



SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Adopted by Council 22nd May 2024

Date of Last Review:	13 th May 2026
Date of Next Review:	13 th May 2027

INDEX

1. GENERAL.....	3
2. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL.....	3
3. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT.....	3
4. BUDGET AND PRECEPT.....	4
5. PROCUREMENT.....	5
6. BANKING AND PAYMENTS.....	7
7. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS.....	7
8. CHEQUE PAYMENTS.....	8
9. PAYMENT CARDS.....	8
10. PETTY CASH.....	8
11. PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES.....	9
12. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS.....	9
13. INCOME.....	10
14. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING AND OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORK...10	
15. STORES AND EQUIPMENT.....	10
16. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES.....	10
17. INSURANCE.....	11
18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.....	11

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 orders¹ and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.3. Members of the council 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.
- 1.4. 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.
- 1.5. 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 accounting control systems.
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed.
 - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices.
 - 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.
- 1.6. **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 the accounting statements.
 - approving the 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 keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts.
 - authorise any grant or a single commitment in excess of £5,000
 - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations made by the relevant committee relating to annual salaries in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.8. In these financial regulations
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 or any superseding legislation 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.

¹ Model Standing Orders for Councils (2018 Edition) are available from NALC (©NALC 2018)

- 'Proper Practices' refers to the guide issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practises Panel (SAPPP) and published jointly with NALC, SLCC and ada.
- 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
- 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by its members and staff.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 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 assessment in respect of all activities of the council. This policy statement 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 and adoption 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 and fraud, and**
 - **Allow the reconstitution of any lost records,**
 - **Identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
 - **Ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. Regular backup 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 availability 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, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular they must contain:**
 - **Day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate,**
 - **A record of the assets and liabilities of the council.**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Return.
- 3.4. On a regular basis, at least once per quarter and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair of the Council shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign all bank reconciliations and 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.
- 3.5. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 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 or any duly delegated committee and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, internal controls and governance processes required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 3.9. A new internal auditor shall be appointed by the council every 3 years.
- 3.10. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- 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 during each financial year
 - demonstrates 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 financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 3.11. 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
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.12. 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.
- 3.13. 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 the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.14. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. BUDGET AND PRECEPT

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its Council Tax 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 salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in November for the following financial year as part of the annual budget planning process. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.3. Each Committee (if any) shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 4.4. The RFO must each year, by no later than November, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications or repair or replacement to be considered by any relevant Committee and the council.
- 4.5. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly. Unspent

provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

- 4.6. During the budget year and with the approval of the 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').
- 4.7. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments 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 the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances.
- 4.8. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.
- 4.9. Having considered the proposed budget and three-year forecast, the council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year by setting a budget not later than by the end of January each year.
- 4.10. **Any member with Council Tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.11. **The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 4.12. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 4.13. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserves shall be agreed by the council.

5. PROCUREMENT

- 5.1. An official order or letter 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.
- 5.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 5.3. **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.
- 5.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.5. The RFO 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.
- 5.6. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
 - a. Every contract shall comply with the council's standing orders and these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to 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 legal professionals acting in disputes:
 - 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 Clerk as RFO shall act after consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair 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. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The**

Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation (The Legislation”), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.

- c. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of the items listed in paragraph a) obtain prices as follows:
- d. When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 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 Clerk as RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £1,000 and above £500 the Clerk as RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates, which might include evidence of online prices, or prices from recent suppliers. Such quotations may be received by post, email or fax. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with appendix 1.
- e. For smaller purchases the Clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.
- f. **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.**
- g. 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 or duly delegated committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- h. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest price for any tender, quote or estimate.
- i. The Clerk/RFO has delegated authority to pay all invoices up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure all of which have previously been approved by the Council in January each year.
- j. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1000. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- k. Any expenditure over £1000 which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work and is of such urgency that it must be carried out at once whether or not there is budgetary provision for the expenditure must have prior approval from the Chair of the council. In the absence of the Chair of the council approval must be sought from the Vice-Chair of the council or in their absence from any Councillor. The Chair, Vice-Chair or Councillor will refer the matter to Full Council or any other Councillor if they deem it necessary prior to giving approval for such expenditure.
- l. The Clerk/RFO has authority to pay all invoices funded from earmarked reserves subject to prior approval from the council.
- m. In respect of grants the council or a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any relevant policy statement approved by council.
- n. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council. Such authorisation must be supported by a minute or other auditable evidence trail.
- o. Any expenditure that exceeds the amount already approved for any project funded from earmarked reserves must be approved by the council except in an emergency.
- p. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or any tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

- q. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- r. **Contracts may not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- s. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be retained by the RFO.

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.

6. BANKING AND PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council. Banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. The RFO shall present to the council a detailed list of all payments made together with a copy of the bank statement at every full council meeting. The council shall review the payment list and such review be noted in the minutes. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, 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.
- 6.3. The council's preferred method of payment is via bank transfer. The Clerk/RFO has delegated authority to create and release online banking payments subject to the limits as set out in Budgetary Control and Authority to Spend. The Clerk/RFO prints the bank confirmation of each payment and attaches this to the relevant invoice.
- 6.4. Payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers or by direct debit or online banking and the payment method stated on the schedule of payments presented to the council for review on a monthly basis.
- 6.5. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 6.6. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading.
- 6.7. The council, a duly delegated committee or the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.8. 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.
- 6.9. 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.

7. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

- 7.1. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates 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.
- 7.2. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made.

The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

- 7.3. Where online banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk/RFO shall be appointed as Service Administrator.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator will be responsible for processing all payments made online.
- 7.5. 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.
- 7.6. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 7.7. Access to any online banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), 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. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 7.8. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for online banking, may only be changed on written notification by the supplier and verified by the RFO. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

8. CHEQUE PAYMENTS

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by the Clerk and two members of council in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment.
- 8.2. 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.
- 8.3. 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 and invoice.
- 8.4. 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 at the next convenient meeting.

9. PAYMENT CARDS

- 9.1. Any debit card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £300 unless authorised by the council before any order is placed.
- 9.2. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk acting as RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month end.
- 9.3. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used unless in extreme circumstances i.e. where payment for goods or services can only be made by credit or debit card and there is no council debit card. In such circumstances approval by resolution of the council must be obtained prior to placing any order.

10. PETTY CASH

- 10.1. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk acting as RFO (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

11. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 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. Payment of salaries shall be made after deduction of tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations.
- 11.4. 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.
- 11.5. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council or duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or delegated committee
- 11.6. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of any 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 or
 - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 11.7. 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.
- 11.8. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by full council.
- 11.9. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 12.1. 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 the Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council and must be recorded in the minutes.
- 12.2. 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. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to the council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 12.4. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.5. All investments 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 RFO.

- 12.7. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts 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. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council as part of the budget setting process. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 13.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 13.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 13.5. 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.
- 13.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 13.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claims due in accordance with the VAT Act 1994, section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 13.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

14. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 14.1. 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).
- 14.2. 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.
- 14.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and issued by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

15. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 15.1. The Clerk shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.
- 15.2. All goods received must be checked as to order and quality at the time of delivery.
- 15.3. The RFO shall be responsible for checking the condition of stores and equipment at least annually.

16. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

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

- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is maintained of all properties held 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.
- 16.3. 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, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.
- 16.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the full council, together with any 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 where required by law).
- 16.5. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

17. INSURANCE

- 17.1. Following the annual risk assessment, the Clerk shall affect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 17.2. The Clerk shall keep a record of all insurances affected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it prior to the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management
- 17.3. The Clerk shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 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 by the council or duly delegated committee

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 at least annually. 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 provided that the 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. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 18.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

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