



**STANDING ORDERS
SPELDHURST PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

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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 and the Internal Financial Control System.
- 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 £7,500

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 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 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. On a monthly basis a member other than the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member 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.

- 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 reasonably 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 RFO shall provide the Finance Committee with up-to-date financial figures, which will include a detailed statement of receipts and payments along with actual v budget figures, at the Finance meetings.
- 3.4. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.5. The RFO shall be responsible for completing the Accounts of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as supplied by the appointed Auditor) and for submitting the Annual Return for approval by the Governance Committee and authorisation by the Council within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.6. **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.**
- 3.7. **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.
- 3.8. 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.
- 3.9. 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

3.10. 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.

3.11. 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.

3.12. 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.

3.13. 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 precept (council tax) 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. The RFO will provide budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions to the Governance Committee for review in October or November for the following financial year. The Governance Committee will provide their recommendations to the Finance Committee prior to their meeting to finalise the budget before submission to Full Council for approval.

4.3. The RFO shall prepare a draft budget for the Finance Committee with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments/income and expenditure for the following financial year by the end of October each year.

4.4. Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the Finance Committee meeting to finalise the budget before submission to Full Council for approval which will be not later than the end of November each year.

- 4.5. The Finance Committee will maintain a list of planned or potential projects and/or initiatives for the next 3 financial years (excluding the current financial year). Each committee will be responsible for informing the Finance Committee on a regular basis of any new items and/or changes to existing items. The Finance Committee will review the list at each Finance Committee meeting and inform Full Council of any recommendations, concerns and/or issues on a regular basis.
- 4.6. The Finance Committee shall review the budget and submit them to the Council not later than the end of December each year and shall recommend to the Council the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year to be approved by the Council.
- 4.7. **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.**
- 4.8. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the middle of January** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.9. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.10. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

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 Clerk 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 , 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 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 Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £15,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes. In the event of fewer than 3 quotations being available, the Clerk will place a notice of the work and give at least one week's public notice of such intention in the same manner as public notice of meetings of the Council is given.
- 5.9. where the value is between £5000 and £15,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall seek to obtain 3 estimates or quotes as appropriate which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases under £5,000, 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. 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, shall have authority to incur any item of expenditure up to £500 excluding VAT arising from the administration of council business.
 - Any two of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Clerk shall have, under delegated authority, the authority to incur any item of expenditure up to £1,000 excluding VAT where it is in their view necessary or desirable to act without delay.

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

- All three, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Clerk, shall have, under delegated authority, the authority to incur any item of expenditure up to £5,000 excluding VAT where it is in their view necessary to act without delay.
- Any exercise of such delegated authorities shall be reported to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter for authorisation. Such authorisation must be supported by a minute
- The Finance Committee has delegated powers of expenditure to a maximum of £7,500 per item. Expenditure in excess of this amount will be referred to the Council on a recommendation from the Finance Committee or be considered by Full Council directly.
- The Amenities Committee has delegated powers to expenditure to a maximum of £500 per item. Expenditure in excess of this amount will be referred to the Council on a recommendation from the Amenities Committee or be considered by Full Council directly.

5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council unless authorised to do so by a resolution of the Council.

5.17. . 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.

5.18. An official order or letter shall be issued or obtained for all work, goods and services above £5,000 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.

6. Banking and payments

6.1. The council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and reviewed regularly by the Finance Committee for security and efficiency. Any change in banking arrangements is to be recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the Council.

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. A schedule of the payment of money required each month shall be prepared by the RFO and, together with the relevant invoices, be presented

to the Council. If the schedule is in order, it shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council. The schedule will be shown in the Minutes of the meeting, or as an attachment to the minutes. Personal payments (including salaries, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information. The RFO shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next Council Meeting. Payments shall not normally be presented for authorisation other than at a Council meeting. Any payments made between meetings shall be reported to the Council (or Finance Committee) at the next meeting.

- 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 effected by bank transfer, cheque or other order drawn on Unity Trust Bank, or by credit card. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the Council or Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. 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}. If approved by the Council, payment may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.7. If a member who is also a bank signatory has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, in the matter in respect of which the payment is being made, that Councillor shall be required to consider Standing Orders, and thereby determine whether it is appropriate and/or permissible for that Councillor to be a signatory to the transaction in question.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. It is recognised that the majority of banks will only speak to a signatory and therefore, if it is necessary for the administration of business, the RFO shall

be a signatory on those accounts. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify those who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals. On the accounts that the RFO is a signatory, payments will only be made to SPC's account at Unity Trust Bank or a cheque made payable to SPC.

- 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.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised officer shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. One councillor, who is not an authorised signatory, will check payment details against the invoices before schedule of payments is presented to Council for approval. After approval by Council two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the approved schedule before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be recorded in the minutes. Any payments made after the schedule has been approved shall be reported to the next Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.
- 7.9. With the approval of the council 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 amounts payable are reported to Council for approval. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.10. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security
- 7.11. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two signatories.

- 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. A credit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Finance Committee. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Council or Finance Committee and balances paid in full by direct debit to avoid bank charges.
- 9.2. The single transaction limit for credit card payments is £500 unless to cover a payment authorised by Full Council.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. The council will not maintain any form of cash float.

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. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by the Council.
- 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. Each payment is to be reported to the next available Council meeting.
- 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. Each payment is to be reported to the next available Council meeting.

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. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
- b) by the internal auditor;
- c) by the external auditor; or
- d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation

11.7. For the administration of salaries as detailed below the council employs a payroll manager. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the Clerk to ensure that the correct payments have been made. Spot audit checks of payroll reports will be undertaken by members of the Governance Committee a minimum of 3 times p.a.

11.8. 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.

11.9. Before employing interim staff, the Council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

12.1. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period of time.

12.2. 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.

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

12.4. The council shall maintain an Investment Policy which shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practice and guidance. This Policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

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

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

12.7. 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 RFO. The Clerk 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 Clerk 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 Clerk considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required bi-annually. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made annually.

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 Clerk shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.
- 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 Clerk 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 Clerk 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.
- 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.

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The Clerk 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 Governance Committee of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The Clerk 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 Clerk shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 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 Finance and Governance Committees 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) 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.