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**Shavington-cum-Gresty Council
Finance & Strategy Committee meeting**

Main Road,
Shavington, Crewe
CW2 5DP

www.shavingtononline.co.uk

20 June 2024

To: **Members of the Finance & Strategy Committee**

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the **Finance & Strategy Committee** to be held at **7:30PM** on **Wednesday 26 June 2024** at **Shavington-cum-Gresty Village Hall, Main Rd, Shavington, CW2 5DP**.

Your sincerely,

Simona Garnero
Parish Clerk

AGENDA

1	To elect the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Finance & Strategy Committee.
2	To receive and consider apologies for absence.
3	To note declarations of Members' interests.
4	To note the Terms of Reference of the Finance & Strategy Committee. (attached)
5	To confirm and sign the minutes of the Finance & Strategy Committee Meeting held on 28 February 2024 (attached)
6	Public Participation <i>A period not exceeding 20 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments</i>

7	To review the year-to-date expenditure for the Council as a whole and to consider Month-End reconciliation statements (attached)
8	To receive and consider to recommend to Full Council the budget setting schedule for 2025/2026 (attached)
9	To receive and consider the DRAFT following policy (attached) : <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Fast Fail Policy (new)b. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Performance Management Policy (new)c. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Quality Policy (new)d. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Allotment Policy (revisions in yellow)e. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Bench Sponsorship Policy (revisions in yellow)f. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Child Protection and Safeguarding (revisions in yellow)g. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Complaint Policy (revisions in yellow)h. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Dignity at Work (revisions in yellow)i. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Document Retention Policy (revisions in yellow)j. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Environment and Sustainability Policy (revisions in yellow)k. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Fixed Asset and Content Management Policy (revisions in yellow)l. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Granting of Honorary Freedom of the Parish (revisions in yellow)
10	To receive and consider a proposal to assess the council structure, with the support of ChALC, to better support the Council Strategy 2024-2029.
11	To review and consider the updated version of Shavington-cum-Gresty Financial Regulations, revised in alignment with the newly published NALC Model Financial Regulations 2024 (attached)
12	To note the date of the next Finance & Strategy Committee Meeting – 25 September 2024 7:30PM



Report Statement

Meeting: Finance & Strategy Committee

Report Purpose: To present Committee ToR

Version Control: v1

Author: Clerk

1. Report Summary

The report presents the Committee ToR for 2024/25

2. Background

On 1 May 2024 the Parish Council approved the Committees Term of References.

3. Position

Members are asked to note the Committee Term of Reference for 2024/25

4. Governance

ScG Parish Council Standing Order
LGA 1972

5. Financial Impact

None

6. Resource Impact

None

7. Wards Affected

All

8. Conclusions

Members are asked to note the Committee Term of Reference.



FINANCE AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Approved by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council on 1 May 2024

6 Members of Authority		Quorum 3
	Meeting will take place 4 times per year	
	<p>To take a strategic overview of Council operations and ensure that strategy is coordinated across all committees in line with the strategic agenda set by members.</p> <p>To oversee the general operations of the Council in areas such as finance, policy review, budget management, audit, risk management.</p> <p>All non-committee members may attend meetings of the Committee except for confidential items or matters relating to grievance or discipline and speak at the Chairman's discretion but are unable to vote.</p>	
	Function of the Committee	Delegation of function
1	To advise Council on Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Standing Orders for Contracts.	Committee
2	To ensure that there is a rolling programme of policy and governance reviews in accordance with agreed "review" dates.	Parish Clerk
3	To advise Council on the Constitution and all policy documents not specifically allocated to other standing committees	Committee
Finance		
4	To be responsible for the overall management and control of the finances of the Council	<p>Council to approve banking arrangements Committee for strategic review</p> <p>RFO/Parish Clerk in accordance with Financial Regulations and for operational management</p>
5	To monitor the Council's capital and revenue budgets	Committee/RFO in accordance with Financial Regulations.
6	Approval of variation, overspend, and virement in accordance with financial regulations	Committee, Parish Clerk and RFO as set out in Financial Regulations
7	To authorise payments in accordance with Financial Regulations	Committee, Parish Clerk and RFO as set out in Financial Regulations



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8	Approval of Orders for work, goods or services acceptance of tenders	<p>Council/Committee/Proper Officer/Parish Clerk in accordance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts.</p> <p>Parish Clerk to approve or vary lists of approved contractors subject to Financial Regulations or Standing orders</p>
9	To make recommendations to the Council on Budget and Precept requirements.	<p>Committee</p> <p>RFO/Parish Clerk to prepare draft Budget and Budget Report</p>
10	To advise on the financial implications of proposed new policies or services including potential costs and sources of revenue.	Committee
11	To advise Council on borrowing policy, investment and treasury management	Committee
12	To regularly monitor the performance of all funds invested.	Committee, Parish Clerk/RFO
13	To supervise the Council's insurance arrangements.	<p>Parish Clerk/RFO for renewal and operational matters.</p> <p>Committee for overview, tendering and changes of cover.</p>
14	To supervise the Council's banking arrangements.	<p>RFO/Parish Clerk</p> <p>Authorised signatories to authorise mandate and payments in accordance with Financial Regulations</p>
15	To be responsible for all matters related to the full range of financial and accountancy functions.	<p>Committee for Strategic overview</p> <p>RFO/Parish Clerk for operational management</p>



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16	To consider reports on outstanding debts due to the Council and to undertake recovery or write off.	Committee for aged debt in accordance with Financial regulations. RFO for routine actions to recover
17	Authorisation of investments and debt repayment in accordance with the Council's Policy	Committee
18	To authorise all leasing arrangements for the acquisition of vehicles, plant and equipment within approved budgets	Committee/Parish Clerk in accordance with Financial Regulations
Procurement		
19	To co-ordinate and oversee the Council's Corporate Procurement and advise it on policy.	Committee for strategic overview Parish Clerk for operational management in accordance with Financial Regulations, Standing orders
Information Technology Services		
20	To oversee the use of information and other technology in support of the Council's business and service commitments.	Operational management to Parish Clerk Strategic Overview to Committee and Contracts within approved budget.
21	To approve all security arrangements of the Council in respect of computers and financial issues.	Committee/Parish Clerk/RFO in accordance with Financial Regulations
22	To oversee the implementation and maintenance of the Council's Accessibility and Transparency Policy	Committee for strategic overview Parish Clerk for operational management in accordance with Financial Regulations, Standing orders
Performance and Business Management		
23	Approval and monitoring of Corporate Business Plan	Committee Parish Clerk to determine underlying Action and Project Plans



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24	Approval of Operating Procedures	Committee for initial Financial Procedures Parish Clerk for other procedures and updating financial procedures
25	Approval, design, planning of strategic projects	Committee
26	To seek and maximise the benefits of external funding and have a strategic overview of all funding opportunities and how to better allocate these to the Council's projects	Strategic overview to Committee Operational management to Parish Clerk
Asset Management		
27	To have oversight of assets and the transfers of assets.	Committee
28	Maintenance of the Asset Register	Parish Clerk
29	Corporate landlord management, repair and maintenance. Leasing & licensing of Council land and buildings	Council for acquisition and disposal Strategic overview to Committee Parish Clerk for operational management
Public Buildings		
30	Power to provide and encourage the use of conference facilities, Local Government Act 1972, S144 Power to provide public buildings and halls, Local Government Act 1972, S215 Power to provide and equip community buildings, Local Government Act 1972, s 133	Committee for strategic overview Parish Clerk for operational management
31	Power to provide and equip community centres for use of clubs having athletic, social or recreational objectives, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 S19.	Committee for strategic overview Parish Clerk for operational management
Audit		
32	To maintain and have oversight of Member Audits.	Committee



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		Parish Clerk to support with operating procedures
33	To undertake any actions recommended following Member Audits and to have overview of risk management	Committee (Council if change of policy required). Council to receive external audit report. Parish Clerk/RFO to manage in accordance with Financial Regulations and to undertake all statutory actions to facilitate audits and returns.
34	Final Internal and External Audit Reports	Committee to advise Council on response
Information and Data Protection		
35	Policy on Data Protection, Access to Information, Freedom of Information and Human Rights.	Advice to Council
36	Decisions on issues relating to Data Protection and Human Rights.	Strategic overview and monitoring to Committee Parish Clerk to renew Data Protection Registration, make amendments as necessary, respond to routine requests for information and matters raised by the Information Commissioner or Data Protection Officer. Parish Clerk to update Privacy notices of all categories.
37	Decisions on issues relating to Access to Information and Freedom of Information.	Committee for strategic overview Parish Clerk to ensure Publication Scheme and Information Guide up to date, all requests for information are dealt with according to legislation and policy and respond to matters raised by the Information Commissioner.
Ethical Framework		



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38	To monitor and control the Council's Code of Conduct and related protocols	Strategic overview and monitoring to Committee. For Officer delegation see Council ToR
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NB. Any actions delegated to the Parish Clerk/Proper Officer may in his/her absence be undertaken by the nominated deputy or deputies, if the matter cannot wait until the Parish Clerk's return.

Shavington-cum-Gresty Council
Finance & Strategy Committee meeting
Main Road,
Shavington, Crewe
CW2 5DP



MINUTES of the meeting held on **Wednesday 28 February 2024**

In attendance: Cllrs Ferguson, K Gibbs, R Jones, S Jones

ScG FSC/23/04/1	To receive apologies for absence
	Apologies were received from Cllr B Gibbs due to work commitments.
ScG FSC/23/04/2	To note declarations of Members' interests
	No interest was declared.
ScG FSC/23/04/3	To confirm and sign the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 29 November 2023
	RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous meeting are approved and signed as an accurate record.
ScG FSC/23/04/4	Public participation <i>A period not exceeding 20 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments</i>
	No comment was raised.
ScG FSC/23/04/5	To review the year-to-date expenditure for the Council as a whole and to consider Month-End reconciliation statements
	Members NOTED the Parish Council YTD financial position. It was NOTED that the month-end reconciliations statements ending 30

	November 2023, 31 December 2023 and 31 January 2024 were checked and signed by Cllrs S Jones, Ferguson and K Gibbs.
ScG FSC/23/04/6	To review the forecast position of the council at 31 March 2024 and to consider any necessary corrective actions
	Councillors NOTED the update.
ScG FSC/23/04/7	To receive and consider the latest version of Parish Council Fixed Asset register
	Councillors NOTED the report. RESOLVED: that the latest version of the Parish Council Fixed Asset Register is approved and recommended to Full Council.
ScG FSC/23/04/8	To receive and consider the latest version of the Parish Council Financial Risk Assessment
	Councillors NOTED the report. RESOLVED: that the latest version of the Parish Council Financial Risk Assessment is approved and recommended to Full Council
ScG FSC/23/04/9	To receive and consider the latest version of the Council Direct Debit list and to consider making a recommendation to the Full Council to approve the use of direct debit payments as per section 6.5 of the Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Financial Regulations
	Councillors NOTED the report. RESOLVED: that the updated version of the Council's Direct Debit list is approved, and that a recommendation is made to Full Council to approve the use of variable direct debit system as per s.6.5 of the Council's Financial Regulations
ScG FSC/23/04/10	To receive and consider the DRAFT following policy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Councillor-Officer protocol b. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Training and Development Policy for Councillors and Staff c. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Publication Scheme Information Guide d. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Pensions Discretions Policy

	<p>Councillors NOTED the report.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the following policies are recommend to Full Council for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Training and Development Policy for Councillors and Staff b. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Publication Scheme Information Guide c. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Pensions Discretions Policy <p>RESOLVED: that the Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Councillor-Officer protocol is recommend to Full Council for approval, subject to the following amendment under the paragraph Roles of Councillors and Officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "In any instance where behaviour deviates from the standards outlined in the Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Councillor Code of Conduct or the Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Councillor-Officer Protocol, escalates in tone, or causes someone to feel threatened or uncomfortable, the interaction should be promptly terminated and reported to the line manager." Should be added under s. "Roles of Councillors and Officers" • "To represent the council externally if authorised by the Parish Council" should replace the sentence "To represent the council externally;"
<p>ScG FSC/23/04/11</p>	<p>To receive and consider an update on the Weston Ecological Mitigation Land Acquisition Project</p>
	<p>The Clerk briefed Councillors on the project.</p> <p>Councillors NOTED the update.</p>
<p>ScG FSC/23/04/12</p>	<p>To receive and consider an update on the Council Strategy Review project</p>
	<p>The Clerk briefed Councillors on the project.</p> <p>Councillors NOTED the update.</p>

Meeting Closed at 2011 hrs

Chair: Cllr R Jones

Clerk: S Garnero

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

Community & Engagement Co

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
20	Newsletter: design, printing and				14,600.00	2,446.64	12,153.36	12,153.36 (83%)
21	General Parish Council design a				3,600.00		3,600.00	3,600.00 (100%)
22	PC/VH subscription and adv				1,600.00	97.20	1,502.80	1,502.80 (93%)
24	Christmas Carol				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00 (100%)
25	Remembrance Service				4,100.00		4,100.00	4,100.00 (100%)
26	Community events				2,500.00		2,500.00	2,500.00 (100%)
43	PPS/PRS				300.00		300.00	300.00 (100%)
49	Micro & Small Grant Scheme				2,500.00	250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00 (90%)
61	Civic events				2,600.00	2,034.35	565.65	565.65 (21%)
70	Parish Map Framework				800.00		800.00	800.00 (100%)
73	Community Event Marketing and				900.00		900.00	900.00 (100%)
SUB TOTAL					35,000.00	4,828.19	30,171.81	30,171.81 (86%)

