STILTON PARISH COUNCIL

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FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Contents

1. General 2
2. Risk management and internal control 3
3. Accounts and audit 3
4. Budget and precept 4
5. Procurement 5
6. Banking, payments and invoicing 6
7. Electronic payments 7
8. Payment cards 8
9. Petty Cash 8
10. Payment of salaries and allowances 8
11. Loans and investments 9
12. Income 9
13. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works 10
14. Stores and equipment 10
15. Assets, properties and estates 10
16. Insurance 11
17. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations 11
18. Document Review 11
Appendix 1 - Tender process 11
Addendum 1 – Additional Procedures for Tendering 12

1. General

1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.

1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.4. In these Financial Regulations:

- 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
- "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
- "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
- 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
- *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
- 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
- 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.

1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. [The Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly.] The RFO;

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

1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment ~~in excess of [£5,000~~];

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/RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk/RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.

2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**

2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
- **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
- **ensure division of responsibilities.**

2.6. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council's Finance, General Purpose and Communication Committee.

2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

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

3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**

- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
- **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**

3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the

Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them with any related documents to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices**.

3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.

3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.

3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:

- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
- reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
- can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the management or control of the council

3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**

4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council, following on from Finance, General Purpose and Communication committee reporting at least annually in October for the following financial year.

4.3. No later than October each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments/income and expenditure for the following financial

year along with a forecast for the following year, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the full council.

4.5. Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council {finance committee} not later than the end of [November] each year.

4.6. Having considered the proposed budget, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.

4.7. **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 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 end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget. The budget will also be made available on the Parish Council's website.

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 RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

5.3. Every contract shall comply with 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 Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**

5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:

5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £30,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**

5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk/RFO shall seek at least [3] fixed-price quotes;

5.9. where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk/RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates {which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.}

5.10. For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

5.11. **Contracts must not be split 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, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT.
- the council for all items over £2,000

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

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

5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference except in an emergency.

5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

~~5.19.~~ No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available

5.20. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking, payments and invoicing

6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Barclays. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO

6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking, in accordance with a resolution of the council unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.

6.6. The Clerk/RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments only in the following circumstances (and as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation):

i. any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.

ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.

iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk/RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

6.7. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices (uploaded to Scribe), to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

6.8. Pavilion Deposit Refunds – the RFO shall set up Pavilion deposit refunds for repayment each month, detailing the deposit reference, amount and hirer name. There shall be a refund invoice set up on Scribe for recording purposes and for hirer reference. This allows for cross checking and provides confirmation for councillors authorising payments these are correct. The information box on each item can also be used to document the deposit journey through the hire.

6.9. Invoicing – the RFO shall check all invoices (Pavilion, football and Burial) prior to being sent to customers as best practice in spotting potential errors (grammatical and mathematical) which might impact income or the reputation of the Parish Council.

7. Electronic payments

7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.

7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.

7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be added to Scribe and available to two authorised signatories. The signed payment sheet is filed for reference.

7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.

7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

~~7.7.~~ Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment via email

7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month is provided to the next council meeting within the minutes.

7.9. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by a authorised bank signatory, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

7.10. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed by a members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.

7.11. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk/RFO. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine.

7.12. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

7.13. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Payment cards

8.1. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk/RFO and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

8.2. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall ideally not be used {under any circumstances.} OR {except for expenses of up to [£250] including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.}

9. Petty Cash

9.1. The council will not maintain any form of cash floats.

10. Payment of salaries and allowances

10.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**

10.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**

10.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council. 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.
10.4. 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.
10.5. 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.
10.6. 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 (Brightpay) or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the finance committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

10.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.

10.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

11. Loans and investments

11.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

11.2. 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, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

11.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

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

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

11.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

12. Income

12.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

12.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

12.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

12.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

12.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

12.6. 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.

12.7. Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

12.8. Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.

13. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

13.1. 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.

13.2. 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.

14. Stores and equipment

14.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.

14.2. 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.

14.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

14.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

15. Assets, properties and estates

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

15.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

15.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15.4. 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).

15.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

16. Insurance

16.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.

16.2. The Clerk/RFO shall give prompt notification to council of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

16.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.

16.4. 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.

17. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

17.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

17.2. 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.

17.3. 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.

