



**ORDINARY MEETING**  
**7.30pm 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**  
**STOKE PRIOR VILLAGE HALL**

**MEETING PAPERS**

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# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

*Chairman:*  
Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright  
The Cider Mill  
Humber  
Herefordshire HR6 0NE

*Clerk to the Council:*  
Allan Drew  
The Coach House  
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Councillors are summoned to an ordinary meeting of the Group Parish Council to be held on

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7.30pm  
in Stoke Prior Village Hall**

which will consider the business set out in the agenda below.

10<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Allan Drew, Clerk to the Council

## AGENDA

### 63/25 Apologies for absence

*To receive:* any apologies for absence.

*To consider, if necessary:* excusing absence of members to the following meeting.

### 64/25 Declaration of interests and dispensations

*To receive and record:* any declarations of interest in agenda items in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted in July 2021.

*To consider:* any applications for dispensations in accordance with Standing Order 13.

### 65/25 Minutes of previous meetings

*To approve:* draft minutes of the meetings held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025

### 66/25 Chairman's announcements

*To note:* any announcements from the Chairman.

### 67/25 Public participation

*Under Standing Order 3e, any member of the public may make a statement or give evidence to the meeting on any business to be transacted or any other business, and ask or answer questions. At the discretion of the Chairman such participation may be permitted under the relevant agenda item.*

### 68/25 District Councillor's report

*To receive:* a report from Ward Councillor Bruce Baker.

### 69/25 20 MPH Speed Limits in the Group Parish

*To consider with Ward Councillor Baker:* the practicality of setting 20 MPH speed limits in the parts of the Group Parish

### 70/25 Planning Committee and planning applications update

**(a) To consider for comment new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council.**

#### Ford & Stoke Prior

**252407 Stoke Haven Stoke Prior HR6 0LG**

Proposed erection of conservatory.

**252071 Priory Farm Stoke Prior HR6 0ND**

2 3 & 4 attached to planning permission 233094

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions

**Split decision: Condition 2 (landscaping) &**

**condition 4 (biodiversity) are discharged. Condition 3 (water efficiency) is not discharged**

**251923 Land adjoining Croft Gate Farm Stoke Prior**

(orchard management plan) attached to planning permission 200705.

Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3

**Discharged**

#### Humber

**252379 Land adjacent to Butt Oak Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ**

family home with detached garage/workshop, parking area, landscaping and associated development

Proposed erection of a self-build, split level

**(b) To note: updates on current planning applications**

**Ford & Stoke Prior**

**223610 Land north of Bowley Court farm** Change of use from a water storage lagoon to a water and anaerobic digestate storage lagoon (retrospective). **Undecided.**  
This application is due to be determined by Herefordshire Planning and Regulatory Committee. However, it is not on the latest posted agenda for the meeting of 3 September 2025.

**204437 Plot 1 Land at Old Hall Stoke Prior HR6 0LH** Proposed construction of a new self-build custom home and garage **Undecided - on hold due to phosphates**

**Humber.**

**241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ** Proposed Conversion of Building to a self-build dwelling House **Undecided**

**212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG**  
Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses). **Undecided - on hold due to phosphates**

**212473 Dev 1 Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage Risbury HR6 0NG**  
Proposed permission for the siting of a caravan to provide accommodation on site during the construction of a dwelling on Plot 5 approved under application ref 181648. **Undecided- on hold due to phosphates.**

**211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire**  
Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687. **Undecided**

**193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ** Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm. **Undecided**

**71/25 General Financial Matters**

*To consider:* contribution to the costs of a community noticeboard  
*To receive:* the external auditor's closure and opinion for the 2024-25 accounts  
*To consider:* payments for authorisation

**72/25 Biodiversity Action Plan**

*To receive:* a presentation from Ms Jenny Ellerton on a draft biodiversity action plan for the Group Parish  
*To consider:* adoption of the plan as part of the wider Environment project and involvement of other local parishes

**73/25 HFSP Emergency Plan**

*To receive:* from Mr Philip Brown an update on the Group Parish Emergency Plan

**74/25 Annual Business from Forward Plan 2025-26**

*To consider:* adoption of new model Financial Regulations as recommended by HALC Internal Audit  
*To consider:* updates to Council GDPR policies.  
*To consider:* roles of Councillors