Environment & Recreation Co

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
27	Ground Maintenance - General a				500.00	19.02	480.98	480.98 (96%)
28	Ground Maintenance- supplier				17,000.00		17,000.00	17,000.00 (100%)
29	Vine Tree Play area - maintenanc				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00 (100%)
30	Vine Tree Play Area - Inspection				400.00		400.00	400.00 (100%)
31	Allotment fee	700.00	125.00	-575.00				-575.00 (-82%)
32	Allotment maintenance cost				700.00	10.80	689.20	689.20 (98%)
52	Defibrillator and kiosk				300.00		300.00	300.00 (100%)
54	CIL - Community Infrastructure L							(N/A)
74	Ground Maintenance Contingenc				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00 (100%)
SUB TOTAL		700.00	125.00	-575.00	20,900.00	29.82	20,870.18	20,295.18 (93%)

External Grants Fund

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
78	SPF E6 Cultural Activity Grant					2,581.76	-2,581.76	-2,581.76 (N/A)
79	Flourish Fund		5,000.00	5,000.00		1,382.92	-1,382.92	3,617.08 (N/A)
80	Improved, Greener, Community							(N/A)
81	IMPACT (budget 2023/24)					803.62	-803.62	-803.62 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL			5,000.00	5,000.00		4,768.30	-4,768.30	231.70 (N/A)

Finance & Strategy Committee

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
3	Staff Expenses				150.00		150.00	150.00 (100%)
4	Stationary				500.00	156.36	343.64	343.64 (68%)
5	Accountancy software				835.00		835.00	835.00 (100%)

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

6	ICT equipment			1,500.00	55.82	1,444.18	1,444.18 (96%)		
9	Audit Fees			1,000.00	583.00	417.00	417.00 (41%)		
10	Insurance			4,000.00		4,000.00	4,000.00 (100%)		
11	Legal and professional fee			2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00 (100%)		
12	Subscription (adobe/office/Chalc			4,050.00	1,568.30	2,481.70	2,481.70 (61%)		
13	Telephone and WiFi			950.00	78.83	871.17	871.17 (91%)		
14	Website subscription			2,400.00	525.00	1,875.00	1,875.00 (78%)		
15	Website transparency			500.00		500.00	500.00 (100%)		
16	Misc/Expenses			1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00 (100%)		
17	Precept	116,127.00	116,127.00				116,127.00 (N/A)		
18	VAT reclaim						(N/A)		
19	Other income						(N/A)		
53	Ecological Mitigation Land acqui:			7,000.00		7,000.00	7,000.00 (100%)		
59	Office costs			6,600.00		6,600.00	6,600.00 (100%)		
67	IT support			300.00		300.00	300.00 (100%)		
SUB TOTAL				116,127.00	116,127.00	32,785.00	2,967.31	29,817.69	145,944.69 (445%)

Parish Council Project

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
51	Community Support				41,789.40		41,789.40	41,789.40 (100%)
68	Sponsorship Main Road Car pari				4,837.50		4,837.50	4,837.50 (100%)
72	Sign restoration project				3,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00 (100%)
75	Rolling Capital Fund (Strategy)				20,000.00		20,000.00	20,000.00 (100%)
SUB TOTAL						69,626.90	69,626.90	69,626.90 (100%)

Staffing Committee

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
1	Staff Salary				86,100.00	22,003.16	64,096.84	64,096.84 (74%)
2	Payroll Service				800.00	224.50	575.50	575.50 (71%)
7	Staff Training				1,000.00	206.00	794.00	794.00 (79%)
8	Members Training				400.00		400.00	400.00 (100%)
76	Communication officer				20,000.00		20,000.00	20,000.00 (100%)
SUB TOTAL						108,300.00	22,433.66	85,866.34 (79%)

Village Hall Committee

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
33	Suppliers				300.00		300.00	300.00 (100%)
34	Cleaning Service				5,400.00	1,174.70	4,225.30	4,225.30 (78%)
35	Gas supply				4,800.00	160.48	4,639.52	4,639.52 (96%)
36	Power supply				1,600.00	137.00	1,463.00	1,463.00 (91%)
37	Fire equipment				330.00		330.00	330.00 (100%)
39	Online booking system				370.00		370.00	370.00 (100%)
40	Hygine service				700.00	578.51	121.49	121.49 (17%)
41	Water supply				3,000.00	483.88	2,516.12	2,516.12 (83%)

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

42 Waste collection				1,000.00	89.98	910.02	910.02 (91%)
47 General Maintenance				1,500.00	375.00	1,125.00	1,125.00 (75%)
48 Hall hire	15,000.00	3,701.50	-11,298.50				-11,298.50 (-75%)
60 Office costs income	6,600.00		-6,600.00				-6,600.00 (-100%)
71 Roof maintenance				3,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00 (100%)
77 Fire emergency panel + smoke c				2,500.00	1,972.00	528.00	528.00 (21%)
SUB TOTAL	21,600.00	3,701.50	-17,898.50	24,500.00	4,971.55	19,528.45	1,629.95 (3%)

Summary

NET TOTAL	22,300.00	124,953.50	102,653.50	291,111.90	39,998.83	251,113.07	353,766.57 (112%)
V.A.T.		2,874.87			1,849.11		
GROSS TOTAL		127,828.37			41,847.94		



Report Statement

Meeting: Finance & Strategy Committee

Report Purpose: To provide a budget setting schedule for 2025/26 Council Budget

Version Control: v1

Author: Clerk

1. Report Summary

As an autonomous local council, Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council has the power to set budget and levy precept to fund services and provision of activities within its powers and duties. Budget Setting is a key process in ensuring financial security, service delivery clarity and transparency.

2. Background

The council must notify Cheshire East Council (CEC) as the collecting authority in early January of its precept requirement for the forthcoming year. To achieve this, budget must be set and calculated in good time to ensure reporting is achieved to deadline.

It is essential that council has the opportunity to review the budget in context of current year projected spend, in relation to its ambitions and to reflect anticipated service delivery and developments.

3. Position

Every committee will be asked to review the budget as it pertains to their delegated work and provide input for the budget-setting process.

The Finance and Strategy Committee will maintain oversight of each revised version, with the most up-to-date version being shared at the Parish Council meetings in October and November.

A council meeting will be held in December to consider and approve the budget for 2025/26, allowing ample time to complete the precept return paperwork for CEC.

Draft Budget Review and Recommendation Schedule

The budget-setting process will offer multiple opportunities for members, committees, and the council to build consensus on the forthcoming year's budget. This approach will also help members develop an in-depth understanding of the council's spending plans and gain confidence in the final budget approval for 2025/26.

a. **09.10.2024:** Draft budget reviewed by the Environment & Recreation Committee as it relates to their remit, for onward recommendation.



- b. **16.10.2024:** Draft budget reviewed by the Staffing Committee as it relates to their remit, for onward recommendation.
- c. **11.09.2024:** Draft budget reviewed by the Community and Engagement Committee as it relates to their remit, for onward recommendation.
- d. **Extra meeting TBD:** Draft budget reviewed by the Village Hall Committee as it relates to their remit, for onward recommendation.
- e. **25.09.2024:** Draft budget reviewed by the Finance & Strategy Committee.
- f. **02.10.2024:** Draft budget circulated to members of the Parish Council for input and revision.
- g. **13.11.2024:** Draft budget discussed at the Finance & Strategy Committee for its final recommendation to the Council.
- h. **TBC:** Councillors' informal session to review the draft budget recommended by the Finance & Strategy Committee.
- i. **04.12.2024:** Parish Council considers and approves the budget for 2025/26.

4. Consideration Sought

The Clerk recommends that the council adopts a clear budget-setting schedule. This schedule will empower and encourage members, committees, and the council to shape the future spending profile effectively.

The proposed schedule aims to maintain a consistent focus on budget setting within the council and committee meeting calendar.

Members are asked to note this report and approve the recommendation for the full council to adopt the budget-setting schedule for 2025/26.



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Report Statement

Meeting:	Finance and Strategy Committee
Report Purpose:	To provide Members with a set of Policies to consider or review
Version Control:	v1
Author:	Clerk

1. Report Summary

The report aims to provide Councillors with a set of policies to consider or review

2. Background

As per the Financial RA, the Parish Council is required to regularly review its policies and governance to ensure its internal arrangements are both fit for purpose and compliant with the law.

The approved delivery plan of the council also mandates a review plan for the council's policies. Unless otherwise agreed, all policies will be reviewed biennially to ensure they remain compliant with regulations and are fit for purpose.

3. Position

Members are asked to consider the following policies:

- a. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Fast Fail Policy (new)
- b. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Performance Management Policy (new)
- c. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Quality Policy (new)
- d. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Allotment Policy (revisions in yellow)
- e. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Bench Sponsorship Policy (revisions in yellow)
- f. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Child Protection and Safeguarding (revisions in yellow)
- g. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Complaint Policy (revisions in yellow)
- h. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Dignity at Work (revisions in yellow)
- i. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Document Retention Policy (revisions in yellow)
- j. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Environment and Sustainability Policy ((revisions in yellow)
- k. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Fixed Asset and Content Management Policy ((revisions in yellow)
- l. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Granting of Honorary Freedom of the Parish ((revisions in yellow)



- m. Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Training and Developing Policy ((revisions in yellow))

4. Governance

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Financial Regulations
Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Standing Orders
Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Strategy 2024-29
Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Delivery Plan 2024-25

5. Financial Impact

Nil

6. Resource Impact

Clerk's time

7. Conclusions

Members are asked to note the report and:

- a. Approve all policies and recommend those for approval by the full Parish Council.
- b. Approve all policies with some amendments and recommend those for approval by the full Parish Council.
- c. Not approve policies.

8. Consideration Sought

That all policies are approved and recommended to Parish Council



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Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council
Main Rd, Shavington, Crewe, CW2 5DP

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Fails Fast Policy



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Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council
Main Rd, Shavington, Crewe, CW2 5DP

Objective

To provide a clear and concise procedure for identifying and addressing issues promptly, ensuring swift course correction and maintaining high-quality performance in all Council activities.

1. Monitoring and Reporting

1.1 Regular Check-ins

- The Clerk (or Community Manager) will arrange regular check-ins with the Chair of the Council and relevant committee Chairs.
- These check-ins will review ongoing projects, identify issues, and assess challenges.

1.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- The Clerk (or Community Manager) will establish KPIs for any new projects and activities, including milestones and quality metrics.
- The Clerk will track these KPIs and report any deviations or risks during check-ins.

2. Rapid Response Protocols

2.1 Immediate Escalation

- The Clerk must escalate significant issues to the Chair of the relevant committee or the Chair of the Council as soon as practicable.
- In such circumstances, the Clerk, the Chair of the Council, and the relevant committee Chair will be delegated by the Council to make quick decisions to mitigate risks and ensure continuity.
- The Clerk will document and share these plans with all Councillors and report any changes at the next Council meeting.
- A decision log will be maintained with all decisions made, including rationale and expected outcomes.
- The Clerk will keep this log updated and accessible.

3. Project/Event Termination Protocol



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3.1 Termination Approval

- Termination of any project or event must be approved by the full Council or the relevant committee.
- The Clerk will present a proposal, including issues, resolutions attempted, and justification for termination.

4. Continuous Improvement

4.1 Lessons Learned Sessions

- Conduct regular sessions to review what went wrong, what was done to fix it, and what can be improved.
- The Clerk (or the Community Manger) will organise these sessions and document the outcomes.

4.2 Best Practices Sharing

- Document and share best practices across the council to enhance overall performance.
- The Clerk will compile and distribute best practice guides.



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SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Main Rd, Shavington, Crewe, CW2 5DP

INTRODUCTION

We recognise that managing the performance of Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is critical to its success. It enables members and officers to assess whether the organisation is achieving what it set out to do, delivering value for money, and making life better for its citizens. Others may also require this information – including regulatory bodies, local partners, local residents, and voluntary and community groups.

Performance management is about the practical ways of keeping councillors and others informed about our progress. We will gradually improve our performance management until we are fully compliant with this policy.

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council's approach to performance management is intended to provide an overview of both the systems and the culture by which the organisation manages, monitors, and improves its performance and achieves its objectives. In other words, it should be able to tell us not just how well our services are performing against set targets, but the reasons why performance is at the level identified.

Our performance management approach will be concerned with measuring and monitoring four basic aspects of service delivery:

- **Inputs:** the resources used in delivering a service, e.g., the financial and staffing costs of delivering a service.
- **Processes:** the approach that the organisation takes in using its available financial and staffing resources to deliver a service.
- **Outputs:** the services that are delivered as a result of the inputs and processes of the council.
- **Outcomes:** the improvements in the quality of life experienced by those in the community as a result of the outputs delivered by the council.

We recognise that we will need robust performance indicators. These should be relevant, clearly defined, easy to understand and use, and cost-effective to collect. In addition, the indicators should be SMART, i.e., specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-related. We will strive to gradually improve our indicators. We will develop these indicators over time for all of our services.

Monitoring our Delivery Plan

The Council Delivery Plan for 2024-25 lists many actions that we need to undertake in order to achieve our strategic aims. Monitoring progress against this plan will form the core of our performance management.



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Progress will be updated and the Parish Clerk will report them to Councillors on a regular basis.

Financial Reporting

Each committee and full Council will be able to review progress and financial reports in their area of responsibility. These reports will be available on the website as part of each agenda papers.

