



# HOLYBROOK COUNCIL

Proudly serving the residents of Holybrook Parish since 2000

## Financial Regulations

### DEFINITION ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REGULATIONS

In these Financial Regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' means the regulations issued under the provisions of section 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

### Public Contracts Regulations

In these Financial Regulations, references to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or "the PC regulations" shall mean the regulations which came into force in February 2015, or any superseding legislation, then in force unless otherwise specified.

### Proper Practice

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 the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

### Appropriate or Relevant Committees

In these Financial Regulations, references to the appropriate or relevant Committees, shall refer to those which have delegated powers.

### The Council or The Parish Council

The 'Council' or 'Parish Council' refers to Holybrook Parish Council.

### Members

Members shall mean the elected Members of the Parish Council. Meaning Councillor.

### Terminology

In the Financial Regulations the words 'must' and 'will' have the same meaning as 'shall'.

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.

## **1. GENERAL**

1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of the financial transactions of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial Regulations are one of the Council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial Regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders and the current Code of Conduct.

1.2 The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the Council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

1.3. The Council's accounting control systems will include measures:

- for the timely production of accounts;
- that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
- to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- that identify the duties of officers.

1.4. These Financial Regulations demonstrate how the Council will meet these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council will review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.7. Members of council will follow the instructions within these Regulations and not 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, appointed by the Council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations apply accordingly.

1.9 The RFO will;

- act under policy direction of the Council;
- administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determine, on behalf of the Council, its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensure the accounting and control systems are observed;

- maintain up-to-date accounting records of the Council in accordance with proper practices;
  - assist the Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.10 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipt and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management of information prepared for the Council from time to time, comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.11 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall, in particular, contain:
- Entries, from day to day, of all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments relate.
  - A record of the assets and liabilities of the Council; and
  - Wherever relevant, a record of the Council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include measures to:
- ensure the financial transactions of the Council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and accurately as possible.
  - enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records.
  - identify duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of the officers in relation to significant transactions.
  - ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts, are not submitted to the Council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
  - Measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.13 The Council must not delegate any decision regarding:
- Setting the final budget or precept (Council Tax requirement);
  - Approving an Annual Governance Statement;
  - Approving Accounting Statements;

- Borrowing;
- Declaring eligibility for General Power of Competence; and
- Addressing recommendations in any report from the Internal or External Auditors shall be a matter for the Full Council only. However, the Finance Committee may, with delegation from Full Council, review the recommendations and suggest, for full council approval, new policies and procedures.

1.14 In addition, the Council must:

- Determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts.
- Approve any grant or single commitment in excess of £10,000, and
- In respect of the annual salary for any employee, have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

## **1. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)**

- 2.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2 On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end the Chairman shall verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The Chairman shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall, on conclusion, be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Council's Finance Committee. These records will be made available at each Finance Committee meeting for review by members.
- 2.3 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement (AGAR) and any related documents required (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4 The Council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the Council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Council, supply the RFO, Internal Auditor or External Auditor with such information and explanation as the Council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by the Council and shall carry out the work required by the RFO, or by the Council, with a view to satisfactory completion of the Internal Auditor's Report section of the Annual Return as compiled annually by the

Audit Commission. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to Council in writing with a minimum of two reports in respect of each financial year.

2.6 Internal or External Auditors will not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the Council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the audit process.

2.7 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.

2.8 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is on a purely administrative matter.

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

3.1 The RFO must each year, formulate and submit proposals of all relevant budget headings to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will review all proposals and will submit an annual budget and precept recommendation to the Council in respect of revenue and capital costs for the following financial year not later than the end of December each year.

3.2 The Finance Committee shall review, update and maintain a 5-year rolling capital and revenue project/maintenance plan as well as plans for Community Infrastructure Levy expenditure.

3.3 All committees to submit their budget requests to the RFO no later than the end of September each year to ensure their budget requirements are met in the annual budget.

