

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1. GENERAL.....	- 1 -
2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)	- 3 -
3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET).....	- 5 -
4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND.....	- 5 -
5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS	- 6 -
6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS.....	- 7 -
7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES	- 8 -
8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS.....	- 9 -
9. INCOME.....	- 10 -
10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES.....	- 11 -
11. CONTRACTS	- 11 -
12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS	- 13 -
13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT	- 14 -
14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES.....	- 14 -
15. INSURANCE.....	- 15 -
16. RISK MANAGEMENT.....	- 15 -
17. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS	- 15 -

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20 March 2023.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial Regulations are one of the Council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2 The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the Council has a sound system of financial 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 must 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
 - identifying the duties of officers
- 1.4 These financial regulations demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5 At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7 Members of the 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 and shall be appointed by the Council.

1.9 The RFO:

- acts under the policy direction of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
- administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices
- determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed
- maintains the accounting records of the Council up to date in accordance with proper practice
- assists the Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the Council.

1.10 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Council's transactions and to enable the RFO 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.

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

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

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

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Council are recorded as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible,
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the Council for approval to be written off except with the

approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records, and

- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

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

- setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax requirement)
- approving accounting statements
- approving an annual governance statement
- borrowing
- writing off bad debts
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors

shall be a matter for the full Council only.

1.14 In addition the Council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or "the regulations" shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of 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 (s)' 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 and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

1.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

1.2 At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member shall verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO/Deputy RFO. Two members shall verify a sample of invoices and the bank reconciliations/statements. Verification shall be confirmed in writing by email. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- 1.3 The RFO shall complete the annual financial statements, 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 for approval and authorisation in accordance with proper practice and within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.4 The Council shall ensure that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO, Town Clerk and Chief Executive or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit. The officer or member shall supply the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 1.5 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the Council in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6 The Internal Auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council
 - report to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report in respect of each financial year
 - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.
- 1.7 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the Council
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions, or
 - direct the activities of any Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor
- 1.8 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 1.9 The RFO shall make arrangements for 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 Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 1.10 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET)

- 1.11 Each Committee shall review its four-year forecast of income and expenditure. The Committee shall formulate and submit proposals to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in respect of revenue and capital including the use of reserves and sources of funding for the following financial year not later than the end of January each year.
- 1.12 Detailed estimates of all income and expenditure including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO the form of a budget to be recommended to the Council by Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 1.13 The Council shall review the budget not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved budget.
- 1.14 The approved annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

- 1.15 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget and in accordance with the Officers' Scheme of Delegation.
- 1.16 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure unless Finance and General Purposes Committee or the Council, having fully considered the implications for public services, resolves that unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate (virement).
- 1.17 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the Council.
- 1.18 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually for the following financial year as part of the budget setting process. The RFO or Head of Service will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 1.19 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive or the RFO may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council, which is necessary to carry out repair, replacement or other work that is of such extreme urgency, that it must be done at once, whether or not there

is any budgetary provision for the expenditure. This is subject to a limit of £25,000, following consultation with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Chairman of one other Standing Committee. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

- 1.20 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and contracts 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.
- 1.21 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive, RFO and Heads of Service are authorised to incur expenditure on the Council's annually agreed capital/revenue reserve programme on transactions of £10,000 or less having discussed the issue first with the appropriate standing Committee Chairman. Any proposed expenditure above £10,000 from allocated reserves; any expenditure from the General Reserve; or any other reserves expenditure determined by the standing Committee's Chairman as needing prior Committee approval, must first be approved by the relevant standing Committee.
- 4.9 The RFO shall provide the Finance and General Purposes Committee with a summary 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 at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of £5,000 or 15% of the budget.
- 4.10 Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Finance and General Purposes Committee as part of the budgetary control process.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the Bank Mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. **Banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee.** They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2 The RFO will ensure that a schedule of payments over £500 be presented to two members of Finance and General Purposes Committee on at least a quarterly basis for viewing and verification. Invoices are provided on request.
- 5.3 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring all invoices for payment are examined, verified and certified. When required, the Budget Manager shall verify that the work/ goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received/carried out.

- 5.4 The RFO shall be responsible for examining invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall assign them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO and shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, within 30 days of receipt.
- 5.5 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive and RFO shall have delegated authority to make fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 The Council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.8 Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved by the RFO or Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS

- 6.1 The Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2 Following authorisation under Regulation 5 above, the Council, a duly delegated Committee or, if so delegated, the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3 Apart from petty cash, all payments shall be effected by cheque, direct debit, on-line banking or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.4 Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two members of Council and countersigned by the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in accordance with Regulation 5. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5 Payment for utility and other regular supplies (including energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by the RFO and or Town Clerk and Chief Executive.
- 6.6 Payment for salaries and wages shall be made by BACS via the Council's approved payroll bureau. The BACS release will be authorised by submission of a Payroll Approval form certified by the RFO and or Town Clerk and Chief Executive. The

RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall maintain records detailing all payments.

