agents with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 8.6 A record shall be maintained by the RFO of the amounts making up the total of each paying-in slip.
- 8.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 8.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 8.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 8.10 Any income arising which 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 (see also Regulation 15 below).

## 9 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

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- 9.1 An official order number shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate or unnecessary. Details of orders shall be retained.
- 9.2 All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction.
- 9.3 A Member may not specify the use of a particular supplier, issue an official order or make any contract (verbal or written) on behalf of the council.
- 9.4 The RFO shall satisfy themselves as to the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of an order.

## 10 CONTRACTS

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- 10.1 Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to the following items:
- a. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
  - b. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
  - c. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
  - d. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
  - e. for additional audit work of the external auditor;
  - f. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price: and
  - g. In circumstances where continuity of supplier is considered by the RFO to offer greater benefits to the Council than retendering.
- 10.2 Where the council intends to procure or award a ~~public supply contract, public service contract or public works~~ contract within the scope of the Procurement Act 2023 as defined

~~by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015~~ (“the ~~ActRegulations~~”) which is valued at ~~£3025,000~~ or more ~~(including VAT)~~, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the ~~ActRegulations~~<sup>2</sup>.

- 10.3 The full requirements of The ~~ActRegulations~~, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a ~~public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract~~ which exceed thresholds in The ~~Act Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive~~ (which may change from time to time)<sup>3</sup>.
- 10.4 Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to the requirements of Standing Orders related to procurement<sup>4</sup> and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 10.7 When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
- 10.8 Where the Clerk has determined that there is a benefit to the Council to let a contract in association with one or more other partners, or to make use of another authority’s facilities such as the County Council’s e-tendering system, the requirements of these regulations shall be replaced by the requirements of the regulations of the lead body for the letting of the contract.
- 10.9 When it is to enter into a contract of less than ~~£3025,000~~ ~~(including VAT)~~ but in excess of ~~£3,000~~ ~~(excluding VAT)~~ in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph 10.1 above the Clerk or RFO shall, where possible,

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

<sup>3</sup> Thresholds ~~currently~~ applicable ~~in February 2024~~ ~~(including VAT)~~ are:

- a. For public ~~goods and services supply and public service~~ contracts ~~£214,904189,330~~
- b. For public works contracts ~~£4,733,2525,372,609~~

<sup>4</sup> Standing Order 19 based on the version effective from ~~April~~ ~~September~~ 202~~4~~<sup>1</sup> which was current at the time of preparing this document. This reference may change in subsequent versions of standing orders.

obtain 3 quotations. Below this figure, the Clerk of RFO shall seek to obtain the best overall value for money for the Council after taking into account cost, quality of service and availability, and shall strive to obtain one or more estimates for the work/service to be performed.

- 10.10 The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 10.11 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated, and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken.

## **11 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS (PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS)**

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

## **12 STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

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- 12.1 Where the Council operates a system of stock control, or holds a supply of equipment for the use of a number of people, the Town Clerk shall be responsible for the arrangements for the care and custody of these stores and equipment.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 12.4 The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.



## 13 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

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- 13.1 The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 13.2 No tangible moveable property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of each individual~~any one~~ item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.
- 13.3 No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 13.4 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to 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).
- 13.5 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

## 14 INSURANCE

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- 14.1 Following an annual risk assessment, the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.
- 14.2 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.
- 14.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 14.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.

- 14.5 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 by the council, or duly delegated committee.

## 15 CHARITIES

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- 15.1 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.

## 16 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

## 17 SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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- 17.1 It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 17.2 The council may, by resolution, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that the advice of the RFO regarding the risks and implications has been considered prior to the suspension. Details of the suspension must be recorded in the minutes, and must include a record of the advice of the RFO if the council has chosen not to follow it.