3.4 Detailed estimates of all receipts and payments for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO.

3.5 The Council shall review the estimates, not later than the end of January each year, and shall fix the Precept (council tax requirement) to be levied for the ensuing financial year.

3.5.1 Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government

Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.

3.6 The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall provide each member with a copy of the approved annual budget and precept demand figures.

3.7 The annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

#### **4. BUDGETARY CONTROLS**

4.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget without further council approval.

4.2 No expenditure may be incurred which will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure or for which no budget was included in the annual budget without resolution of the Council or duly delegated committee except in the case of 4.4 below. During the budget year, and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

4.3 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each budget heading, comparing actual expenditure against that planned.

4.4 The RFO may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council, which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is urgent and must be actioned immediately, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £3,000 ex VAT. The RFO shall report the action to the Chairman immediately and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

4.5 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.6 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually by the relevant committee(s) in September for the following financial year taking account of potential statutory pay rises and performance pay rises.

4.7 The RFO will inform Committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

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

4.9 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations relating to contracts.

- 4.10 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of income and expenditure to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared for consideration by the Finance Committee and an explanation of material variances given. For this purpose “material” shall be more than 15% of the budget.
- 4.11 Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Council as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND CHEQUE PAYMENTS**

- 5.1 The Council’s banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. Bank arrangements shall not be delegated to a Committee except where they are reviewed for safety and efficiency. All recommendations to be reviewed and approved by full council.
- 5.2 A schedule of the payments made and/or required, forming part of the Agenda for the meeting, shall be prepared by the RFO and be presented to Council. The schedule will detail each cheque number or payment method i.e. card or Faster Payment and the date on which it was written/paid. If the schedule is in order, it shall be confirmed by resolution of the Council and shall be signed, on each page, by the Chairman of the meeting or Chairman of the Finance Committee. Personal payments (including salaries and wages and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.3 Cheques drawn on the bank account, in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 or in accordance with paragraph 6.4, shall be signed by the Chair and RFO. When this is not possible or appropriate (i.e. payments to the aforementioned) cheques are to be signed by two approved members of the Council.

## **6. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

- 6.1 All payments may be made by cheque, debit card or faster payment or other order drawn on the Council's bankers. Cash payments should be avoided.
- 6.2 Deposit payments made to the Council, for the hire of its facility at the Beansheaf Centre, by Faster Payments may be returned to the payee in the same manner. A register of deposits must be kept and checked against the bank account by the Chairman of the Council.
- 6.3 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO. The RFO shall be satisfied that the work, goods or services, to which the invoice relates, has been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- a. Large projects must be approved by at least one member of the parish council, in conjunction with the Clerk, before final payment is made.

- 6.4 The RFO shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall allocate them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted and which are in order.
- 6.5 The RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge of interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the Council, where the RFO certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next meeting of the Council.
  - b) An expenditure item authorised under 6.8 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next meeting of the Council: or
  - c) Fund transfers within the Council's banking arrangements up to the sum of £40,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 6.6 For each financial year, the RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) salaries, PAYE and NI, superannuation fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like, for which the Finance Committee may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 3.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Council.
- 6.7 The Council does not hold petty cash and therefore no provision is set for its use.
- 6.8 In respect of grants, the Finance Committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by Council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by Council.
- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 During an election year, the Council will appoint cheque signatories for the term of office of the Council unless the current signatories are still members in which case, they shall remain as the approved signatories.
- 6.11 No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Council or a duly delegated committee.

- 6.12 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under 'favourites'), and not through a search engine or email link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for Council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.13 Any bank debit card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk, RFO or an Officer designated by the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction with a maximum value of £1,000 unless authorised by Council or appropriate Committee in writing before any order is placed. The Parish Council does not currently hold a credit card.