Monitoring of Resolutions

All resolutions of full council or committees under delegated authority are set out in formal public minutes.

Specific reports will additionally be made to committees/council updating them in more detail on progress on specific matters within their Terms of Reference.

Officer Delegated Decisions

The Council believes that efficiency is best served by empowering its officers as long as accountability measures are in place.

Decisions made by officers under delegation (either through the formal Delegation Scheme or Finance Regulations) will be reported to each Council meeting as required by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. These are not routine operational and administrative decisions such as giving instructions to an officer or paying an invoice approved by council but would include urgent action taken after consultation with the members, such as responding to a planning application or carrying out urgent work. In other words, decisions which would have been made by Council or committee had the delegation not been in place.

This acts to ensure members that delegated powers are being used correctly.

Process Monitoring

In the interests of continuous improvement, the Council encourages staff to regularly review processes and procedures. These are available to all officers and public on the council website.

Routine auditing of any Integrated Management (Quality) System or procedures will be undertaken by the Parish Clerk.



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SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL QUALITY POLICY

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PURPOSE

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council believes that its commitment to continuous improvement will guarantee the success of the Council by fulfilling its strategic objectives and the needs and expectations of its residents, communities, businesses, clients, partners, and other stakeholders.

SCOPE

The Council's policy on Quality supports the Mission, Vision, strategic priorities, and objectives contained in its Parish Council Strategy, which can also be viewed on our website. It relates to all activities and processes developed and operating for quality control and management which have been underlined by the Council in a range of linked policies. It will also help ensure the Council operates in compliance with its Core Values, legal requirements, and best practice.

POLICY

The Council is committed to seeking Quality in all that we do by:

- Developing and maintaining activities that are systematically planned, implemented, and reviewed.
- Increasing the Council's capacity by developing both Members and Staff and using external expertise where necessary.
- Investing in technology and equipment which will increase efficiency.
- Working in partnership where it can add value.
- Building successful relationships with residents and communities by ascertaining their respective needs and considering their wishes.
- Developing and achieving our commitments for quality, cost, and service.

The Council will seek recognition for its policy by:

- Striving for excellent internal and external audit outcomes.
- Seeking to gain and then retain successive levels of the Local Council Awards Scheme.
- Remaining eligible to use the Power of General Competence.
- Operating through integrated quality management principles which incorporate continual assessment and can be externally assessed if appropriate.



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- Publicly reporting on our progress and achievements.
- Undertaking satisfaction surveys on our services.
- Assessing business, financial, and safety risks and managing them to an acceptable level.
- Preparing and regularly reviewing a Delivery Plan.

Responsibilities

The Councillors and Officers are responsible for quality control through the policies and procedures, seeking improvement by constant review. Suppliers and sub-contractors will be encouraged to co-operate. The Council is committed to achieving customer satisfaction by the use of quality procedures.

Alignment with Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Strategy

This Quality Policy aligns with our Parish Council Strategy by supporting the strategic themes of building a united community, protecting our environment, celebrating our heritage, making the Council work better, and improving health and wellbeing. Our approach ensures that our actions are in harmony with our vision, mission, and core values, fostering a collaborative and transparent relationship with the community.

By adhering to this Quality Policy, Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council aims to provide exemplary service, foster community engagement, and continuously improve in all areas of our operations.



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Allotment Policy

Adopted by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council on 7 July 2021
Amended by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council on 2 February 2022
Amended by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council on 5 October 2022

1. Definitions and Interpretations

“The Council” means Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council, and includes any committee of the Council, or any allotment officer appointed by the Council under the Allotments Acts 1908 and 1950.

“Allotments” means an area of land set aside by the Council, and protected by statute, for the purposes of leisure and of growing vegetables, flowers and fruit.

“Allotment Tenant” means any person, 18 years or older and residing within the Council area of Shavington-cum-Gresty, who has entered into an Allotment Tenancy agreement for an allotment plot situated within one of the Council’s allotment sites.

“Allotment Tenancy” means the tenancy agreement incorporating these Allotment Rules and any subsequent amendments.

“Allotment Plot” means a defined area of land, within each allotment site, that is available to rent for an annual sum.

“Allotment Rent” means the annual charge for renting an allotment plot for 12 months, from the 1st April to 31st March. This charge is reviewed annually by the Council.

“Minimum Charge” means the minimum invoice amount that will be issued by the Council.

“Cultivation” means actively growing plants during the main growing season on an area of no less than 75% of the total plot area.

“Non-Cultivation Notice” means a formal notice, sent in accordance with section 7 of these Rules, calling on the tenant to commence cultivation or face further action leading to the termination of the allotment tenancy agreement.

1.1 The Council reserves its right to change the Allotment Rules and procedures from time-to-time, but will make such changes known to tenants in advance in an appropriate manner (e.g. through the Council’s website, on-site noticeboard and by letter). The Council will supply a copy of any updated rules, free of charge to any person who requests a copy. Tenants will be expected to comply with any rule changes, following the consultation and notification process.



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1.2 Grandfather rights shall apply up to the date in which this policy has been approved by Council.

2. Eligibility Criteria and Allocation of Plots

2.1 To be eligible for an allotment a person must be 18 years or older and reside within the boundary of Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council (section 23(1) of the Allotments Act 1908).

2.2 The Council will supply information regarding available plots, on a site by site basis, and provide site maps to allow applicants to visit and inspect potential plots before making a decision to confirm their interest in a particular plot. The Council may also have informal arrangements with a number of existing allotment tenants and site representatives who have agreed to show potentially interested tenants around their site.

2.3 When someone confirms their wish to commence a new tenancy, having identified a vacant plot and clarified that they are eligible, then they will be asked to sign a Tenancy Agreement before being allowed to start work on the plot.

2.4 All allotment plots are let on an "as seen" basis. The Council does not routinely carry out improvement or clearance works for new tenants.

2.5 The Council operates a Waiting List. When a plot becomes vacant the plot is offered to the person on the top of the waiting list. People are given two weeks to respond to this offer and if no response is received within this time, their name is removed from the waiting list. If they do not wish to, or cannot, take that plot at that point in time, the Council will allow them to defer whilst staying at the top of the list until another plot becomes available. In this instance, the plot will be offered to the next person on the waiting list. Where, for example two plots become available at the same time, the Council will write to the first two people on the list regarding the two vacant plots and these will be allocated on a "first come first served basis".

2.6 The Tenant shall not sublet or assign or part with possession of any part of their allotment plot.

2.7 In exceptional circumstance the tenancy of the plot might be transferred to a close family member by Council's resolution, provided that at the time of the application supporting evidence are supplied to justify the request. The decision of the Council will be final.

3. Allotment Tenant Responsibilities

3.1 The tenant shall keep their allotment plot in a good state of cultivation, and not allow weeds and grass to seed or to cause a nuisance to neighbouring plots.

3.2 Tenants must only use their allotment plot for their own personal use, and must not use their plot to carry out any business or grow produce for sale.

3.3 The tenant shall not deposit, or permit to be deposited, any refuse, rubbish or extraneous matter on their plot, or any other part of the allotment site. All arising's from the permitted allotment activities shall either be composted on the plot or burnt as outlined1.

3.4 Bonfires are not permitted.

3.5 The tenant shall not cause or permit any nuisance or annoyance to any other tenant, or obstruct or encroach onto other plots, paths and roadways.



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3.6 The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council, cut or prune any trees growing in a communal allotment area, or in a boundary hedge.

3.7 The tenant shall not take, sell or carry away any minerals, gravel or clay from the allotment site.

3.8 The tenant shall maintain any shrubs, conifers or trees to a maximum of three metres in height and within the boundaries of the allotment plot. Fruit trees such as apples, pears and plums, the tenant must use dwarfing rootstock.

3.9 The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council, plant a hedge or install any type of fence around or on their plot.

3.10 Where a plot adjoins a boundary hedge or ditch, the tenant shall be responsible for keeping the side of the hedge properly trimmed, and the ditches kept cleared.

3.11 The tenant is permitted to bring a dog onto the allotment site, however, for health and safety reasons any such dog must be kept on a lead at all times. All faeces must be removed immediately and disposed of appropriately. Dogs must not be allowed to foul neighbouring plots.

3.12 The tenant shall not keep, or allow other persons to keep animals or livestock (except hens, but not cockerels, or rabbits) on the allotment site. Although it is lawful to keep hens or rabbits on an allotment, the Council requests that it is advised in writing when this is intended and the tenant will need to always demonstrate that this can be done in a way that is not detrimental to the health of the hens or rabbits, and will not cause a nuisance to other allotment tenants (section 12 of the Allotments Act 1950). Any structure required to keep hens or rabbits on a plot is subject to the provisions of section 5 of these Rules.

3.13 The Council encourages tenants to keep bees, in order to promote biodiversity. However, the tenant will need to notify the Council prior to commencing to keep bees or beehives on any Allotment Site. The tenant will need to demonstrate that they are properly experienced, and that bee keeping will not cause a nuisance to other allotment tenants.

3.14 Tenants are permitted to use the main water system only while their plot is being attended

Disputes and Tenant behaviour

3.15.1 Any disputes between tenants should be referred to the Council and the decision of the Parish Clerk will be binding on all tenants involved in the dispute.

3.15.2 Tenants shall not at any time use offensive language or offensive/aggressive behaviour towards other tenants, Council Officers or members of the public.

3.15.3 The Council operates a corporate complaints procedure, and details can be obtained from the Council.

3.16 Each tenant is responsible for providing and maintaining a marker that clearly identifies their plot number.

3.17 Tenants who use pesticides are legally responsible for using these chemicals correctly and effectively. Tenants are advised to refer to the Health and Safety Executive guidance available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pesticides/user-areas/garden-home.htm>



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3.18 When using any pesticides or fertilisers on their plot, the tenant must:

- only use domestic grade pesticides;
- take all reasonable care to ensure that other plots, rivers and waterways, grass roads and paths, hedges and trees are not adversely affected, and must make good or replant as necessary should any damage occur;
- select and use pesticides, whether for spraying, seed dressing or for any other purpose whatsoever, so that there is minimal risk to members of the public, birds and other wildlife, with the exception of vermin or pests;
- comply at all times with current pesticide regulations. Tenants are advised to refer to the Health and Safety Executive database, available at <https://secure.pesticides.gov.uk/garden/prodsearch.asp>, to ensure that specific products may be lawfully used.

3.19 Tenants are prohibited from storing pesticides or other potentially toxic chemicals on allotment plots or in allotment sheds.

3.20 The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council, install ponds on their plot(s). Requests to install ponds on allotment plot(s), for example for encouraging the habitation of frogs, will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Factors that will be considered by the Council when dealing with such requests are as follows:

- Size of allotment plot;
- Proposed size of pond;
- Proposed location of pond on allotment plot; and
- Proximity to communal paths and roadways.

3.21 The Tenant is required when entering or leaving the allotment site to lock the gates behind them at all times.

3.22 The Council accepts no liability for any loss, damage or injury to tenants, guests or any other person, or their belongings occurring on allotment sites.

3.23 It is recommended that tenants ensure that they have adequate public liability insurance cover.

3.24 Tenants are not permitted to take, remove or borrow crops, equipment or supplies that belong to other persons without prior consent of the owner thereof.

3.25 Tenants are not permitted to keep any vehicle(s) at the Allotment Site, or obstruct roadways.

4. Council Responsibilities

4.1 The Council will provide public access to staff during normal working hours. The public and allotment tenants can also contact the Council via e-mail and via the Council's website, www.shavingtononline.co.uk

4.2 Tenants are advised to consider the National Allotments Association guidance available at <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/join-us/allotmenteeers-liability-insurance/>. Tenants may also discuss public liability cover with their relevant allotment site representative.

4.3 The Council will encourage and work with allotment associations, and will endeavour to attend meetings when requested.



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4.4 The Council will promote best practice on all its allotment sites, and encourage sustainable environmental management. It will seek to make sites accessible and useable for all allotment tenants.

4.5 The Council will assist security by providing boundary fences and/or hedges, with lockable access gates at every site. Every tenant will be provided with an access gate key or code for their personal use only. In the interests of maintaining security tenants are asked not to make copies for others to use. Where keys are provided by the Council they remain the property of the Council, and together with any additional copies must be returned to the Council when a tenancy comes to an end.

4.6 The Council will arrange for ground maintenance operations to be carried out on every site through its Grounds Maintenance contract. This will include grass cutting on all the roads, (but not the small paths between plots), and boundary hedge cutting

5. Buildings and Structures

5.1 The Council, as landlord, will give permission for tenants to erect one shed and one greenhouse on every plot with neither to be larger than 1.9 metres by 2.6 metres (approximately 6 feet by 8 feet), and the apex of the roof to be no higher than 2.5 metres. Written permission from the Council is required to erect any further provision or structure larger than this size, such as polytunnels. Such larger structures may also require planning permission.

5.2 The Council's consent is subject to tenants obtaining any appropriate planning permission and compliance with any applicable building control regulations. The tenant is liable for any costs in relation to compliance with planning and building control regulations. Any liability associated with failure to comply with current planning and building control regulations is the responsibility of the tenant.

5.3 All buildings and structures on allotments must only be used in connection with the use and management of allotment plots.

5.4 All such buildings should be maintained in a good state of repair and condition. If the Council is not satisfied with the state of repair it may require the tenant to remove the shed, green house or structure forthwith.

5.5 Buildings and structures must not be installed on a permanent base, and must be at least 8 metres away from any riverbank and at least 2 metres from the site boundary.