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# Stone

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Town Council



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## Councillor Code of Conduct

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April 2025

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.
- 1.2 As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.
- 1.3 Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.
- 1.4 This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government. The document is based on the Model Councillor Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- 1.5 All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

# 2 DEFINITIONS

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- 2.1 For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a "councillor" means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A "co-opted member" is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as "a person who is not a member of the authority but who:
  - a. is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
  - b. is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee".
- 2.2 For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, "local authority" includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

### 3 PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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- 3.1 The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

### 4 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILLOR CONDUCT

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- 4.1 Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.
- 4.2 Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.
- 4.3 In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:
- I act with integrity and honesty
  - I act lawfully
  - I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
  - I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.
- 4.4 In undertaking my role:
- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
  - I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
  - I avoid conflicts of interest
  - I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
  - I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

## **5 APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

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- 5.1 This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.
- 5.2 This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:
- you misuse your position as a councillor
  - Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;
- 5.3 The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:
- at face-to-face meetings
  - at online or telephone meetings
  - in written communication
  - in verbal communication
  - in non-verbal communication
  - in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.
- 5.4 You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.
- 5.5 Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

## **6 STANDARDS OF COUNCILLOR CONDUCT**

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- 6.1 This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.
- 6.2 Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

## **7 RESPECT**

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7.1 As a councillor:

- I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.
- I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

7.2 Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

7.3 In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

7.4 In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor officer protocol.

## **8 BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION**

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8.1 As a councillor:

- I do not bully any person.
- I do not harass any person.
- I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

8.2 The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

8.3 The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such



conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

8.4 Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.5 The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

## **9 IMPARTIALITY OF OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL**

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9.1 As a councillor:

- I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

9.2 Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

## **10 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

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10.1 As a councillor:

- I do not disclose information:
  - i. given to me in confidence by anyone
  - ii. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:
    - I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;
    - I am required by law to do so;
    - the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the

third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or

- the disclosure is:
  - reasonable and in the public interest; and
  - made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and
  - I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.
- I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.
- I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

10.2 Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

## **11 DISREPUTE**

---

11.1 As a councillor:

- I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

11.2 As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or your local authority's ability to discharge your/it's functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

11.3 You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

## **12 USE OF POSITION**

---

12.1 As a councillor:

- I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

12.2 Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

## **13 USE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY RESOURCES AND FACILITIES**

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13.1 As a councillor:

- I do not misuse council resources.
- I will, when using the resources of the local or authorising their use by others:
  - i. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and
  - ii. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.

13.2 You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

13.3 Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

13.4 These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

## 14 COMPLYING WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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### 14.1 As a Councillor:

- I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.
- I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.
- I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.
- I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

14.2 It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

## 15 INTERESTS

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### 15.1 As a councillor:

- I register and disclose my interests.

15.2 Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority .

15.3 You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

15.4 You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as setout in Table 1, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

15.5 Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek appropriate advice.

## 16 GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

---

### 16.1 As a councillor:

- I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.
- I register with the Monitoring Officer (Clerk in respect of a town or parish council) any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.
- I register with the Monitoring Officer (Clerk in respect of a town or parish council) any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

16.2 In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer (Clerk in respect of a town or parish council) for guidance.

## 17 DEALING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

---

### 17.1 As a councillor:

- I ensure at that when dealing with members of the public<sup>1</sup> that they are clear at all times when I am acting on behalf of the Council and when I am acting in a personal capacity.
- I remember that as a councillor I am part of a body corporate and only have decision making authority in specified meetings as part of that body. I will not seek to suggest to any member of the public that I have any specific influence on decision making within that body.

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<sup>1</sup> A member of the public, in this context, means anyone other than a Stone Town Council member or officer.

- I will not use the designation “Councillor” where it has the potential to suggest that I am acting on behalf of the Council, unless authorised by the Council to so act.