## **7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES**

- 7.1 As an employer, the Council shall decide 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 and in conjunction with section 3.6.
- 7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salaries such as may be made for tax, National Insurance and any pension contributions, are to be arranged by the Council's authorised payroll administrators in accordance with the payroll records on the appropriate dates.
- 7.3 Any increases in annual salaries, overtime or other payments will be agreed and authorised by the appropriate committee with delegated functions and or/Council and notified to the Council's payroll administrators for appropriate action by the RFO.
- 7.4 Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be kept on separate confidential record. These confidential records are not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
1. by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  2. by the Internal Auditor;
  3. by the External Auditor; or
  4. By any person authorised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5 The total of such payments, in each calendar month, shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.

## **8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS**

- 8.1 All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan, shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.3 The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with the relevant regulations, proper practices, and guidance. Any strategy and/or policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 8.4 All investments of money, under the control of the Council, shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.6 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

## **9. INCOME**

- 9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of the Bookings Clerk under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the appropriate committee, and notified to the RFO. The RFO shall, ultimately, be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 9.3 Any sums and any bad debts found to be irrecoverable, shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off as soon as practicable.
- 9.4 Preference for income shall be via direct bank transfer and this payment method is to be encouraged.
- 9.5 Any sums received by cash or cheque on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts, of this type, shall be deposited with the Council's banks with such frequency, as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.6.1 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.

9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

9.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claims due, in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33, shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year-end.

## **10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES**

10.1 An official order, letter or e-mail shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared, or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained; electronic copies shall serve this purpose.

10.2 Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order is to ensure, as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, subject to any *de minimis* provision in Regulation 11.1 below.

10.3 A Member shall not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.

10.4 The RFO or delegated officer, shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order and, in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

## **11. CONTRACTS**

11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
  - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
  - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;

- iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
  - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
  - v. for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum, the RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Council); and
  - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are minor goods which are used in the Council Offices or other Council owned property and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b) Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or a public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the PC Regulations") or any superseding legislation which is valued at current limits (currently £30,000 inc VAT) or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the legislation
  - c) 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. Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the RFO 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 the 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.
  - d) The Clerk, in the presence of at least one member of Council, shall open all sealed tenders at the same time on the prescribed date.
  - e) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £30,000 inc vat or if all the tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
  - f) Any invitation to tender, issued under this regulation, shall be subject to the Council's Standing Order (Interests) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
  - g) When it is intended to enter into a contract less than £30,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the RFO shall strive to obtain 3

quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply). Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.

- i. The Council reserves the right to award a contract under 11.1.g to an existing council contractor without obtaining further quotations.
- h) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quote or estimate.
- i) The Council will have the power to appoint professional project managers to handle works on its behalf. Where such managers are appointed, they will fulfil the requirements of dealing with tender processes for contracts as set out above.
- j) If 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.

## **12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS OR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS (PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS)**

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

## **13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

- 13.1 The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.
- 13.2 Delivery Notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made. Delivery notes can be destroyed once the order is confirmed as complete and satisfactory.

- 13.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4 A delegated officer shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

#### **14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

- 14.1 The RFO shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Regulation 4(3)(b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 as amended.
- 14.2 An Asset will have a value exceeding £500 and will not be used up or consumed within one year.
- 14.3 No 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, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the Full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5 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.

#### **15. INSURANCE**

- 15.1 Following an annual risk assessment, the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.3 The RFO shall give prompt attention to all new risks, properties or vehicles, which require to be insured, and of any alterations affecting existing insurances to the appropriate committee.

- 15.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to the appropriate committee at the next available meeting.
- 15.5 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.

## **16. CHARITIES<sup>2</sup>**

- 16.1 Where the Council is sole trustee of a charitable body the RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

## **17. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 17.1 The Council will be 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.
- 17.2 When considering any new activity, the Clerk and responsible officers shall prepare a draft risk assessment, including risk management proposals, for consideration and adoption by the Council.

## **18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 18.1 It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2 The Council may, by resolution of the Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations that are not required by law, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all Members of Council.

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<sup>1</sup> At the date of this review, no loans or investments were held by the Council.

<sup>2</sup> The Council was not the sole trustee of any charitable body at the date of this review.

\*At the date of this revision to the Financial Regulations, the Clerk and RFO are one and the same.