5.6 When a tenant ceases their tenancy on a plot, they are expected to remove their buildings and structures from the allotment site before their plot is reallocated, unless otherwise agreed with the Council. Such buildings, structures or belongings shall be removed by the end of one month from the end of the tenancy, unless otherwise agreed with the Council. Following the end of this period, any remaining structures on the plot will revert to the ownership of the Council and will subsequently be offered for use by the new tenant.

5.7 Tenants must not remove, demolish or alter in any way sheds or structures provided by the Council and the Council is not liable for loss or damage to any contents stored in sheds and structures owned by the Council.

5.8 Tenants are advised not to store valuable equipment and materials in their sheds or structures, and should not store petrol, oil, lubricants or other inflammable materials.



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5.9 Tenants are permitted to install compost bins and structures intended for such purpose. Tenants are also permitted to erect fruit cages and support structures for soft fruit and fruit trees. Barbed wire is not permitted on any part of the allotment site.

6. Site Management

6.1 The Council will arrange for regular site inspections, to ensure that each site is being properly maintained and used. The Council reserves the right to access any plot or structure in order to carry out these inspections.

6.2 The site inspections will include checking on the performance of the Council's Grounds Maintenance contractor, the cultivation of plots, the condition of site boundaries and identifying any other problems that the Council needs to resolve. It is also an opportunity for Council officers to meet allotment tenants, and to receive feedback.

6.3 Given the high demand for allotment plots the Council wishes to avoid plots being left uncultivated for lengthy periods, especially during the main growing season. However, the Council recognises that cultivation practices can vary during the seasons, and has prepared the following definition to help tenants understand what the Council is expecting:

- A minimum area equal to 75% of the total plot should be under cultivation and in active use during the main growing season (March to September).
- Tenants will ensure that areas of uncultivated ground do not become overgrown to an extent that it will become inconvenient to other or future tenants.
- Tenants are permitted to cover an area of their plot with a cover to inhibit the growth of weeds. Rubber backed carpet is, however, not permitted for this purpose.
- The Council will accept that space can be taken up by raised borders and internal paths, provided the minimum area is under cultivation.
- Fruit trees are allowed (see section 3.8), but it is not acceptable to turn a plot into a fruit orchard, with fruit trees planted on grass exceeding an area equal to 20% of the total plot area. The minimum cultivation rule is still expected.
- The Council will allow new tenants 3 months to cultivate 25% of the plot and 6 months to reach the 75% cultivation requirement. If additional time is required tenants must contact the Council to request a further grace period.

6.4 Any site problems should be reported to the Council as soon as possible.

7. Termination of Allotment Tenancy Agreements

7.1 Tenants will have many reasons to cancel their tenancy agreement, but the Council requires confirmation of the cancellation in writing, giving a minimum of one month's notice. The Council will not refund any rent paid in that year, when the cancellation is at the request of the tenant.

7.2 The Council has the right to terminate the tenancy agreement if the Tenant is found to be in breached of any of these Allotment Rules.

7.3 The Council further reserves the right to terminate an allotment tenancy via one month's written Notice-To-Quit pursuant to section 30(2) of the Allotment Act 1908 if:

- Allotment rent is in arrears for 40 days or more (whether formally demanded or not); or
- Allotment tenancy agreement is in arrears for 40 days or more; or



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- It appears to the Council that the Tenant of an allotment, resident more than one mile outside the Village for which the allotments are provided.

7.4 Where the Council issues a Notice-to-Quit to a named tenant and there is a designated second tenant, the second tenant will only be eligible to take on the plot in exceptional circumstances.

7.5 The Council will initially write to any tenant, where it is considering cancelling a tenancy agreement, explaining the reasons for its concern and asking the tenant for an explanation. Sometimes a plot is not being cultivated due to illness, and the Council will take this into account, and not be unreasonable. A written Notice-To-Quit will only be issued after all reasonable efforts to resolve the issue have been unsuccessful.

- Where the Council considers a plot not to be actively under Cultivation, the Council will send the Tenant a Non-Cultivation Notice requiring the Tenant to commence cultivation of the plot, or if outside the growth period prepare the ground for cultivation, within 28 days;
- If the Council considers that the plot is still not actively under Cultivation, or if outside the growth period the ground has not been prepared for cultivation, the Council may issue a Notice-To-Quit. This notice will formally terminate the tenancy agreement if no further action is taken within 28 days of the date of the notice.

7.6 The Council may be required to cancel or temporarily suspend some tenancy agreements, where the land is required or appropriated under statutory provision, or for purposes for providing new services such as roads or sewers, building, mining or any other industrial purpose. In such unusual circumstances the Council shall give tenants 3 months' notice in writing pursuant to section 1 of the Allotments Act 1922. In all other circumstances the Council shall give tenants 12 months written Notice-To-Quit expiring before 6 April or after 29 September in any year.

7.7 In the event of the death of an allotment plot holder the Parish Council shall be notified, and the tenancy of an allotment plot shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing, terminate at the end of the yearly agreement.

8. Charges

8.1 In April (or soon after) each year tenants will be sent an invoice in advance for allotment rent covering the forthcoming year (1 April to 31 March). New tenants starting during this year will initially be sent a reduced invoice, covering the period from their start date until 31 March. After that they will receive the annual invoice in March.

8.2 The Council reviews its allotment charges on an annual basis, as part of its budget setting process, and tenants are then written to in March, giving them at least 6 months' notice of the introduction of any new allotment charges.

8.3 A reduced Allotment Rent is offered to tenants who are in receipt of an income-based benefit and/or state pension.

9. Change of Address and Notices

9.1 Tenants should immediately inform the Council, in writing, of any changes in their contact details.

9.2 Notices to be served by the Council on the tenant may be:



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- Sent to the Tenant's last known address in the Tenancy agreement (or notified to the Council under these Rules) by first or second class post, registered letter, recorded delivery or hand delivered; or
- Sent via email; or
- Served on the Tenant personally; or
- Left in a prominent place on the Allotment plot.

9.3 Notices served under sub-paragraph a) above will be treated as properly served even if not received as a notice sent by post is presumed (subject to the contrary being proved) to have been received when the letter would ordinarily be delivered in ordinary course of post (section 7 of the Interpretation Act 1978).

10. Personal data

10.1 The Council will treat the personal data of Tenants in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Further information is available in the Council's privacy notice (please refer to Shavington-cum-Gresty Allotments Privacy Policy).

If you have any queries about these Rules please contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@shavingtononline.co.uk or [01270 421125](tel:01270421125)



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BENCH SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT

Approved 1 December 2021

Please note, the Commemorative Bench Scheme at Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is subject to the following conditions. Please read the following carefully and sign your agreement below

1. Bench sponsorship is for a period of 10 years from the day payment is received either for the refurbishment of an existing bench, or provision of a new bench. The estimated lifespan of commemorative benches is 10 years, but as benches are kept outside this cannot be guaranteed. If after 10 years a commemorative bench is deemed to be in a good state of repair, it may remain in position at the discretion of the Parish Council until it becomes beyond repair when it will be removed from the position. Any plaques will be removed and returned to Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council who will contact the sponsor to enquire if they wish for the plaque to be returned to them
2. Benches are a standard specification and will be supplied by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council.
3. The amount of the sponsorship might vary and will depend on the market price of the bench, and will cover the cost of purchase, delivery and installation of the bench.
4. Benches will have one standard specification plaque which will be placed in the centre of the uppermost wooden slat on the back of the bench. The plaque will display a message of your choice. All wording is to be approved by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council prior to being placed on the bench. A draft will be sent to the supporter before the plaque is ordered, the sponsor is solely responsible for checking the accuracy of the wording.
5. If we are notified that a repair is needed (by supporters or staff), the bench will be removed from its position and assessed:
 - a. If repairable, it will be repaired and returned to its existing place.
 - b. If beyond repair, any plaques will be removed and returned to the Council who will contact the supporter to enquire if they wish for the plaque to be returned to them.
6. If a commemorative bench is deemed "beyond repair" by the Parish Council, it will be removed from its position even if the bench is within the estimated 10 year life-span. A replacement bench may be offered at the discretion of the Council.
7. The bench will be placed in the desired area on delivery, but it could be moved and therefore its location cannot be guaranteed. The Parish Council cannot take responsibility for this movement and if the benches are moved, Council staff may not be able to search for or locate them.
8. On delivery we will attempt to place the benches in the sponsor's preferred area, but this may be subject to availability as some areas of the are likely to be more popular than others – therefore if there are sufficient benches in one area we may have to pursue the sponsor's second or third choice.

Agreement to the conditions of the Commemorative Bench Scheme at Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council.



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By signing this agreement, you are agreeing to the conditions outlined above and you agree to the attached location plan.

Signed:

Print Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Telephone:

Please complete your email address if you are happy for us to contact you in this way.

DRAFT

Appendix 2
Cheshire East Council Adult Safeguarding Referral Form



ADULT SAFEGUARDING FIRST ACCOUNT REPORT

To be filled in by the person who heard, saw or suspects that abuse has happened.

Crewe: Creweandnantwichadultsocialcareteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Congleton: Congletonandsandbachadultsocialcareteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Wilmslow: Wilmslowandknutsfordadultsocialcareteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Macclesfield: Macclesfieldadultsocialcareteam@cheshireeast.gov.uk

CMHT Macc: MentalhealthMaccAdmin@cheshireeast.gov.uk – 01625 505696

CMHT Crewe: MentalhealthCreweAdmin@cheshireeast.gov.uk – 01270 655287

For people already open to CMHT

Macclesfield Hospital Social Work Team / Leighton Hospital Social Work Team:

Macclesfield.hospital@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Leightonsocialworkteamadmin@cheshireeast.gov.uk

For people in hospital

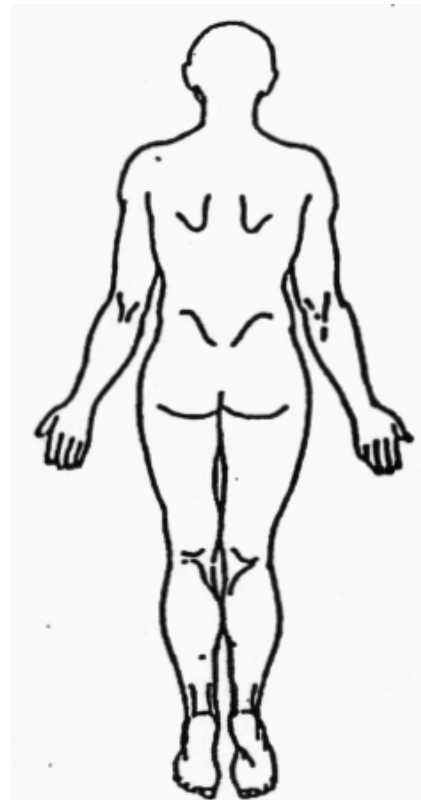
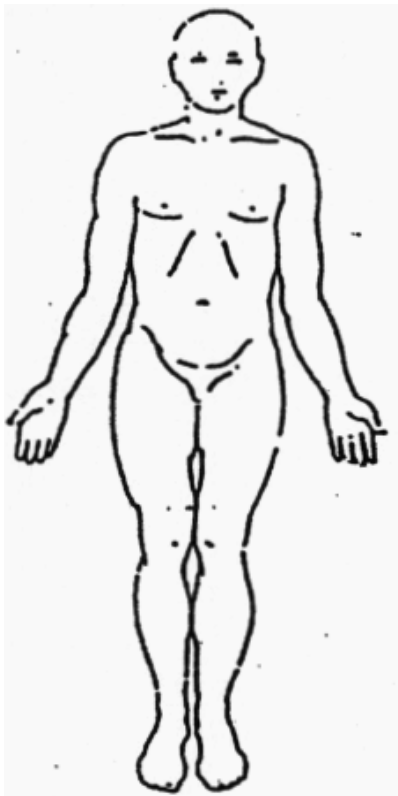
DATE :	TIME:
NAME OF ADULT AT RISK:	
D.O.B:	
PARIS ID:	
ADDRESS:	
POSTCODE:	

NAME OF GP:
ADDRESS:
POSTCODE:

PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT:
NAME TEL
RELATIONSHIP TO ALLEGED PERSON AT RISK:
Account Please write below a factual account of what you saw or heard. Please continue on further sheets as required, number them, and sign and date the statement as it may be used in evidence. Suggestions for inclusion in the account:
<i>What happened? (tell me, describe to me, explain to me)</i> <i>When did it happen? Who is involved? Where did it happen? (continue on extra sheets if required)</i>

Continued...

Continued.....



Office use only:

Action taken by receiving team:

S42 Enquiry Non S42 Complaint Quality of Care issue

Needs assessment / Carers assessment



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CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE PERSONS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Adopted by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council on 2 March 2022

Overview

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all employees, volunteers, service users, clients and visitors are safeguarded in line with the provisions of the Working Together 2014 of the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (**PHSA 3.1, 3.7**)

Safeguarding means protecting an individual's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that an individual's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

It must be recognised that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves.

Scope of the Policy and Procedure

The aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure:

- the safety of adults at risk by outlining clear procedures and
- that all employees, volunteers, service users, clients and visitors within Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council are clear about their responsibilities and are trained adequately
- service plans consider the need to safeguard adults at risk (**PHSA 2.4**)

Definition of Adult at Risk

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over; who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

This may include a person who:

- is an older person who is frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment;
- has a learning disability;
- has a physical disability and / or a sensory impairment / or communication difficulty i.e. autism;
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder;
- has a long-term illness/condition;



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- misuses substances or alcohol;
- lacks capacity to make specific decisions to make particular decisions.