- 17.2 It must be remembered that very few members of the public understand Council procedures and protocols and may find it difficult to differentiate between when an individual is acting in an official capacity and when they are acting as a private individual. It is therefore incumbent upon the councillor to ensure that Council protocols are followed at all times unless it is very clear that they are acting in a personal capacity.
- 17.3 This includes always acting within established Council lines of communication and through existing Council Committees, Sub-Committees and Steering/Working Groups where they exist, and not operating outside them.
- 17.4 Nothing in this section is intended to restrict the role of a councillor in acting as an advocate for a resident, providing that they are operating within Council protocols.

## **18 ADDITIONAL POLICIES/PROTOCOLS**

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- 18.1 As a councillor:
- I will abide by agreed Council procedures and protocols and understand that items specifically specified within this paragraph will be considered to be an integral part of this Code of Conduct.
- 18.2 The following items will be considered to be part of this Code of Conduct:
- a. The Press and Media Protocol

## **19 SANCTIONS**

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- 19.1 As a councillor:
- I agree to abide by any sanctions imposed by the Standards Committee following investigation by the Monitoring Officer and subsequent decision of that Committee.
- 19.2 Following a complaint to the Monitoring Officer and subsequent investigation and consideration, the Standards Committee may consider it appropriate that sanctions are applied to a councillor who is considered to be in breach of this code. Such sanctions may include, for example, suspension from one or more Council committees. Other sanctions may also be considered appropriate depending on the nature of the breach.

## **APPENDIX A: THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE**

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The principles are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## APPENDIX B: REGISTERING INTERESTS

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1. Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in Table 2 (Personal Interests).
2. "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.
3. "Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.
  - a. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer (Clerk in respect of a town or parish council, who will then notify the Monitoring Officer).
  - b. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
  - c. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Non participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in Table 1, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

### Disclosure of Personal Interests

5. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Personal Interests (as set out in Table 2), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.



## Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects –
  - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
  - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
  - c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registerable Interests as set out in Table 2

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

8. Where a matter affects your financial interest or well-being:
  - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
  - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

## TABLE 1: DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made to the member during the 12 month period ending on the latest date referred to in paragraph 6 above for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her election expenses.  This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the member or between his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a body in which such a person is a partner in a firm, a director of an incorporated body or holds the beneficial interest in securities <sup>2</sup> ) and the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</li> <li>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</li> </ul>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Council.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the landlord is the Council; and</li> <li>(b) the tenant is a body in which the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner/ the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest.</li> </ul>
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and</li> <li>(b) either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> 'Securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## **TABLE 2: PERSONAL INTERESTS**

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You have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect:

1. Any body of which the member is in a position of general control or management and to which he/she has not been appointed or officially nominated by the Council;
2. Any body:
  - a. exercising functions of a public nature;
  - b. directed to charitable purposes; or
  - c. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union).

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Council and many of its committees and sub-committees both as observers and to make representations to the Council. Representations may take a number of forms, the processes for which are:

### PROPOSALS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL

Opportunity is offered at each ordinary Council meeting for residents to address the Council to make proposals regarding the Council's service policies, or to ask for the Council's support, in areas that are within its remit to act upon. Ordinary Council meetings normally occur monthly, except for January and May.

Residents who wish to contribute need to contact the Town Clerk (details below) to agree their agenda item at least ten working days before the meeting, to allow time for the item to be included within the agenda. Once presented at the meeting, an appropriate Member of the Council may respond immediately to points raised, or a written response may follow, perhaps after further consideration by one of the Council's committees or sub-committees. In any event, the item would not be debated on the day of the meeting.

A single presentation of up to ten minutes can be considered at each meeting. Where more than one resident wishes to speak, priority will normally be given on a "first come, first served" basis. The Council wishes to ensure coverage of the widest number of topics and to offer opportunities to the widest range of speakers so may need to vary this priority basis accordingly. In addition, presentations will not normally be accepted from either a single individual or on the same topic more than once within a six-month period.

Written submissions are not accepted by the Council. Residents wishing to make their views known are asked to attend the meeting and present them verbally.