**75/25 BT K6 phone kiosk in Stoke Prior**

*To consider:* using the kiosk to house a new defibrillator for public use  
*To receive:* a paper from the Clerk estimating the cost of renovating the kiosk

**76/25 Lengthsman & PROW**

*To receive:* work program for 2025-26 to be grant funded  
*To consider:* any additional activities to be added to current list of works

**77/25 The Lamb Inn**

*To receive:* any updates on The Lamb Inn

**78/25 Current projects**

*To receive:* updates on current projects  
Traffic Management Plan Cllrs. Grace & Marston. To include discussion of 20mph limits in villages  
Environment Cllrs. Yair & Hinton

**79/25 Matters for discussion at the next meeting**

**Annual business from Forward Plan 2025-26**  
Draft budget, Projects, Reserves, Banking

**Date of next meeting**

*To note:* the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior village hall

The Chairman will close the meeting

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# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Draft Minutes

of the ordinary Meeting of the Group Parish Council on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior Village Hall

### Present:

Cllr. Ken Bemand  
Cllr. Chris Marston  
Cllr. Tim Yair,  
Cllr. Clare Harris  
Cllr. Rob Pugh

Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright (Chairman)  
Cllr. Sarah Sneyd  
Cllr. Janette Fullwood  
Cllr. James Hinton  
Cllr. Richard Thomas

Ward Councillor Bruce Baker, Clerk & RFO: Allan Drew

No members of the public attended.

### 49/25 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Anne Grace

### 50/25 Declaration of interests and dispensations

None received

### 51/25 Minutes of previous meetings

Cllr. Fullwood raised two points-

- Her annual report on Stoke Prior village hall had not been included in the minutes. The Clerk apologised for the omission and would add the report which had been received and which was included at the Annual Meeting.
- The Clerk clarified that although Kinnersley was on the A4112 road the “smiley face” SID could not be used on the A44 because of the higher classification of the A44.

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025 were then approved and signed by the Chairman

### 52/25 Chairman’s announcements

The Chairman announced that-

- Mr Kieran Wyldes had successfully purchased the Lamb Inn and had received the keys on 15 July. After many years of struggle and setbacks the Lamb would finally be open again as a public house.
- The community noticeboard outside the old Post Office is now in very poor condition and also sits on private land. It had been suggested that a new noticeboard should be purchased and installed close by the Lamb Inn. The Chairman suggested that the Council could pay half of the cost (amounting to about £450) and this suggestion would be further discussed at the next meeting

### 53/25 Update on Stoke Prior school by Mr Matt Lewis, Headteacher

Mr Lewis provided the following update on Stoke Prior school-

- 2024-25 has been a really good year both sporting and academic. Years 5&6 won the County Cricket championship. Year 4 were County Cricket runner-up. The rugby team came first in a big tournament in Bromyard. The football team won the Leominster North tournament. Year 4 team won a netball tournament in Hereford and there were successes for the cross-country team also. Musically the school choir has won a gold medal at the Hereford Performing Arts festival. Academically the year 6 SATs results were well above the national averages.
- Intake last September was low with 4 new students in reception class.
- A negative OFSTED report in 2022 has not been repeated with a 2023 follow-up showing improvement to the next level (requires improvement). The school is now doing a lot of self-promotion especially on Facebook to encourage parents of potential students to visit the school and form their own views. Signage has been extended following comments that some parents did not even know that the school existed.
- A pre-school playgroup has been started on Friday morning and is well attended by up to 25 families. The September 2025 intake has increased to 11.
- The PTA raised £1000 last year but financing remains difficult as budget allocation lags increased numbers by up to a year.
- There is a consultation on starting a pre-school group for 3+ since children coming to pre-school tend to become full time students into reception.

- The Academy now undertakes all the corporate functions such as HR, Finance etc. This step has improved the level of support compared with that provided by the Local Authority. The Academy Trust allows the school to organise the curriculum in the best way given that there are mixed age groups within the classes.
- The wind turbine has been de-commissioned and moved to a new location.

Mr Lewis would like to make these updates a regular event, and it was agreed that the next update would be in March 2026. The Clerk would update the Forward Plan.