Within the services provided by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council, adults at risk could be present in any group or session, at any time so this safeguarding policy statement is applicable throughout all of Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council activities and provision.

In the case of suspected abuse initially staff, trustees or volunteers should raise an alert and submit this to the named Safeguarding Lead who will contact the Cheshire East Adult Social Care see below, and other authorities as applicable. (**PHSA 4.3**)

What is abuse?

Abuse of an adult can take many forms. Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a variety of forms and can be both overt and covert. The following list is not exhaustive, but is illustrative of the kinds of abuse that might be experienced:

- Physical (including Female Genital Mutilation and Honour Based Violence)
- Domestic Abuse
- Psychological
- Sexual abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Neglect and Acts of Omission
- Discrimination abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Self-Neglect
- Deprivation Of Liberty

Standards

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council staff and contractors (**PHSA 2.3**) are required to:

- Where appropriate and required by regulations have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check when they commence employment. Where this has not been undertaken staff will not be allowed to work with adults unless supervised by a member of staff who has had a clear DBS check. (**PHSA 7.2**).
- Demonstrate respect for all service users as individuals in all matters.
- Reflect on their own approach and style, recognising the inherent power their position bestows.
- Undertake relevant training in safeguarding, disclosure and diversity matters. Ask a senior member of staff if they have any uncertainties about how to deal with a specific service user. (**PHSA 7.1**).
- Ensure that all service users experience a suitable and supportive environment to encourage service user disclosure of any issues which might affect the way in which they should be treated.
- Ensure all service users are aware of our Equality and Diversity policy and that they know how to complain if they become victims of harassment bullying, unfair treatment or harassment.
- Ensure a diverse range of services and training that is sensitive to difference.
- Invite and encourage constructive feedback from service users about standards and styles of behaviour and promote an open and honest culture of respect for diversity.
- Deal with complaints of abuse, unfair treatment or harassment and bullying promptly, sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with procedures.



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- Ensure that all persons working for or providing services to Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council are provided with a briefing on these safeguarding policies and procedures before any work is undertaken or any services delivered.
- Report any incidents immediately to any relevant partners or commissioners.

Service users, clients, volunteers and visitors are required to:

- Help prevent inappropriate behaviour by challenging and reporting behaviour that appears to be causing distress to others.
- Support an open, constructive environment within which diversity is valued positively.
- Dealing with claims of abuse perpetrated by internal members of staff

This Policy makes it clear how staff are expected to perform when dealing with all service users including adults at risk. It specifically ensures that claims made of abuse by internal staff will be investigated and dealt with.

Safeguarding Lead

The details of the named contact for Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is the Parish Clerk.

The named person will have full awareness of the policy and procedures guidelines and have attended training on safeguarding endorsed by the local Safeguarding Board.

The named contact will be a single point of contact for the organisation in relation to:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Prevent
- Domestic Abuse
- Honour Based Violence
- Forced Marriage
- Mental Capacity Act
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Trafficking / Modern Slavery

Safeguarding Procedure

First Steps

If you think abuse has or may have occurred act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be an adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to make safe and deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm.



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Do NOT discuss concerns or disclosures with other members of staff other than the safeguarding lead. (*PHSA 3.2*)

If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed.

Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed. Telephone 101 or 999 if an emergency.

Record details of the allegation as soon as possible somewhere that can be kept secure. Include:

- The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident,
- What the adult at risk said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.
- The appearance and behaviour of the victim.
- Any injuries observed.
- Whether any dependants are also at risk (*PHSA 4.4*) (*PHSA 1.3*)

If the allegation is against a member of staff a volunteer or a service user of Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council (*PHSA 3.6*)

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that that the vulnerable adult is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The named person for safeguarding should be informed immediately.
- In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a committee member, director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact the local authority social services team for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and / or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police.
- The individual who first received / witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident / receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and / or social services.
- Regardless of whether a police and / or social services investigation follows, Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.
- Whistle blowing will not prejudice the position or prospects of Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council staff or volunteers (*PHSA 3.3*)

Bring the concern to the attention of your Safeguarding Lead



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It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to:

- Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.
- Deal with any immediate needs:
 - Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe
 - Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged
 - Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost
 - If the alleged perpetrator is also an adult at risk, ensure that another member of staff / manager is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
- Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.
- Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding adult's procedure i.e. meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedure.
- Address issues of consent and confidentiality, taking care to not promise confidentiality
- A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised when:
 - A crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.
 - There is a suspicion that an abuse has taken place.
 - The allegation involves a child
 - The alleged perpetrator is themselves an adult at risk.
 - They are unsure if abuse has taken place
- Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must be recorded, with the reasons for the decision not to refer.
- All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints must be recorded, monitored and available for internal and external audit. (*PHSA 2.1, 2.2*)

The Referral Stage

This involves bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of the following authorities as appropriate:

- All referrals should be made to: **Cheshire East Adult Social Care**. The following number should be called **0300 123 5010** or **0300 123 5500**
- The police if you think a crime may have been committed – Telephone **101** and specify it is a safeguarding issue (**999** in an emergency).
- If a child is also at risk contact **Cheshire East Children's Services**. The following number should be called **0300 123 5012** or **0300 123 5500**
- Outside normal office hours, or on weekends or Bank Holidays, contact should be made for children's and adults on the **out of hours** number **0300 123 5022** or **0300 123 5500**

The person making the referral should ideally have the following information available; however, the lack of any of this information should not delay the referral:

- The name of the adult



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- Date of birth and age
- Address and telephone number
- Why the adult is considered to be at risk
- Whether consent has been obtained for the referral, and if not the reasons e.g. the adult lacks mental capacity or there is an over-riding public interest (e.g. where other adults or children are at risk)
- What the person involved has said they want to happen next (the referral needs to be made, with details of those involved even if the person has not given consent, but this needs to be included in the information given)
- Whether there are any concerns or doubts about the mental capacity of the adult at risk
- Whether the police are aware of the allegation, and whether a police investigation is underway
- If possible, use the Cheshire East Safeguarding referral form (Appendix 2)

What happens next?

The designated lead should receive acknowledgement or the referral from the relevant agency, and be given feedback about what happens next. This will not always be appropriate to pass on to the person completing the first account report.



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APPENDIX 1 SAFEGUARDING ACTION PLAN

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible person</u>	<u>Date to be completed by</u>	<u>Date completed</u>	<u>Evidence</u>
Incidents, allegations and complaints are monitored and lessons learnt are fed into planning				
All staff and volunteers are trained on safeguarding [including who the lead is, how to act, Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty] through induction training and mandatory refresher courses (PSA 1.2, 1.3, 8.2)				
Service developments are informed by the views of adults and carers (PHSA 4.1, 4.2)				
Staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk receive regular support and supervision (PHSA 8.3)				
All staff understand the practical implications of the safeguarding policy and procedure				
Safer Recruitment policy for both staff and volunteers is in place				



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COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council strive to offer a good standard of service, but from time to time the public or our service users have complaints about the administration or procedures of the Council. Sometimes the Council may be in the wrong but on occasions complaints may not be justified. The Council recognises that it is not currently subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman but has adopted this Policy to ensure that complainants can feel satisfied that, at the very least their grievance has been properly and fully considered.

Where a complainant has made a complaint to an outside regulator such as the Monitoring Officer at Cheshire East Council, External Auditor, Police or Information Commissioner, it will not normally be appropriate for the Council to respond through this Complaints Policy, but to fully cooperate with that regulator.

There may be rare instances where a complainant unnecessarily takes up a large amount of resources. This can have a detrimental effect on the Council's ability to provide its services to others.

At the end of this Procedure, the Council sets out what is considered to be acceptable levels of contact with it and how instances of unreasonably persistent or vexatious contact will be handled.

Contact Details:

- Telephone: 01270 421125
- Email: clerk@shavingtononline.co.uk

Informal Complaint

When a complaint is received, the complainant usually wants a quick fix and an apology if the Council is at fault. Examples are the late payment of an invoice or not responding to a letter in a timely manner. The Council will put things right as quickly as possible and admit fault if that is the case. If it is unable to help or disagrees with the complaint, it will state clearly why it takes that view.

Formal Complaint

- If a complainant is not satisfied, or the complaint is too serious for a "quick fix", the complaint will be recorded as a Formal Complaint. The complainant will be asked to confirm the complaint in writing (email is acceptable) to the Parish Clerk, (or if the complaint is about an action of the Parish Clerk, it can be forwarded directly to the Chairman)
- The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the complaint will be considered and by whom



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- The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) will (except where the complaint is about his/her own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant, but will not do so in a case about the Parish Clerk or a Councillor, without first giving that person an opportunity to comment on the matter and the manner in which it is intended to settle the complaint. Where the Parish Clerk (or Chairman) receives a written complaint about his/her own actions, he/she will forthwith refer the complaint to the Council
- The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) will report to the next meeting of the Council, any written formal complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant. The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) may, after consultation with the (Deputy) Chairman and another committee chairman, ask an independent person to investigate the complaint
- The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) will bring any written formal complaint which cannot be settled to the next or a special meeting of an Complaints Committee and the Parish Clerk (or Chairman) will notify the complainant of the date of the meeting and invite them to attend with a representative if they so wish
- Seven clear days prior to the meeting, the complainant will provide the Committee with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they wish to refer to the meeting. The Committee will similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting
- The Complaints Committee will consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public, but any decision on a complaint will be announced at the meeting in public
- The Complainant may opt not to attend or to attend but not present a verbal case
- The Chairman will introduce everyone present and will explain the procedure
- The complainant or representative will outline the grounds for complaint
- Members will ask any questions of the Complainant
- If relevant the Parish Clerk or Chairman will explain the Council's position. Members may ask any questions of them
- The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) and complainant will be offered the opportunity of having a last word (in that order)
- The Parish Clerk (or Chairman) and complainant will leave the room (along with any member who's actions are part of the complaint) while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is required, both parties will be invited back into the room
- The parties will be invited back to hear the decision
- As soon as possible after the decision has been made, it and the nature of any action to be taken, will be communicated in writing to the complainant.



Allegations that a councillor has breached the Code of Conduct should be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer of Cheshire East Council in writing via their online form. If the Parish Council receives such a complaint directly, it will advise the complainant to refer it directly to the Monitoring Officer.

Unreasonably Persistent or Vexatious Complaints

The procedure will not be used to impede the ability of anyone to have reasonable access to services provided, nor will it be assumed that because a customer/complainant has submitted a large number of enquiries they are vexatious or unreasonably persistent. In some cases, their persistence may be necessary to receive sufficient response from the Council.

Unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants are those individuals who, because of the nature or frequency of their contacts with the Council hinder our ability to effectively deliver services to our customers. Some examples of behaviour and actions taken by these individuals are listed below, however this is not an exhaustive list.

These are some of the actions and behaviours which can prove problematic. Single incidents may be unacceptable, but more often the difficulty is caused by unreasonably persistent behaviour that is time consuming to manage and interferes with proper handling of the issues being raised.

These behaviours can be:

- Refusing to specify the grounds of the service request, despite offers of assistance
- Refusing to co-operate with the process for handling service requests
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of the Council
- Insisting on the request being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with adopted procedure(s) or with good practice
- Making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeking to have them replaced
- Changing the basis of the service request as the issue proceeds
- Denying or changing statements made at an earlier stage
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information at a later stage
- Raising numerous, detailed but unimportant questions and insisting they are all answered
- Covertly recording meetings and conversations, otherwise than allowed by law at a public meeting
- Submitting falsified documents from themselves or others
- Adopting a 'scatter gun' approach: inappropriately pursuing parallel service requests on the same issue with a variety of organisations or with a variety of individuals within the Council
- Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with lengthy phone calls or e-mails to numerous council staff or detailed letters every few days and expecting immediate responses
- Submitting repeat requests with minor additions/variations that the service user insists make these 'new' issues
- Refusing to accept the decision or outcome; repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence



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- Making numerous, repetitious and unreasonable contact because an individual is unable or unwilling to accept or agree with a policy decision or approach which has been adopted by the Council or individual services and functions
- Adopting a violent or aggressive demeanour towards staff.

Any of the above behaviours will trigger the beginning of this process. The Parish Clerk will normally write to the individual. The letter will clearly explain the actions the Council may take if their behaviour does not change.

Very rarely, in extreme or rapidly escalating cases, it may be necessary to immediately impose restrictions to ensure the safety of staff members. This is a decision which will be taken by the Parish Clerk with the utmost consideration for circumstances surrounding the incident(s).

Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate, and examples of some options most likely to be considered are:

- Requesting contact in a particular format e.g. letters only
- Requiring contact to take place with a single named person only
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times; and/or a particular member of staff
- Restricting the amount of times a customer may be in contact over a certain time period

The decision to restrict or stop a person's access to the Councils offices and officers can only be taken by the Council.

A letter will then be sent to the complainant outlining the decision. All letters will include:

- Why the decision has been taken;
- What action will be taken;
- The duration of that action;
- The date of review for the action; if required

Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of the Councils staff, other options will be considered; for example, reporting the matter to the Police or taking legal action.

The Parish Clerk will keep a record of all individuals who have had this procedure applied to them. Decisions taken under this procedure are subject to the Data Protection principles and the Human Rights Act. The position will be reviewed after 6 months if requested by the complainant.