### COMMENTS ON ITEMS ALREADY INCLUDED WITHIN AN AGENDA

Opportunity is offered at most ordinary meetings of the General Purposes Committee and its sub-committees and the Planning Committee for residents to raise issues directly related to items on the agenda.

Any resident wishing to speak at a meeting would need to inform the Clerk of the item they wished to speak on and the issues they wish to raise within the period between the publishing of an agenda and two working days before the meeting.

Up to two speakers can be accommodated at each meeting, each of which would be allowed up to five minutes to speak.

If more than two people indicate their wish to speak, priority will normally be given on a "first come, first served" basis, but the Council may need to vary this to ensure coverage of the widest number of topics and to offer opportunities to the widest range of speakers in the same way as for presentations to the Council above.

No response will be made or debate entered into at the time the public representation is made, as this opportunity will be available when the item is considered later on the agenda. Members of the public will not, however, be able to speak again when items are under formal consideration.

Only agenda items that are open to the public are available for public comment through this process.

Written submissions are not accepted. Residents wishing to make their views known are asked to attend the meeting and present them verbally.

### PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Petitions which relate to issues within the Council's remit, and which contain the signatures, names and addresses of at least 100 residents from the Town Council area, may be formally presented by the organiser to the Town Mayor at any ordinary Council meeting.

An organiser wishing to present a petition would need to inform the Town Clerk (details below) at least ten working days before the meeting to allow time for the item to be included within the agenda.

The presenter of the petition will be permitted to speak for up to three minutes. No debate or discussion will take place at the time the petition is presented. The Mayor will accept it on behalf of the Council and pass it to the next available meeting of the appropriate committee or sub-committee for consideration.

If the petition organiser is unavailable, or does not wish to present their petition personally, it should be passed to the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting, who will present the petition to the Mayor on behalf of the organiser.

Where the petition organiser is a Member of the Council, they will have the same rights as the public to present the petition and speak for three minutes, unless the subject of the petition is one in which they have a pecuniary interest. In that case the petition should be passed to the Town Clerk, who will present it to the Mayor on their behalf.

If a petition has less than 100 residents' signatures, the organiser should contact an elected member of the Council to ask them if they would be prepared to raise the issue on their behalf as part of the Council's normal procedures. In this case, the Councillor would need to give ten working days' notice, and although the petition can be referred to, it would not be formally presented to the Town Mayor.

### ELECTIONS

Please note that this scheme will be suspended for a short period prior to national and local elections.

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LES TRIGG  
TOWN CLERK  
T: 01785 619740  
E: [CLERK@STONETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK](mailto:CLERK@STONETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK)

Last Reviewed April 2025

# Stone

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## Town Council



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## Staffing Guidelines

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April 2025~~January 2021~~

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# 1 GENERAL

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- 1.1 These guidelines set out the procedures that the Council will follow when dealing with staffing matters. They may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council or the General Purposes (GP) Committee<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Should there be a clash between the provisions of this document and those within other documents which prescribe the activities of the Council, the order of precedence shall be:
  - a. National Legislation
  - b. The Council's Standing Orders
  - c. Financial Regulations
  - d. Staffing Guidelines (this document)
  - e. All other documents
- 1.3 These guidelines do not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time by the Council.

## 2 WHO IS COVERED BY THE GUIDELINES?

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- 2.1 The guidelines relate to all paid employees of the Council, any volunteers, and anyone engaged on a contract for service. For ease of reference, all of these groups are collectively referred to as employees throughout the document.
- 2.2 The guidelines follow the usual principle that the Town Clerk reports to the Council, and all employees report to the Town Clerk.

## 3 WHAT IS COVERED BY THE GUIDELINES?

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- 3.1 These guidelines are intended to cover all aspects of the Council's employment relationship with its employees. In some cases, however, it is more appropriate to have detailed policies or procedures for specific areas, such as staff discipline. Where this is the case, this will be referred to within this document.
- 3.2 The guidelines will therefore cover recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, day to day management, dispute resolution and termination of employment.