#### 54/25 Public participation

*Under Standing Order 8, any member of the public may make a statement or give evidence to the meeting on any business to be transacted or any other business, and ask or answer questions. At the discretion of the Chairman such participation may be permitted under the relevant agenda item.*

No members of the public present

#### 55/25 District Councillor's report

To receive: a verbal update from the Ward Councillor

Cllr. Baker reported that-

- This administration is now two years into its four-year term
- There is progress on the by-pass. The Southern Link Road (now known as Hereford Western Bypass phase one) which connects the A465 to the A49 will commence in 2026.
- The accounts for 2024-25 are now closed. Herefordshire Council ended the year 2024-25 with a £0.5m surplus. In 2023 the projected overspend was £13m
- Last year the spend for Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport was £4.5m. Options to reduce this spend are being considered.
- The College of Arts is running a summer programme of short courses for adults in the creative art space.
- Government will no longer fund NDPs
- White claw crayfish in the River Arrow are dying from what is believed to be crayfish plague. The Environment Agency is investigating.
- The planning application for the Merton Meadows area is approaching determination. (It was granted with conditions on 31 July 2025). However, there are concerns about possible flooding.
- There is a "Call for Sites" issued for the new Local Plan. The sites are not necessarily just for housing.
- The annual canvass is approaching and will cover 87,000 dwellings.

#### 56/25 Planning Committee and planning applications update

**(c) To consider for comment new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council.**

##### Ford & Stoke Prior

Two new applications to check if prior approval is required – 251565 Ford farm, HR6 0LE and 251435 Luce farm HR6 0RR. The determinations have already been made and PA is NOT required.

##### Humber

**251590 New Barn, Gt. Marston Farm, Risbury, HR6 0NJ** Application for prior approval to erect roof over manure heap.  
**Prior approval refused, planning application required.**

**251884 Land at Buckland farm, Docklow, HR6 0RU** Conversion of redundant rural farm buildings to 8 dwellings. Demolition of existing farm buildings and erection of new farm buildings.

This application is in Docklow Parish. Council agreed that it would support the comments made by Docklow Council. The Clerk submitted the following comments-

*Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council discussed this application at its meeting on 16 July 2025. The application is in the neighbouring Parish of Docklow and Docklow Parish Council has already submitted comments supporting the application. Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council is in agreement with Docklow and SUPPORTS the application*

#### **(d) To note: updates on current planning applications**

##### Ford & Stoke Prior

**223610 Land north of Bowley Court farm** Change of use from a water storage lagoon to a water and anaerobic digestate storage lagoon (retrospective). **Undecided.**

This application is due to be determined by Herefordshire Planning and Regulatory Committee. However, it is not on the latest posted agenda for the meeting of 4 July 2025. The Chairman has written to the Ward Cllr. expressing his concerns regarding the delay in determining a retrospective application. The Planning Officer, Rebecca Jenman provided Cllr. Baker with an update on the case. This update is summarised as-

*The retrospective planning application 223610 is currently under review, with a request for committee determination. This determination is likely to be conditional upon approval by the planning officer. An extension has been proposed until the end of September for the submission of additional documents, including a heritage statement and an aerial emission assessment. The applicant is preparing these documents to address outstanding issues. However, there is*

*no guarantee that these submissions will resolve the technical concerns. Any required mitigation measures must be implemented upfront rather than through planning conditions.*

Cllr. Baker believed that if the required information is not forthcoming by the end of September the application will be refused.

It was also confirmed that Herefordshire is using contract planners to help work through the backlog of applications. However, Cllr. Baker was unaware of when this backlog might be cleared.

On the phosphate problems it was believed that the queue to obtain credits is about four years. Herefordshire had written to Government requesting that the phosphate restrictions be lifted but other interest groups such as Natural England are against such a relaxation without proper measures to address the problems.

**200705/251098 Land adjoining Croft Gate Farm Stoke Prior.** Application to lift conditions 3 & 4 of 200705  
**Split decision C3 not upheld, C4 discharged**

**204437 Plot 1 Land at Old Hall Stoke Prior HR6 0LH** Proposed construction of a new self-build custom home and garage  
**Undecided - on hold due to phosphates**

#### **Humber.**

**241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ** Proposed Conversion of Building to a self-build dwelling House  
**Undecided**

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**Undecided**

**193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ** Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm.  
**Undecided**

Cllr. Bemand mentioned that there were some travellers' caravans on the A44/A49 roundabout. Cllr. Hinton understood that the travellers had been served a section 77 notice which required them to vacate the site by 15 July. This had not happened so further action has been taken though such action has had little effect in the past.