18. Document Review

Adopted: 12 May 2026 (agenda item PC105/26)
Next review date: May 2026
Responsible Officer, Parish Clerk.

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.

Addendum 1 – Additional Procedures for Tendering

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this addendum is to provide additional guidance on the factors to be taken into account when purchasing goods and services.
1.2. Persons involved in the awarding of a Contract on behalf of the Council must ensure that the best value for money is obtained. Before commencing any procurement, it is essential that those authorised to do so have identified the need and fully assessed the options for meeting those needs.

2. Local contractors preferred

2.1. The Council recognises the benefits to the economy of using local businesses and will seek out local contractors and suppliers wherever possible, subject to Para 8 below.

3. Competence of contractors and due diligence

3.1. The Council shall only enter into a contract with a supplier if it is satisfied as to the supplier's suitability, eligibility, financial standing and technical capacity to undertake the contract by carrying out appropriate due diligence.
3.2. All contractors and suppliers working on Council sites will be required to comply with the Council's Health & Safety policy and any rules specific to the site of operation, for example Cemetery Regulations. Provision of suitable risk assessments and method statements will be a condition of all such contractors.
3.3. The Council requires all contractors working on Council sites and projects to maintain adequate insurance, including but not limited to Public Liability insurance for £5 million.

4. Equality and sustainability

4.1. The Council recognises the importance of sustainability and will take into account the environmental, social and economic impacts of its purchasing decisions.
4.2. The Council recognises its duty to protect biodiversity under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. To meet this duty the Council will wherever possible purchase products that protect biodiversity, for example peat-free compost.
4.3. The Council will, wherever possible, purchase goods that meet international Fairtrade standards (or similar).

5. Prompt payment of invoices

5.1. The Council understands the importance of paying suppliers promptly and will wherever possible settle accounts within a maximum of 30 days, or earlier, by agreement. In order to comply with current legislation all payments will be made by BACS transfer.

6. Specifications

6.1. Enquiries and invitations to Tender shall be based on a written specification. The specification shall adequately describe the requirement procedure in sufficient detail to enable effective procurement in accordance with these rules.
7.4. Every written contract shall specify:

a) The work, materials, matters or things to be furnished, had or done:
b) The price to be paid, with a statement of discounts or other deductions (if any); and

8. Acceptance of Quotations and Tenders

8.1. Normally the Council will accept the quotation, estimate or tender that provides best value for money, however, the Council is not obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quotation or estimate, but must give valid reasons for not doing so. Each tender shall be evaluated for the price and quality to ascertain the most economically advantageous tender. Local companies should be encouraged to apply.
8.3. Arithmetical errors found in any tender when checking shall be dealt with as follows:
the tenderer shall have the error pointed out to them and be offered the opportunity to stand by their original tender, or their corrected tender, or withdraw it.

9. Signing and Sealing of Contracts

9.1. Every successful quotation/tender shall be accepted in writing, provided that contracts as the Solicitors to the Council shall determine shall be set out in a formal contract document.

10. Nominated Sub-Contractors and Suppliers

10.1. Where a sub-contractor or supplier is to be nominated to a main contractor, the procurement of the services of the sub-contractor or supplier shall be subject to these Contract Procedure Rules.

11. Contract Variations

11.1. Any necessary instructions to vary a contract shall be made in writing by the Clerk or person(s) responsible for supervising the contract and authorised by The Parish Council. Where a variation occurs during the currency of the contract that is material and cannot be met from within the original contract sum an immediate report shall be made to the Council who shall decide what further action is necessary.

12. Insurances

12.1. Consideration must be given as to the appropriate type (employee liability, public liability, professional indemnity, etc.) and level of insurance requirements for each contract.

13. Termination of contracts

13.1. The Council reserves the right to terminate any contract immediately for any of the following reasons: Termination for Cause – where a supplier commits a material breach of the agreement to deliver services, or fails to deliver agreed services, in the agreed timeframe without a plan to address the failings.

14. Compliance with other relevant legislation.

14.1. In cases where any law, statutory instrument of Government regulation is found to be at variance with any section of this policy, then that shall be applied and this document shall be amended accordingly.

APPENDIX – AUTHORISED COUNCILLORS – BANK MANDATE (BARCLAYS)

AUTHORISED COUNCILLORS
Cllr Sue Ayres
Cllr Anne Arscott