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<sup>1</sup> All further references to "the Council" in this document shall also be considered to refer to the General Purposes Committee for functions which have been delegated to that Committee.

## 4 RECRUITMENT - GENERAL

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- 4.1 Whenever a post becomes vacant, the work of that post should be reviewed. A formal recorded decision should be taken whether the post should be filled and, if so, whether there should be any changes to the hours, salary or duties of the post, or other posts, as a result.
- 4.2 If the vacancy relates to the post of Town Clerk, the review should be undertaken by a Panel specifically appointed by the Council, who should report their findings back to the Council for approval to proceed with the recruitment and any other proposed changes.
- 4.3 If the vacancy relates to any other post, the review should be undertaken by the Town Clerk, who should report back to the General Purposes Committee for approval.
- 4.4 All interview panels will consist only of persons who have received training in proper interview practices and procedures. Such training will be provided by the Council where necessary.

## 5 RECRUITMENT – TOWN CLERK

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- 5.1 Once the Council has made the decision to recruit to the post of Town Clerk it will appoint a Panel to carry out the process. The Panel should be supported by an appropriately experienced advisor, who will assist the Panel throughout the process, but will have no “vote” in the Panel’s final decision. Such an advisor could be, for example, the outgoing Clerk, a Clerk from another Council or an appropriate person from the Borough/County Council or Staffordshire Parish Council’s Association (SPCA).
- 5.2 The Panel will arrange to advertise the post in the local press, on the Council’s website, in the SPCA newsletter, in the County and Borough Council’s internal vacancy systems (where possible) and anywhere else considered appropriate by the Panel.
- 5.3 Following receipt of applications, the Panel will shortlist and interview candidates in order to formulate a recommendation to the Council.
- 5.4 On receipt of the Panel’s report, the Council will determine appointment to the post.

## 6 RECRUITMENT – OTHER EMPLOYEES

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- 6.1 Once the GP Committee has made the decision to recruit to a post, the Town Clerk will be given the authority to make the appointment.
- 6.2 The Clerk will arrange to advertise the post in the local press, on the Council’s website, and (where possible and appropriate) in the SPCA newsletter, the County and Borough Council’s internal vacancy systems and any other suitable places.



- 6.3 Following receipt of applications, the Town Clerk will produce a final shortlist of candidates, having undertaken any preliminary interviews and/or exercises considered appropriate.
- 6.4 For posts at deputy or assistant town clerk level, where significant contact with Members would be expected, the final interview panel would be made up of the Town Clerk, the Chairman of the GP Committee, and one or more other Members appointed by the GP Committee.
- 6.5 For posts at lower levels, or those that would not be expected to have significant contact with Members, the interview panel would be made up of the Town Clerk and at least one other member of staff. If considered appropriate, the Town Clerk could invite one or more Councillors to be part of the panel either instead of or as well as other members of staff.

## 7 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

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- 7.1 All staff will be employed on local government “Green Book” terms and conditions unless specifically resolved otherwise by the Council and included within these guidelines.
- 7.2 Travel allowances will be paid to employees at the current inland revenue mileage rate, or the actual cost if public transport was used. Reimbursement for the use of employees own vehicles will only be made for approved journeys on receipt of a signed and duly authorised claim.
- 7.3 All eligible employees will be given access to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 7.4 Rates of pay for employees will be determined from time to time by the Council, having regard to the recommendations of NALC and SLCC, ~~and~~ the nationally negotiated local government pay scales [and staff contracts of employment](#).
- 7.5 All new appointments will be subject to a six-month probationary period (see paragraph 10.7 below). At the end of this period, the Clerk (the Council in the case of the Clerk’s post) is authorised to confirm the employee in post, dismiss them, or extend their probationary period as appropriate.
- 7.6 Contracts of employment for employees will reflect the conditions above, having regard to the recommendations of both the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

## 8 DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT

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- 8.1 The Town Clerk is responsible for all aspects of day to day employee management including sickness, annual leave, supervision, training and discipline.