The Chairman had heard that travellers might be interested in purchasing land in Risbury in the Poplands Lane area.

#### **57/25 General Financial Matters - Report from the RFO. Report from the RFO.**

Bank balances on 11 July 2025 are-

Unity Bank current account £8,749.63

H&R 90 day account £5,001.00

Total £13,750.63

#### **Q1 (April – June 2025) Bank Reconciliation**

## HFSP CASHBOOK 2025-26

Date	Details	Receipt	Payment	Classification	Add to Asset Register	VAT	VAT Number	Running Balance
01/04/2025	Balance brought forward	3920.91						3920.91
07/04/2025	Alex Davidson AD0132		300.00	Lengthsman				3620.91
07/04/2025	Alex Davidson AD0131		600.00	Lengthsman				3020.91
17/04/2025	Herefordshire Council precept pt. 1	11348.00		Precept				14368.91
17/04/2025	J P Ltd	400.00		Adverts				14768.91
22/04/2025	Radway Bridge	210.00		Adverts				14978.91
30/04/2025	Service charge		6.00	Bank Charges				14972.91
13/05/2025	Golf Grove & Bowl	400.00		Adverts				15372.91
14/05/2025	Matthew Newman	17.50		Adverts				15390.41
20/05/2025	Herefordshire Council Refund	955.00		Grants				16345.41
27/05/2025	A M Drew Clerk April 25 salary		552.21	Clerk				15793.20
27/05/2025	HMRC PAYE April 25		178.98	Clerk				15614.22
27/05/2025	Philip Brown		37.80	Parish Pump				15576.42
27/05/2025	Philip Brown		25.40	Parish Pump				15551.02
27/05/2025	A M Drew Clerk May 25 salary		552.21	Clerk				14998.81
27/05/2025	Barrington Print INV-13951 May 25 Pump		460.00	Parish Pump				14538.81
27/05/2025	Geosphere mapping		36.00	Administration		20.00%	296312096	14502.81
27/05/2025	Barrington Print INV-13858 April 25 Pump		460.00	Parish Pump				14042.81
27/05/2025	Philip Brown		27.20	Parish Pump				14015.61
27/05/2025	HMRC PAYE May 25		178.98	Clerk		0.00%		13836.63
31/05/2025	Service charge		6.00	Bank Charges		0.00%		13830.63
03/06/2025	Zurich Insurance 2025-26		494.50	Insurance, audit,				13336.13
03/06/2025	Lion Court Podiatry TP 82	120.00		Adverts				13456.13
05/06/2025	Thomas Humber W/land of Remem.	120.00		Adverts				13576.13
16/06/2025	Services for Indep. TP83	210.00		Adverts				13786.13
20/06/2025	H&R Building Society		1.00	Out-Transfer				13785.13
23/06/2025	Matthew Newman	17.50		Adverts				13802.63
25/06/2025	H&R Building Society		5000.00	Out-Transfer				8802.63
30/06/2025	Information Commissioner		47.00	Insurance, audit,				8755.63
30/06/2025	Service charge		6.00	Bank Charges				8749.63
<b>Apr-Jun</b>	<b>Sub-totals for period (Horiz.)</b>	<b>13798.00</b>	<b>8969.28</b>					
	Sub -totals for period (Vert)	13798.00	8969.28					
	Balance check	8749.63	OK					
	Reconciliation	OK	OK					
	<b>Totals for financial year to date</b>	<b>13798.00</b>	<b>8969.28</b>					

In the Council cash book for quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2025) the opening balance is £3920.91. During this first quarter of the year Council received £13,798.00 and paid £8969.28. The balance shown in the cash book (£3920.91+£13798.00-£8969.28=£8749.63) is £8749.63.

The bank statements showing 31 March 2025 and 30 June 2025 follow which confirm both the opening and closing balance for the quarter.

Note that the total balance at the end of the quarter is £8749.63+£5001.00 = £13749.63. The £5001 is the balance in the H&R 90 day deposit account. A letter from the H&R Building Society dated 26<sup>th</sup> June is attached to confirm this balance.

Signed..... **RFO: Allan Drew**

Signed..... **Chair: Cllr. Fowler-Wright**

Signed..... **Finance Committee: Cllr. Marston**

**Dated 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

The RFO, and Cllrs. Fowler-Wright & Marston duly signed the reconciliation.