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DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Adopted Parish Council 5 October 2022

Introduction

The Parish Council is committed to creating a harmonious environment by ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for every employee in the workplace. One of the keys aims of the policy is to provide a positive working environment in which all staff feel comfortable and in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief or any other personal factor or quality.

This policy aims to ensure that there is no bullying and harassment of and by any employee, contractor, or anyone else engaged to work on Parish Council premises. The purpose of this policy is to provide you with both protection and a procedure to raise and effectively deal with a complaint either informally or formally, if you believe you have been harassed or bullied.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying or harassment will constitute unlawful discrimination where it relates to one of the protected characteristics, outlined above. Serious bullying or harassment may amount to other civil or criminal offences, e.g. a civil offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and criminal offences of assault.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure another person. Examples, though not an exhaustive list, which may constitute bullying are:

- threats, abuse, teasing, gossip and practical jokes;
- humiliation and ridicule either in private, at meetings or in front of customers or clients;
- name calling, insults, devaluing with reference to age, appearance;
- setting impossible deadlines;
- excessive monitoring;
- removing responsibilities;
- withholding information.

Harassment, in general terms, is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, that:

- violates a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by a person to have the effect of violating his/her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something which is meant to be 'banter' may offend another person. Different people find different things acceptable. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to him or her and to have his or her feelings respected by others.



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Harassment may occur where an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct due to his/her association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Harassment may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct towards another because he/she has a mistaken perception that the recipient has a protected characteristic.

Harassment may also occur where an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct from a third party, such as a client or customer. If you feel that you have been bullied or harassed by customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors, you should report any such behaviour in order that appropriate action is taken. Bullying or harassment of customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors or others will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

For the avoidance of doubt the Parish Council will treat a single incident as harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

All bullying and harassment are misconduct and is a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. Bullying or harassment will often be gross misconduct, which can lead to dismissal without notice.

Examples, though not an exhaustive list, of behaviour which may constitute harassment are:

- physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault;
- verbal and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and defamatory references;
- unwanted nicknames related to a protected characteristic;
- excluding an individual from social activities due to his/her association with someone with a protected characteristic;
- ignoring an individual because he/she has a protected characteristic when in fact he/she does not have the perceived protected characteristic;
- intrusion by pestering, spying, following etc.

The Parish Council will treat all such complaints of harassment and bullying seriously and will investigate them promptly, efficiently and in confidence.

The main aim of this policy is to provide a framework for resolving complaints of harassment or bullying and for stopping any behaviour that is causing offence or distress.

Raising a Complaint

You have a right to complain if you are treated in a manner that you believe constitutes harassment or bullying. This will include behaviour that has caused you offence, humiliation, embarrassment or distress.

Apart from complaints about the behaviour of colleagues, you also have the right to complain if you believe that you have been bullied or harassed by a third party, for example a customer, client or supplier.

If you raise a complaint under this policy you are automatically protected and under no circumstances will you be subjected to any unfavourable treatment or victimisation as a result of making a complaint. However, if it is established that you have made a knowingly false or malicious complaint against another person about harassment or bullying, serious disciplinary action will be taken against you which may result in your dismissal.



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If you witness an incident that you believe to be the harassment or bullying of another member of staff you should report the incident in confidence to your manager who will consider all such reports seriously and will treat the information in strict confidence, as far as it is reasonably possible to do so.

Reporting a Complaint

Before raising a formal complaint, you are encouraged in the first instance to talk directly and informally to the person to whom you believe is harassing you and explain clearly what aspect of the person's behaviour is unacceptable, or is causing offence to you, and request that it stop.

It may be that the person whose conduct is causing offence is genuinely unaware that their behaviour is unwelcome or objectionable and that a direct approach may resolve the matter without the need for formal action.

If you would like support in making such an approach, you should contact your manager or the Parish Clerk. However, if you feel unable to take this course of action, or if you have already approached the person to no avail, or if the harassment is of a very serious nature, you may decide to raise a formal complaint.

Formal complaints may be raised, in writing, with your manager or, if preferred, the Parish Clerk. You may feel more comfortable speaking to them about it before putting it in writing, which is quite acceptable.

When lodging your complaint of harassment/bullying, you should state:

- the name of the person whose behaviour you believe amounts to harassment or bullying;
- the type of behaviour that is causing offence, together with specific examples if possible;
- dates and times when incidents of harassment or bullying occurred, and where they occurred;
- the names of any employees who witnessed any incidents, or who themselves may have been the victims of harassment or bullying by the same person; and
- any action that you have already taken to try to deal with the harassment or bullying.

Management Responsibility

When a complaint of harassment or bullying is received, there is a duty to investigate the matter thoroughly and objectively and to take corrective action in order to ensure compliance with the Dignity at Work Policy.

The Parish Council will be responsive and supportive towards anyone who raises a genuine complaint of harassment or bullying. The Parish Clerk will assist any manager in dealing with complaints of harassment or bullying.

The Parish Clerk may suspend you from duty pending investigation for harassment or bullying for a temporary period whilst investigations are carried out. Such suspension will be for as short a time as possible and will be on full pay.

If you are accused of harassment or bullying you will be informed of the exact nature of the complaint against you and afforded a full opportunity to challenge the allegations and put forward an explanation for your alleged behaviour in a confidential interview, with a companion present if you choose. It will not be presumed that following an allegation of harassment you are guilty.

All forms of harassment and bullying will be regarded as serious misconduct, and if you are found to have harassed or bullied a colleague you will be liable to serious disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.



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Although not always necessary, if a complaint against you is not upheld, a voluntary transfer of either of the parties may be offered, if that is practicable. Such transfers will be consensual.

If it is agreed neither party will move, the Parish Clerk will monitor and check the situation in terms of our duty of care to determine whether there has been any form of victimisation or retaliation.

Alternatively, where a complaint is upheld it may be necessary, if practicable to relocate or transfer one of the parties to another department or function.

Following the meeting, you will be informed in writing of the outcome within 7 working days and told of any actions as a result of your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may make an appeal. Your appeal should be made in writing to the Parish Clerk. You should clearly state the grounds of your appeal, i.e. the basis on which you say that our findings were inaccurate or inappropriate. This should be done within 7 working days of the written notification of the outcome of the grievance. An appeal meeting will normally be arranged to take place within 5 working days of the submission of your appeal. Following the appeal hearing, you will be informed of the outcome within 5 working days.

The Parish Clerk will maintain records of investigations into alleged incidents of harassment or bullying, the outcome of the investigations and any corrective or disciplinary action taken. These records will be maintained in confidence and in line with the provisions of the Data Protection legislation.

Exploitation of Workers

There is an obligation on employers under the Modern Slavery Act (2015) to address the issues of slavery and human trafficking, and to commit to the prohibition and avoidance of the violation of human rights (not only within the employer's own operations, but also in relation to those businesses with which products and services are provided or received).

The Council is forthright and steadfast in complying with these obligations, and fully embraces not only the legal aspects of these issues, but also the moral and ethical duties and responsibilities in identifying and, where necessary, eliminating potential breaches of basic human rights.

It is therefore the policy of the Council that practices such as forced labour, debt-bonded labour, and human trafficking are totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Similarly, inhumane treatment such as corporal punishment or other inhumane threats are also viewed as totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Furthermore, we expect corresponding standards, duties, and responsibilities to be upheld and maintained by all our officers and members, guests, sub-contractors, and business associates.

Through our existing policies and procedures, we will always seek to promote the highest moral standards and will voluntarily and wholeheartedly support all statutory legislation and regulatory guidelines aimed at eliminating these totally unacceptable and inhumane practices.

We encourage all those within our organisation and services, whether directly or indirectly, to report (without fear of prejudice or recrimination) any issues or concerns relating to the potential breaches of human rights.

Stress and Anxiety at Work



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Workplace anxieties and stress are issues that could impact on the health, safety and welfare of individuals, and it is important to identify potential situations that could escalate normal everyday situations into excessive pressures and anxieties. (see also Health and Safety Policy).

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This definition makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly; and stress, which can be detrimental to health and welfare.

The Council will therefore seek to identify situations that could lead to excessive stress or anxiety, with a view to eliminating, or controlling and minimising, the risks. To achieve this, we will:

Encourage interaction and consultation between management and staff, with a view to identifying and preventing excessive stress levels;

- Encourage good management practices and appropriate information sharing;
- Offer impartial support (for instance, via our HR advisers) for staff affected by stress, whether in work or externally;
- Only undertake fundamental procedural changes within the organisation following appropriate consultation with staff members;
- Ensure staff members are fully capable of carrying out their role and duties;
- Monitor workloads to ensure that staff members are not struggling and overloaded;
- Monitor contractual working time and overtime to ensure that staff members are not struggling and overworking;
- Monitor holiday leave to ensure that staff members are taking their full annual entitlement;
- Ensure that, where available and appropriate, staff members are provided with meaningful role development opportunities;
- Consider training in management practices, and health, safety and welfare;
- Be vigilant, and offer additional support to individual employees who may be experiencing stress issues outside work (e.g. bereavement, divorce, family issues);
- Support staff members who have been off sick with stress, and plan a structured and considerate return to work.



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Document Retention Policy

Approved 1 December 2021
Adopted by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council on 17 May 2023

PURPOSE

The council requires a wide variety of documents for transacting its business and is committed to retaining these documents in a format and for periods of time that:

- Enables the council to meet its statutory obligations in respect of documents subject to legislation;
- Ensures security of documents;
- Protects employees' privacy;
- Facilitates access to information;
- Optimises the use of storage space;
- Is cost effective; and
- Facilitates destruction of redundant documents.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to users of the council's information records, both paper and electronic, it includes Councillors and employees.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Documents subject to a statutory period of retention are identified by their associated legislation in Annex A.

SECURITY OF DOCUMENTS

Council records are held in paper and/or electronic format. The following security is applied to manual documents:

- all paper documents are stored in lockable cupboards
- all sensitive files are secured with password

EMPLOYEES' PRIVACY

The privacy of personnel records will be appropriately assured.

AVAILABILITY & ACCESS

All records necessary for council business will be retained for a period of time that reasonably assures the availability of records when needed.

STORAGE SPACE AND COST



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Redundant records may be destroyed in order to reduce the cost of storage, indexing and handling the vast quantity of documents that would otherwise accumulate. Destruction of documents will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of this Policy to avoid any inference that a document was destroyed in anticipation of a problem.

ELECTRONIC STORAGE

Records maintained on electronic data processing storage media will be subject to the same rules of retention and security as paper records.

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

The Council will be responsible for the implementation of the Policy.

MONITORING & REVIEW OF POLICY

Council will review the Policy periodically to monitor its effectiveness, taking account of users' comments.



Annex A – Retention Periods: Statutory Requirement & Best Practice Guidance

Document/Type	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Associated Legislation
Agreements, Contracts & Related Correspondence			
Contract Executed as a Deed	12 years	Proceedings founded on a contract may be brought within these periods Actions for latent damage may be brought up to fifteen years after the damage occurs Audit, Management	Limitation Act 1980 Section 5
Contracts with Customers, Suppliers or Agents	Indefinite		
Licensing Agreements			
Rental/Hire Purchase Agreements			
Indemnities & Guarantees			
Other Agreements/Contracts			
Quotations and Tenders	12 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	
Leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Limitation Act 1980 Section 14B
Corporate plans, strategies, policies, business plans, annual reports, asset register	Indefinitely	Common Practice	
Operating Procedures	2 years after superseded	Common Practice	
Market Licences	Destroy after 6 years	Management	
Market Licence Holder Records	Destroy after 6 years after leaving the market	Management	
Other Licences	Destroy after 6 years after leaving the market	Management	
Funding Documents	As required by individual funders	Funding requirements	
Press Releases	Destroy after 3 years	Local Choice	
Property			
Title Deeds	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Limitation Act 1980 Section 14B



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Document/Type	Minimum Period	Retention	Reason	Associated Legislation
<i>For Town Hall and Market</i>				
application to hire lettings diaries copies of bills to hires records of tickets issued	6 years		VAT	
<i>For Allotments</i>				
Register and plans	Indefinite		Audit, Management	
<i>Financial Records</i>				
Cheques, cheque book stubs, bills of exchange and paying in books	6 years plus current year		Audit	
Instructions to banks	6 years after ceasing to be effective			
Investments	Indefinite		Audit, Management	
Scales of Fees and charges	6 years plus current year		Management	
Postage & Telephone Records	6 years plus current year		Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations	
Receipt and payment account(s)	Indefinite		Archive	
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years plus current year		VAT	
Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts	6 years plus current year		Audit	
Paid Invoices	6 years plus current year		VAT	
Paid cheques	6 years plus current year		Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	6 years generally but 20 years for VAT on rents		VAT	
Petty cash and postage	6 years plus current year		Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	



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Document/Type	Minimum Period	Retention	Reason	Associated Legislation
Timesheets	3 years		Audit (requirement) Personal injury (best practice)	
Wages books	12 years		Company Pension	
Accounts and Audits	Indefinite, archive after administrative use		Common Practice	
Budget and estimates	Indefinite, archive after 3 years		Statutory	
Building contracts	Life of the building, plus 15 years		Statutory	
Loans	Destroy 7 years after loan repaid		Common Practice	
Tax				
Supporting documentation for VAT returns	6 years plus current year		If there is an enquiry into a tax return, records should be retained until the enquiry is complete	VAT Act 1994 s58 & Schedule 11 Para 6
Supporting documentation for PAYE returns	6 years plus current year			Income Tax (PAYE) Regulation 2003 Reg.97
PAYE related records not required to be sent to Inland Revenue	Three years after the end of the tax year to which they relate			
Electoral Roll	Destroy when superseded			
Councillors Records				
Members allowances register	6 years		Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Councillors Notification of Members' Interests	1 year after end of service		Local Choice	Chapter 7 Localism Act 2011
Councillor contact	1 year after end of service		Local Choice	
Employee Records				