- 8.2 Whilst the Clerk will be largely required to self-manage on a day to day basis, where a line management function is required for legal or other reasons, the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee shall be authorised to perform that function.

## 9 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

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- 9.1 Disputes may arise between employees, an employee and their manager, an employee and a Member of the Council or an employee and a member of the public. In most cases, such disputes are quickly and amicably resolved between the parties themselves.
- 9.2 Where it is necessary to escalate the resolution of a dispute, such escalation shall be to the Town Clerk or, if the Town Clerk is a party to the dispute, to the Town Mayor.
- 9.3 Where appropriate, the Council's disciplinary procedures or grievance procedures should be followed.

## 10 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

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- 10.1 An employee's employment may be terminated by way of resignation, retirement, redundancy, dismissal or mutual agreement. Each of these circumstances is set out below. Should the termination relate to the Town Clerk, references to the Clerk should be replaced by the Council.
- 10.2 When an employee determines that they wish to resign, they shall inform the Clerk in writing of their intention and of their proposed date of termination in accordance with their contract of employment. The Clerk is authorised to vary this termination date, in agreement with the employee, if it is considered to be beneficial to the Council.
- 10.3 The Clerk shall instigate a review, as outlined in Section 4 above (Section 5 in respect of the Clerk's resignation), prior to making a recommendation to the Council related to the replacement of the resigned employee.
- 10.4 A decision to make a post redundant can only be made by the Council, following receipt of a report from the Town Clerk setting out the legal position and the potential impact on the organisation.
- 10.5 Redundancy payment would normally be made based on the standard legal requirements for the number of weeks' pay, but based on actual salary rather than the statutory rate in accordance with typical local government practice. The Council would be free to enhance this where appropriate.
- 10.6 Dismissal of an employee can only be made by following the due process of the Council's disciplinary policy, except during an employee's probationary period or in other exceptional circumstances as determined by the Council.

- 10.7 During a probationary period, the Town Clerk may dismiss an employee whose capability was not considered sufficient for the job, and it was not considered that that capability could be developed sufficiently within a reasonable period.
- 10.8 A situation may exist where the Council and an employee mutually agree to terminate the employee's contract. This would usually be accompanied by the Council making a legally binding settlement agreement with the employee, including an agreed settlement payment and a set of terms and conditions under which that payment is made.
- 10.9 A decision to enter into a settlement agreement can only be made by the Council, following receipt of a report from the Town Clerk setting out the legal position and the potential impact on the organisation. In the case of the settlement agreement being between the Council and the Clerk, the report should be commissioned from the Borough Council's Monitoring Officer or another appropriately qualified legal professional.
- 10.10 ~~All payments made by the Council due to termination for whatever reason will be subject to the regulations relating to public sector exit payment caps.~~

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## Stone Town Council - Payments

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The table below lists payments made by the Council in the period identified, for the Committee's information.

The table includes payments by cheque, direct debit, payment card, telephone banking and online banking. It excludes salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity, and transfers between the Council's bank accounts. All amounts exclude VAT.