- 6.7 Where internet banking arrangements are made with the bank, the RFO, the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services shall be appointed as Service Administrators. The Bank Mandate approved by the Council will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the Service Administrators. Access rights to on-line banking will be set up in accord with internal signatory and delegation rules to ensure that payments cannot be processed and released with only one signature.
- 6.8 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for Council banking work.
- 6.9 No employee shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised by the Council.
- 6.10 Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away off site.
- 6.11 Changes to account details which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written notification by the supplier and authorised by the RFO/ and or Town Clerk and Chief Executive.
- 6.12 Any corporate credit cards held by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Budget Managers and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end.
- 6.13 Any trade account opened by the Council will operate on submission of an authorised purchase order and be restricted to delegated officers.
- 6.14 The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Finance Officer may provide petty cash to Officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Requests for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Finance Officer with a claim for reimbursement:

7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1 As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with the agreed rates of pay and other allowances as held on the payroll records and in accordance with the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2 Payment of salaries and payment deductions from salary such as may be required in respect of income tax, National Insurance, pension contributions or similar

statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts.

- 7.3 No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 7.4 Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record. 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
 - d) 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.
- 7.6 All timesheets shall be certified as to accuracy by the individual's manager, and retained by the Business Support Manager and checked by the RFO.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.

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. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 83 The Council has adopted a Treasury Management Plan in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. The Plan shall be reviewed 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 Payment).

9. INCOME

- 9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of the RFO/Deputy RFO.
- 9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO who will be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.
- 9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable together with any bad debts shall be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and shall be written off at the end of the financial year.
- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The only exception to this is for insignificant cash sums received for photocopying or postage which may be deposited into the petty cash.
- 9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 9.8 The RFO shall be responsible for promptly completing any VAT Return required in accordance to the rules applicable to a VAT Registered body.
- 9.9 Where the Council regularly receives any significant sums of cash, the RFO shall be responsible for taking such steps as agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance. Also, 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.
- 9.10 Every transfer of Council money from one member of staff to another shall be signed for by the receiving officer.

10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1 An official order shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2 Order books shall be controlled by the Finance Officer under the direction of the RFO.
- 10.3 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, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimus provisions in Regulation 11 (h) below.
- 10.4 A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.
- 10.5 The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall ensure the lawful nature of any purchase.

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, telephone and datalink services;
 - (ii) For specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, specialist consultants etc; whereby periodic reviews will be made of ongoing arrangements to test for value for money or at least three quotes will be required for one-off specialist support with an estimated value in excess of £7,500;
 - (iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of any 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 and or the Town Clerk & Chief

Executive shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council);

- (vi) For goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- (b) Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations. (Footnote 1: 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)
- (c) The full requirements of the Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds, the Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24EU which may change from time to time. (Footnote 2: Thresholds currently applicable are: a) For public supply and public service contracts £213,477 b) For public works contracts (£5,336,937.
- (d) Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £40,000 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 expected as set out in paragraph (a) the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall invite tenders from at least three suppliers, such suppliers to be selected in accordance with Standing Orders.
- (e) When applications are made to waive Standing Orders relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.
- (f) 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 RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or Head of Service in the ordinary course of (electronic) post.
- (g) All sealed (or electronically delivered) tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the RFO, and/or designated Manager, in the presence of at least one member of Council.
- (h) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £40,000 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.
- (i) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 35 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

- (j) The value of a contract is the total cost of the projects/works over the length of the agreement.
- (k) When it is intended to enter into a contract:
 - (i) exceeding £5,000 but less than £40,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, material, works or specialists services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a), the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive shall invite quotations from at least three suppliers, such suppliers shall be selected in accordance with Standing Orders;
 - (ii) for expenditure of £5,000 or less in value the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or the duly authorised Head of Service shall have executive power;
 - (iii) for expenditure exceeding £40,000, a minimum of three tenders shall be invited in accordance with Standing Orders.
- (l) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- (m) Should it occur that the Council, or duly delegated Committee, does not accept any tender, quotation 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 quotation who was present when the original decision was being undertaken.
- (o) The Town Clerk and Chief Executive or his nominated representative shall have authority to sign all contract documentation.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive 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 and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and/or the Head of Service 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 RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and/or the Head of

Service, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 13.1 The Head of Service shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section and ensure that the officer allocated responsibility for those stores shall maintain such stocks as consistent with minimum operating requirements.
- 13.2 Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3 The RFO or Head of Service shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive 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 Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2 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 any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.
- 14.3 No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the Council. In each case, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5 The RFO and or the Town Clerk & Chief Executive 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 the annual risk assessment, (per Financial Regulation 16), the RFO shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The RFO or Head of Service shall give prompt notification of all new risks, properties or vehicles that require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances affected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report any greater than £5,000 to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the next available meeting.
- 15.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance, which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.

16. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 16.1 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive and/or Head of Service 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 Town Clerk and Chief Executive and/or Head of Service shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council.

17. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 17.1 It shall be the duty of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive 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 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 the Council.

Adopted at meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee on 21 March 2023.