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Document/Type	Minimum Period	Retention	Reason	Associated Legislation
Personal Records, inclusive of appraisals, disciplinary records, leave, training records, contracts, redundancy, promotion/pay awards/pay levels etc	6 years after employment ceases	25 years for staff working with Children	Health & Safety Records may need to be kept longer	Limitation Act 1980
Basic Personal Details (name/address/dates of employment/role etc)	Indefinitely		Health and Safety or DBS records	
Employee Handbook	Indefinitely		Common Practice	
Applications for jobs-where the candidate is unsuccessful, including CV's, Interview notes	6 months after notifying the unsuccessful candidate		Time Limit for employment claims	Equality Act 2010 Limitation Act 1980
Salary/Payrolls/Wages/tax documents (Inland Revenue)	12 years after 31 January of the following year of assessment		Company Pension	Tax Management Act 1970 Sections 12 & 15.
LGPS Correspondence re individuals	12 years from date of leaving		LGPS regulations	
P Forms (P45 etc)	6 years			
Expense Accounts	6 years			
Labour Agreements	10 years		Best practice	
Sickness Records	6 years after employment ceases			Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982 Reg.13
Accident Books	7 years from the date of last entry		Local Choice	
Health & Safety Records	3 years		Personal injury actions must generally be commenced within three years of the injury. The time periods are extended in relation to employees exposed to	



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Document/Type	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Associated Legislation
		hazardous substances.	
Time-Keeping Records	Last Completed Audit	Last completed audit year	Audit
Recruitment documents, including Person Specification, Job Descriptions	5 year	Equal Opportunities claims	
Statutory Maternity/Paternity pay and leave records	Current tax year plus 3 years	Local Choice	
References	Destroy after 5 years of leaving employment	Insurance	
Correspondence with residents	Two years	Local Choice	
Insurance			
Policies	40 years	Statutory	
Claims Correspondence	Three years after settlement	See NALC LTN 40 Para 7 replicated below	
Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate	40 years from the date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI. 2753), Management	
Accident Reports and relevant correspondence	3years after settlement		
Donations & Subscription Records			
Donations given & related correspondence	6 years		Companies Act 1985 Sections 221-222
Deeds of Covenant	6 years after the last payment made 12 years if payments are still outstanding or there is a dispute re the Deed		



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Document/Type	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Associated Legislation
Subscription records	3 years after cessation of membership		Companies Act 1985 Section 222
Planning Applications & Associated Documents & Licensing	Where planning permission is granted, the application, any plans and the decision letter should be retained until the development has been completed. Advice from CWaC: Six years from the date of meeting at which Planning Application discussed (Planning Authority's records, available for inspection, go back to 1973)		
Planning Memos	Council Comments & Planning Authority's Decision – 6 years Other related documents – 2 years	Until the development has been completed	Freedom of Information Act 2000
Private Applications (Rejected)	5 Years	Until the period within which an appeal can be made has expired	
Appeal Decision relating to rejected Private Applications	Indefinitely	NALC LTN 40 refers	
Major Developments	Indefinitely		
Copies of Structure Plans, Local Plans and similar documents	As long as document is in force	NALC LTN 40 refers	
Licensing Memos	NTC's comments – 6 years Other related documents – 2 years	Local Choice	
Publications Newsletters Guides, Pamphlets, Leaflets, Maps, Plans	Local choice	a copy of published works in print after 01.02.04 or after 06.04.13 electronic works off line, to deliver, at its own expense, a copy of them to the british library board. electronic works published on line	The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003



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Document/Type	Minimum Period	Retention	Reason	Associated Legislation
			after 2013 only if requested NALC LTN 40 refers	
Meetings Records Agendas Minutes – Meetings Minutes – Committees, Subcommittees	Following the meeting Indefinite Indefinite Indefinite		Facility for back-checking Hard copies – at Archives On electronic media – 1 copy at a separate location	
Electronic Documents				
E-mail	2years		Local Choice	
Scanned Documents	2years		Local Choice	



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ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Approved by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council on 1 December 2021

Approved by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council on 15 March 2023

THE POLICY

Shavington Parish Council recognises its responsibilities to the sustainability of the environment. It is the policy of Shavington Parish Council to conduct all aspects of our activities in accordance with approved, sustainable and acceptable environmental practices, and to operate within current environmental legislation.

In order to achieve this, we will encourage and instruct all staff to operate within the following guidelines:

- To minimise the consumption of natural resources and energy;
- To consume material goods with consideration and in moderation;
- To adopt working practices that will reduce waste and allow for the recycling of materials wherever and whenever possible;
- To ensure that all waste and effluent is disposed of safely, responsibly, and without unacceptable risk to the environment;
- To encourage amongst all staff and clients an understanding of environmental considerations in the context of our business activities;
- To comply with and embrace all environmental legislation.

Through this policy, Shavington Parish Council will always seek to consider the environmental impact in relation to all its activities, and to recognise its responsibilities in helping to protect the overall environment.

AIM OF THE POLICY

The aim of the policy is to:

- Comply with current environmental legislation;
- To consider and assess best practice; taking action where necessary to continuously improve environmental practice;
- Emphasise to all employees at all levels their own responsibility to the environmental well-being; providing training where applicable;
- Ensure this Policy is available to all employees, including sub-contractors;
- Audit environmental and sustainability performance;
- Review this policy regularly, taking into consideration any audit findings.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Clerk (or the senior member of staff in charge in their absence) will be responsible for implementing this Policy and, as far as is reasonably practicable, will ensure that:

- Any work carried out will comply with the requirements of this Policy;
- We will try to recycle as much of our waste as possible;



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- Measures are taken to prevent any surface, underground or atmospheric pollution;
- Noise pollution is kept to a minimum, as far as is reasonably practicable;
- Vehicle exhaust pollutants are kept to a minimum;
- Wildlife and surrounding habitats, trees, flora, fauna, and archaeological and heritage sites are protected as appropriate;
- Material wastage is kept to a minimum, as far as is reasonably practicable;
- Water and energy are conserved, and recycling of materials is promoted;
- Environmental accidents are investigated and resolved; and preventative measures are enforced to prevent reoccurrences;
- The policy is reviewed regularly to ensure both compliance and relevance.

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FIXED ASSETS AND CONTENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Approved by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council on 15.03.2023

Introduction

The Asset Management policy provides overall framework to guide the strategic management of Parish Council's infrastructure assets in a co-ordinated manner. The policy sets out a systematic process to guide the planning, acquisition, operation and maintenance, and disposal of assets. The objective is to maximise asset service delivery potential and manage related risks and costs over the entire life of the asset. The Parish Council fixed assets and contents management will be carried out based on this policy document which establishes systems and controls. This policy must be observed in conjunction with the Parish Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which requires annual governance reporting as part of the annual returns.

Asset management will be integrated with financial and budgetary planning to inform decision making, incorporating a life cycle approach in asset management to achieve value for money usage of all assets. This policy also establishes accountability and responsibility for asset condition, use and performance.

Local Councils can acquire or dispose of assets under the general power in section 111 Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 "power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions". However, for the acquisition of land and buildings special rules apply.

Usage and the protection of Assets

Parish Council assets should not be used by employees and Councillors to pursue their own personal business.

Parish Council assets should not be misused or maliciously damage by staff or Councillors.

Moveable assets like a laptop etc in the possession of staff and Councillors outside Council premises should be used to carry out Council business in accordance with this policy.

As far as is reasonably practicable, employees and Councillors will have full responsibility for the care, security and proper use of assets in their personal possession.

Asset Management Responsibility

Asset management needs a Corporate approach, hence requires appropriate initiative to give awareness and build internal capacity to undertake the required asset management activities.

Parish Clerk

Parish Clerk is the person responsible for all Parish Council assets and oversee implementation of the asset management policy.

The Parish Clerk fulfils the requirements of Town Council asset management processes.

Staff

The Parish Council staff are responsible for following asset management procedures and processes as set out in this policy.



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Councillors

The Council should be aware of the Parish Council Asset Management policy and procedures and ensure procedures are followed when dealing with Parish Council assets in any capacity.

Asset Register

An asset register / database will be maintained in accordance with the Parish Council Financial Regulations which states in clause 14.6 the requirement to maintain such register

(14.6. The Clerk or RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.)

The asset database shall seek to capture information for both fixed and tangible moveable property with a life expectancy more than one year.

The asset register / database shall include the following information which is necessary for managing asset lifecycle.

- Date of purchase
- Make, model, and description
- Location
- Category of asset
- Purchase Cost
- Insurance Valuations
- Repairs / maintenance information (hyperlinks) to key reports
- Disposal information

Acquisitions and Disposals

Acquisition and disposal of assets will adhere to the Financial Regulation of the Parish Council as set out in the following clauses;

(14.2 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 £1,000. Such a disposal must be authorised by the Clerk or RFO and reported to the appropriate Committee or to Council)

(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 Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).



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(14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council with a full business case.)

Acquisitions of tangible moveable assets

Acquisitions of asset will comply with the Parish Council Financial Regulations and the following internal procedures and protocols shall also apply to asset purchase management activities.

- Assets which cost more than £100 should be tagged except when their useful life is less than 12 months. Computer components which stores data should be tagged notwithstanding its purchase price. When assets are purchased in bulk and the total cost exceeds £100, for example chairs, should be tagged individually. Tagging should continue where individual items of the bulk are replaced in the future.
- Prior to deployment, Managers and Staff shall assign an tag to the asset and pass the information to the Parish Clerk for entry onto the Asset Database (Scribe).

Disposals of tangible moveable assets

Assets disposal should be carried out with appropriate authorisation which is dependent on class of asset and asset value using the disposal form. Disposal of assets with inherent value should aim at ensuring value for money for the Council and obtaining a sale with an anticipated current value wherever possible.

Disposal principle

- High value Assets that are no longer required by the Parish Council should be disposed of by first determining an appropriate market valuation and if required, a third-party valuation should be sourced and then sold in the open market place.
- Appropriate authorisation to dispose of assets applies; The Parish Clerk authorises disposals of assets up to the market valuation of £1000, valuation above £1,000 requires the approval of the appropriate committee or the Parish Council in accordance with the Parish Council Financial Regulations.
- Appropriate authorisation does not apply where an asset is certified by a competent assessor or a Manager to be unusable and no longer functional, are not fit for purpose and are beyond repair or their use will breach regulatory compliance. A report for high value assets costing above £1,000 to replace should be sent to the appropriate Committee following such assets immediate disposal to avoid maintenance and hazard problems that their continuous use will bring.

Disposal Due Diligence

In determining if an asset is appropriate for disposal, appropriate due diligence is required as follows:

- Justification for disposal
- classification as usable with appropriate valuation or unusable
- Method of disposal (Note appropriate procedure for disposal of IT equipment and data storage devices)
- Sale Proceeds where cash is involved should follow the cash handling procedure.
- Where the sale involves trade-in for new equipment, this must be reported on the disposal form

Lost, stolen and destroyed assets



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Lost, stolen and destroyed assets where the replacement cost is more than £1,000 must be reported on the disposal form following investigation and a report to the appropriate Parish Council Committee. The disposal form should be passed to the Parish Clerk for updating the Asset Register and for insurance claims where appropriate.

Audits and Valuations

Asset management processes and procedures will be reviewed annually following a process of category and or location by location audits of assets throughout the year which will ensure all assets will have been audited by the end of the financial year. Audits will account for all risks associated with the asset, defects identification, repairs and maintenance requirements and inventory audits. Audits will aim to manage asset life cycle as depicted below.

Insurance

The Parish Council insures all its assets and content to protect the assets for all insurable risks.

Policy Amendments and Reviews

Asset Management Policy shall be amended accordingly in line with the requirements and needs of the Parish Council. Such amendments shall be initiated by officers of the Parish Council or a Councillor and shall follow the proper procedures and Standing Orders of the Parish Council.



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Appendix 1
ASSET DISPOSAL FORM

(To be completed and passed to the Parish Clerk and a copy saved in disposal folder in Assets on shared drive when disposing tagged assets)

Item description

Asset Numbers

Product Code

Item Location

Item Condition

Item Value

Reason for Purchase

Deployment Date:

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Authorised Manager:

Name:

Signed:

Date:



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POLICY FOR GRANTING OF THE HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE PARISH

Adopted by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council on 2 March 2022

From 12 January 2010, all local councils may exercise powers to confer the title of “honorary freeman” or “honorary freewoman” to persons of distinction and those who, in the council’s opinion, have rendered eminent services to the council’s area (section 249(5) and (6) of the 1972 Act).

From time to time, members of the community demonstrate outstanding commitment and contribution to the wellbeing of the Parish and it is recognised that their efforts should be acknowledged. The Council will do this, in special circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, by awarding to an individual the title of ‘Honorary Freeman (or Honorary Freewoman) of the Parish of Shavington-cum-Gresty’. This honour will be awarded only on rare and exceptional occasions.