Payment Date From : 01/01/2025

Payment Date To : 28/02/2025

<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
02/01/2025	6857	Prism Solutions	Leased line rental - Dec 24	49.99
02/01/2025	6857	Prism Solutions	Leased line rental - Dec 24	59.90
02/01/2025	6857	Prism Solutions	Leased line rental - Dec 24	60.90
03/01/2025	184601431	Association of Local Council Clerks	ALCC Subscription to 03.01.26	50.00
03/01/2025	130310	B Hygienic Ltd	FJC - Toilet Rolls	78.57
06/01/2025	9666366	British Gas	Elec Supply Ampitheatre 19 Nov to 19 Dec 24	12.60
06/01/2025	V02302488149	EE	EE mobiles - 29 Dec to 28 Jan 25	14.80
06/01/2025	V02302488149	EE	EE mobiles - 29 Dec to 28 Jan 25	14.80
09/01/2025	9707184	British Gas	Elec Usage - Feeder Pillar 1, 30 High Street 21.11 to	12.89
09/01/2025	01141826	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas Usage -01.01 to 31.01.25	11.88
09/01/2025	9706253	British Gas	Elec Usage 61 High Street 21.11 to 21.12.25	19.70
13/01/2025	GB5B12QTAEUI	Amazon	Office Stationery	10.16
13/01/2025	GB500120W438DI	Amazon	Laminating Pouches	16.13
13/01/2025	IN30004659330004	R Edwards Expense Claims	HCTre - door sign	1.75
13/01/2025	444008-036	Virgin Media Business	Telephone rental & calls 22.12 to 21.01.25	88.23
13/01/2025	IN30004659330004	R Edwards Expense Claims	Fire door strips	21.45
15/01/2025	INV-1725	IG Stage Hire	30% Deposit for Summer Music Event 16.08.25	270.00
15/01/2025	INV288863480	Zoom Video Comm Inc	ZOOM Subscription Jan 14 to Feb 13 2025	25.98

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## Stone Town Council - Payments

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<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
17/01/2025	SI-237564	Mailing room	Franking machine rental 31.01 to 29.04.25	60.00
20/01/2025	01141826	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Elec Usage 01.01 to 31.01.25	449.10
20/01/2025	wp-INV07946245	Water Plus	Water Usage SSTN - 06.01 to 05.01.25	108.98
20/01/2025	wp-INV07954568	Water Plus	FJC Water Usage 6.12 to 06.01.25	83.90
20/01/2025	01141826	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Gas Usage - 01.01 to 31.01.25	773.09
20/01/2025	01141826	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Elec Usage - 01.01 to 31.01.25	439.03
20/01/2025	01141826	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas Usage -01.01 to 31.01.25	805.16
20/01/2025	201615202571612	Pozitive Energy	HC Gas Usage -01.12-31.12.24	173.91
21/01/2025	CD-243683609	Culligan	Water Cooler Rental Jan 25	23.06
21/01/2025	7070296059	Stafford Borough Council	SBC Qtr Office Rent 19/01 to 19/04/25	150.00
21/01/2025	5477	Christmas Plus	Installation of Festive Display 2024 - 30%	2,250.00
21/01/2025	181986890	JB Window Cleaner	Window Cleaning -January 25	65.00
21/01/2025	181986890	JB Window Cleaner	Windows overcharge to be refunded	10.00
21/01/2025	181986890	JB Window Cleaner	Window Cleaning -January 25	25.00
21/01/2025	181986890	JB Window Cleaner	Window Cleaning -January 25	30.00
21/01/2025	16302	All Print Equipment Ltd	Photocopier usage - Dec 24	19.13
23/01/2025	wp-INV07999801	Water Plus	Water Usage - Mount Road - 09.12 to 09.01.25	34.67
24/01/2025	743014903/001/01	Virgin Media Business	Broadband usage - 06.01-05.02.25	50.00
27/01/2025	211996	Prism Solutions	Prism IT Managed Service - Feb 25	1,269.58
28/01/2025	9892890	British Gas	Heritage Centre Elec - 09.12 to 09.01.25.	147.77
28/01/2025	12155	JW Plant Flag Company	VE Day 80 Flag	101.59
28/01/2025	SOT1142526	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	FJC - Waste Collection Dec 24	109.00
28/01/2025	SOT1142527	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	SSTN - Waste Collection - Dec 24	76.21
29/01/2025	wp-INV08073626	Water Plus	Water Usage - Newcastle Road - 15.12 to 15.01.25	13.73
05/02/2025	10008433	British Gas	Elec Usage - Feeder Pillar 1, 30 High Street 21.12 to	13.02

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## Stone Town Council - Payments

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<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
06/02/2025	V02312402112	EE	EE mobiles - 29 Jan to 28 Feb	14.80
06/02/2025	V02312402112	EE	EE mobiles - 29 Jan to 28 Feb	14.80
07/02/2025	025817	R Mountfords	FJC - Gate padlock and keys	50.10
10/02/2025	25765	Stone Gazette Ltd	3 Full pages advert ST15 Directory 25	645.00
10/02/2025	10009508	British Gas	Elec Usage 61 High Street 21.12 to 21.01.25	18.72
10/02/2025	9968602	British Gas	Elec Supply Ampitheatre 19.12 to 19.01.25	13.02
10/02/2025	01184330	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas Usage -01.02 to 28.02.25	2.05
11/02/2025	444008-037	Virgin Media Business	Telephone Rental & Calls - 22 Jan - 21 Feb 25	87.74
12/02/2025	SOT1143737	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	Waste Collection - FJC January 2025	41.95
14/02/2025	16406	All Print Equipment Ltd	Photocopier Usage - Jan 25	14.34
14/02/2025	432643	Stone Shoe Repairs Ltd	FJC - Gate key for waste collectors	5.00
14/02/2025	INV-0003	G C Power Cables Limited	FJC - 5 year fixed wire elec test	690.00
14/02/2025	INV293016340	Zoom Video Comm Inc	ZOOM Subscription Feb 14 to Mar 13 2025	25.98
14/02/2025	ExpenseClaims	Paul Castrey Expenses	HC - Desk tidy, stapler, scales	22.12
14/02/2025	INV-0003	G C Power Cables Limited	SSTN - 5 year fixed wire elec test	690.00
14/02/2025	2478978	Forvis Mazars LLP	Limited Assurance Review -31.03.2024	1,365.00
14/02/2025	131295	B Hygienic Ltd	SSTN - Annual hygiene contract to 31.01.2026	336.00
18/02/2025	201615202573522	Pozitive Energy	HC Gas Usage -01.01-31.01.25	177.52
19/02/2025	wp-INV08230397	Water Plus	Water Usage SSTN - 06.01 to 05.02.25	108.98
20/02/2025	01184330	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Gas Usage - 01.02 to 28.02.25	658.33
20/02/2025	01184330	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Elec Usage - 01.02 to 28.02.25	350.06
20/02/2025	01184330	VALDA ENERGY	FJC Gas Usage -01.02 to 28.02.25	754.01
20/02/2025	01184330	VALDA ENERGY	SSTN Elec Usage - 01.02 to 28.02.25	403.84
20/02/2025	wp-INV08248054	Water Plus	FJC Water Usage 06.01 to 06.02	83.90
24/02/2025	INV3001362	MEB Total Ltd	SSTN - Repairs to lights	183.49

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## Stone Town Council - Payments

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<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
24/02/2025	wp-INV08281332	Water Plus	Water Usage - Mount Road - 09.01 to 09.02	34.67
24/02/2025	CD-243734947	Culligan	Water Cooler Rental - Feb 25	23.06
24/02/2025	743014903/001/02	Virgin Media Business	Broadband Usage -6 Feb to 5 Mar	50.00
24/02/2025	INV0004630910	Eurooffice Ltd	FJC - Cleaning items	58.98
24/02/2025	INV0004630910	Eurooffice Ltd	A4 clear folders	4.76
25/02/2025	213801	Prism Solutions	Prism IT Managed Service - Mar 25	1,273.93
27/02/2025	STC/DL250225	The Puppet Tree	Deposit - Puppet Event 29th May	750.00
27/02/2025	INV3001467	MEB Total Ltd	FJC - 1/4 Fire alarm test	64.17
28/02/2025	10196467	British Gas	Heritage Centre Electricity 9 Jan to 9 Feb	294.15
28/02/2025	SOT1143737	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	Waste Collection - FJC January 2025	82.06
28/02/2025	SOT1143738	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	Waste Collection - SSTN - Jan 2025	110.39
28/02/2025	SBC	Stafford Borough Council	Temp Event licence - Stonefield Park	21.00
				20,567.98