Granting the Freedom of the Parish

Granting the Freedom of the Parish is the highest honour that the Parish Council can bestow. Although it carries no powers, rights or privileges, those who receive the honour are able to use the title of Freeman or Freewomen.

As this is the highest honour that the Parish Council can grant it should be used sparingly and should not be given too often in order to preserve its status and value.

Service

The nominee may have given extensive and eminent service to the Parish of Shavington-cum-Gresty and its local community (e.g. service to other organisations and voluntary and community groups) in a largely voluntary capacity. The nominee must have made an outstanding contribution to the Parish such that the nominee’s contribution can be seen to stand above the contributions made by most other people.

Cost

Section 249 (9) of Local Government Act 1972 allows Councils to spend “such reasonable sum as it thinks fit” on presenting an address to a Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman. A commemorative ‘scroll’ or certificate will be provided. Currently there is no budget provision for this but under the S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 the costs of the scroll and frame can be allocated.

Legislation

Section 249 (5) of Local Government Act 1972, as amended by Section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009, allows the Council of a relevant authority (including a Parish Council) to admit to be honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority:

a. Persons of distinction, and



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b. Persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent service to that place or area.

A resolution must be passed:

a. At a meeting of the Parish Council that has been convened especially for the purpose and where notice of the object of the meeting to pass a motion relating to the granting of the award has been given; and

b. By not less than two-thirds of the members of the Council who vote on it.

Procedure for Granting of Freedom of Shavington-cum-Gresty

Any Parish Councillor may nominate to the Council individuals, who in their opinion, have rendered eminent services to the Parish and who should be considered to be granted the Freedom of the Parish.

A member of the public may petition any Parish Councillor to nominate an individual to the Council individuals for consideration.

Individuals who have profited from their service would not normally be eligible, however this is subject to the discretion of the Council.

The nomination for the Honorary title will be considered at the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council. The agenda item will be discussed in private, and the public and press will be excluded. The name(s) of the individual(s) must not appear in the agenda or minutes of the meeting. The following procedure shall be adopted:

1. The Chair shall open the agenda item and remind the Members of this Policy Document giving guidance on those criteria for suitable nominations.
2. The Chair shall invite the Member(s) ('the sponsor) to present the application for nomination. The Member(s) of the Council making a nomination for the Honorary title should be able to demonstrate to the Council that the nominee has given extensive and eminent service to the Parish of Shavington-cum-Gresty and its local community
3. The Chair shall invite all Members to discuss and debate the merits of the nomination.
4. The Chair shall then invite the Council to pass a resolution in support of convening a meeting especially for the purpose of passing a motion relating to the granting of the award.

The Chair (or another nominated Councillor) shall prior to the issuing of the meeting calling notice for the purpose of passing a motion relating to the granting of the award, informally enquire with the proposed individual as to:

1. whether or not they are prepared to accept such an award.
2. whether they are aware of any reason that their acceptance of the award may, or could be considered by a reasonable third-party, to bring the parish or the Parish Council into disrepute.

The Parish Council will convene a meeting of the Council especially for the purpose, and where notice of the object of the meeting to pass a motion relating to the granting of the award to a specific individual(s) has been given. The following procedure shall be adopted:

1. The Chair shall open the meeting and remind the Members of this Policy Document which gives guidance on the criteria for suitable nominations.



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2. The Chair shall invite the Member ('the sponsor) to present the application for nomination. The Member(s) of the Council making a nomination for the Honorary title should be able to demonstrate to the Council that the nominee has given extensive and eminent service to the Parish of Shavington-cum-Gresty and its local community
3. The Chair shall invite any members of the public who wish to speak in relation to the nomination to speak, subject to the following criteria:
 1. Council Standing Orders shall be followed
 2. each member of the public may speak for a maximum of 5 minutes, and whom may speak only once during the meeting
 3. members of Council may ask questions (with the agreement of the Chair), to the member of the public who is speaking, however, questions to the member of the public who is speaking, from other members of the public are not permitted.
4. The public and any press shall then be excluded from the meeting.
5. The Chair shall invite all Councillors present to discuss and debate the merits of the nomination.
6. The public and any press shall then be invited to return for the remainder of the meeting.
7. The Chair shall then invite the Council to pass a resolution granting the award, which should recite the particular grounds and details of the public services rendered by the potential recipient.
8. If the Council passes the resolution by no less than a 2/3rds majority then the resolution shall be recorded in the Council Minutes in the usual way.

If the motion is passed, the Chair in consultation with the Parish Clerk shall then make arrangements for the formal presentation of the 'Freedom' which will be marked by the giving of a framed certificate.



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**SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY
FOR COUNCILLORS AND STAFF**

Approved 06.03.2024



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Introduction

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council recognises that its most important resources are its members and officers and it is committed to keeping them apprised of current issues and to developing them to their potential. Some training is necessary to ensure compliance with legal and statutory requirements.

Training can be defined as “a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy current and future needs of the organisation” (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Encourage Members and staff to undertake appropriate training and development
- Allocate training in a fair manner
- Ensure that all training is evaluated to assess its value.
- Ensure that the Parish Council has the necessary skills to plan and deliver high quality services.

Commitment to Training

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is committed to the training and development of all councillors and staff to enable them to make the most effective contribution to the Council's aims and objectives and to providing the highest quality representation and services to the Parish.

There are a number of benefits to training, it:

- Improves the quality of the services and facilities provided by the Council.
- Enables the organisation to achieve its corporate aims & objectives.
- Demonstrates commitment to employees and acts as a motivator, attractor and retention aid.
- Enables members to undertake their duties to the best of their ability.
- Improves the skill base of both councillors and employees and aids team working.

Councillors

Members bring a diverse range of skills and experience to the Council. However, both local government and the world around it, are fast changing and it is an essential investment to develop



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councillors to their full potential. In addition, the Council is likely to have a number of new functions over the coming years and it will be important for councillors fully appreciate the implications of the decisions they make.

The Council will establish a comprehensive Development Programme for members, based on the following approach:

- Skills development for individual members or groups of members.
- Seminars, Briefings & Workshops to raise general awareness of topical issues.
- Briefings and awareness raising prior to making a key decision or policy

A rolling programme will be established immediately following the adoption of this Policy and following normal elections and updated annually.

Certain training is identified as essential for all councillors including:

- Induction for new Councillors;
- General Power of Competence;
- Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework
- Equality responsibilities.
- Understanding the Planning System (for members of Planning Committee).

Some councillors may have undertaken relevant training at principal council level or in some cases as part of their employment.

Training needs are prioritised by the Staffing Committee following advice from the Parish Clerk and completion of a questionnaire by councillors.

Employees

Training needs are determined by the appraisal process and are set as targets for individual staff members by the Parish Clerk on a yearly basis. Training needs are also identified during the appointment process and by informal discussion. Although sometimes training does need to be prioritised, the Council will try to accommodate requests from staff which are reasonable and appropriate.

Certain staff may be required to hold valid First Aider qualifications or be trained as fire wardens.

Training is prioritised on the following grounds (not in priority order):

- Legislative requirements e.g. health and safety
- Changes in relevant legislation
- Changes in systems, new working methods or equipment
- New or revised qualifications available
- The delivery of devolved or new services



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- Specialist need.
- Unexpected need e.g. following a service failure or accident
- Identified competence issue

Corporate training is necessary for subjects including corporate objectives or working practices, equality, health and safety.

Other considerations include:

- Implications of employee release for training courses upon the operational need and capacity of the Parish Council
- Economic and effective means of training the employee
- Provision and availability of the training budget
- Continued professional development in line with requisite professional bodies.

All new staff will receive induction training.

Resourcing training

Sufficient funds are allocated in the budget for Staff and Members for training purposes with a forecast of anticipated expenditure presented to Members for consideration each year as part of the Budget setting process. Separate budget headings are allocated for Members and Staff.

Qualifications

Employees may apply to take qualification training. These will be considered on an individual basis and will be dependent upon the need or priorities of the Parish Council

- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)-The Parish Council view these as accrediting existing knowledge and is greatly encouraged.
- Career Personal Development (CPD)-The Parish Council supports the Career Personal Development of all its employees.
- Employees will be required to attend training courses, workshops or seminars where necessary relating to legal responsibilities and corporate standards

Delivery

Members' training, learning and development opportunities will be arranged predominately by Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) or SLCC. This will be supplemented as appropriate by in-house provision, the use of local training organisations and by inviting "guest speakers" to Council or committee meetings.



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Most staff training needs are catered for by ChALC, Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), or local colleges, again supplemented by specialist providers.

Some joint training for both members and officers is not only cost effective but often gives added value through a cross fertilisation of ideas.

Staff and Members attending courses are encouraged to pass on what they have learned to colleagues where appropriate.

Financial assistance

The cost of training for Members will be paid for by the Council and reasonable associated costs such as travel and subsistence, reimbursed.

The Parish Council will pay and/ or assist with expenses incurred to cover the cost of tuition and examination fees for employees provided that the training is approved by the Parish Clerk.

Costs for travel to tuition, courses or examination will generally be paid. This will include such expenses as:

- Course fees
- Examination fees
- Associated membership fees
- The purchase of resources to complete a course or examination

Where training is provided for a qualification or exceeds the general costs of training, then employees will be expected to sign an appropriate agreement to manage the risks associated with the Council's investment in the training. If an employee fails to sit an examination within a reasonable period of time, fails to satisfyingly progress or discontinues the course, the Parish Council may withdraw its support and may request reimbursement of the financial assistance the employee has received to that date.

Should a councillor or staff member fail to attend a training session, this should be reported immediately to the Parish Clerk. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken. If the cost of the training cannot be refunded, the Council will not be able to offer the same course again unless the councillor or staff member pays for it. However, exemptions may be granted by the Parish Clerk in cases of exceptional circumstances or health issues, subject to this being reported to the full council.

Study leave

Employees who are given approval to undertake external qualifications will be granted



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- Time to attend day release courses
- Time to sit examinations
- Study time (to be discussed and agreed with the Parish Clerk in advance)
- Paid leave for courses, studying and examinations

Training evaluation

Records of all employee training will be kept on individual personnel files and all Member training will be recorded.

All courses and seminars are evaluated by requesting staff and councillors for feedback.

Policy Review

The Annual Training and Development Plan for Members and staff, will be reviewed and updated every two years.



Report Statement

Meeting:	Finance and Strategy Committee
Report Purpose:	To provide Members with an updated version of the Financial Regulations
Version Control:	v1
Author:	Clerk

1. Report Summary

The report aims to provide Councillors with a set of policies to consider or review

2. Background

The Parish Council is required to regularly review its policies and governance to ensure its internal arrangements are both fit for purpose and compliant with the law.

3. Position

In May 2024, the Council approved the Financial Regulation. However, since then, NALC has issued a new model. Consequently, the Clerk has reviewed the regulation (attached) based on this new model.

4. Governance

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Financial Regulations
Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Standing Orders
Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Strategy 2024-29
Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council Delivery Plan 2024-25

5. Financial Impact

Nil

6. Resource Impact

Clerk's time

7. Conclusions

Members are asked to note the report and:

a. Approve the revised Financial Regulations attached and recommend the document to Full Council for approval

a. Approve the revised Financial Regulations attached, subject to some amendment being made, and recommend the document to Full Council for approval

c. Not approve the revised Financial Regulations

8. Consideration Sought

That the revised Financial Regulations are approved and recommended to Parish Council



**SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

DRAFT

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [enter date].

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]; and

2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
 - **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
 - **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
 - **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
 - **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
 - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. At every Finance & Strategy Committee meeting, 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 (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be recorded on the meeting minutes.
- 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 Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish 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 Staffing Committee at least annually in September/ October for the following financial year and recommended to Full Council for approval

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

4.5. Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance & Strategy Committee not later than the end of November each year.

4.6. The draft budget forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance & Strategy Committee and a recommendation made to the council.

4.7. 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.

- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. 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.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. 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 these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation (“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 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;

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.

- 5.9. where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk 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 into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council or relevant committee. 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 £1,000 excluding VAT.
 - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT.
 - a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £10,000 excluding VAT
 - in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.
 - the council for all items over £10,000;
- 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 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 and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £500 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

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

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. The council has resolved to bank with Co-Operative Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed regularly 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. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council or a duly delegated committee may authorise in advance for the year.

6.7. A copy of this schedule of regular payments shall be signed by three members on each and every occasion when payment is made - to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.

- 6.8. A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee for information only.
- 6.9. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments the following circumstances:
- i. any payments of up to £1,000 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 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 or Finance & Strategy Committee
- 6.10. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices. The council or relevant committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item 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.

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 at least 4 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 sent by email to three authorised signatories.
- 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 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 online
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and appended to the minutes
- 7.9. With the approval of the Council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are approved online by three authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by three authorised bank signatories, 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.
- 7.11. 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 three 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.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.13. 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.
- 7.14. Remembered password facilities should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.
- 8.4. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council or Finance & Strategy Committee at the next convenient meeting.

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council.
- 9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £500 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

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 [or RFO] (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or relevant committee.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the Finance & Strategy committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.
- 11.7. 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.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. 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.
- 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, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. 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.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. 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.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made quarterly where the claim exceeds £100 and at least annually at the end of the financial year.
- 13.7. 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.

13.8. 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.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by [the Clerk] to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

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

15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

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

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

16. Assets, properties and estates

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

16.2. The 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.

16.3. 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.

16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £1,000. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

- 17.1. 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.
- 17.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. 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
- 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. 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.
- 18.2. 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.
- 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.