**April 2025 Bank statement showing opening balance on 1 April 2025**

# Your Account Statement



For Businesses. For Communities. For Good.

1034638010 | 01375

Mr Allan Drew  
Humber Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council  
The Coach House  
Pencombe  
Bromyard  
HR7 4RL

Unity Trust Bank plc  
PO Box 7193  
Planetary Road  
Willenhall  
WV1 9DG



**Date:** 30/04/2025

**Account Name:** Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

**Swift Code (BIC):** NWBKGB2L

**IBAN Number:** GB93NWBK60023571418024

**Sort Code:** 608301

**Account Number:** 20430401

Your arranged overdraft limit is £0.00

**Go Paperless!** Receive your statements online and we'll notify you by SMS or email when they're available to view. Simply log into Your Online Banking and update your statement preferences or give us a call on 0345 140 1000



For eligible organisations, your deposits held with Unity Trust Bank are protected up to £85,000 under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). For more information about eligibility and compensation provided by the FSCS, please visit: [FSCS.org.uk](https://www.fscs.org.uk) or refer to our FSCS Information Sheet and Exclusions List at [unity.co.uk/fscs](https://www.unity.co.uk/fscs)

## Contact Us

- Call us: **0345 140 1000**
- Email us: [us@unity.co.uk](mailto:us@unity.co.uk)
- Visit us: [unity.co.uk](https://www.unity.co.uk)

1034638010 | 01375 | 00001 | 00004 |

### Your Current T1 account transactions:

Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
31/03/2025		Balance brought forward	£0.00	£0.00	£3,920.91
07/04/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Alex Davidson	£300.00	£0.00	£3,620.91
07/04/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Alex Davidson	£600.00	£0.00	£3,020.91
17/04/2025	Credit	HCC CREDITORS	£0.00	£11,348.00	£14,368.91

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Statement number 071

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## Your Account Statement



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Unity Trust Bank plc  
PO Box 7193  
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Willenhall  
WV1 9DG

1042515011 | 01362

Mr Allan Drew  
Humber Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council  
The Coach House  
Pencombe  
Bromyard  
HR7 4RL

**Date:** 30/06/2025

**Account Name:** Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

**Swift Code (BIC):** NWBKGB2L

**IBAN Number:** GB93NWBK60023571418024

**Sort Code:** 608301

**Account Number:** 20430401

Your arranged overdraft limit is £0.00

Go Paperless! Receive your statements online and we'll notify you by SMS or email when they're available to view. Simply log into Your Online Banking and update your statement preferences or give us a call on 0345 140 1000



For eligible organisations, your deposits held with Unity Trust Bank are protected up to £85,000 under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). For more information about eligibility and compensation provided by the FSCS, please visit: [FSCS.org.uk](https://www.fscs.org.uk) or refer to our FSCS Information Sheet and Exclusions List at [unity.co.uk/fscs](https://www.unity.co.uk/fscs)

### Contact Us

- Call us: **0345 140 1000**
- Email us: [us@unity.co.uk](mailto:us@unity.co.uk)
- Visit us: [unity.co.uk](https://www.unity.co.uk)

### Your Current T1 account transactions:

Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
31/05/2025		Balance brought forward	£0.00	£0.00	£13,830.63
03/06/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: Zurich Insurance	£494.50	£0.00	£13,336.13
03/06/2025	Credit	LION COURT PODIATRY AND ASSOCIATES	£0.00	£120.00	£13,456.13
05/06/2025	Credit	THOMAS H W OF R	£0.00	£120.00	£13,576.13

Page number 1 of 3

Statement number 073

**For Businesses.  
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Your Current T1 account transactions:					
Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
16/06/2025	Transfer	SERVICES FOR INDEP	£0.00	£210.00	£13,786.13
20/06/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: HR Savings	£1.00	£0.00	£13,785.13
23/06/2025	Credit	Matthew Newman	£0.00	£17.50	£13,802.63
25/06/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: HR Savings	£5,000.00	£0.00	£8,802.63
30/06/2025	Direct Debit	Direct Debit (ICO)	£47.00	£0.00	£8,755.63
30/06/2025	Fee	Service Charge	£6.00	£0.00	£8,749.63

Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
16/06/2025	Transfer	SERVICES FOR INDEP	£0.00	£210.00	£13,786.13
20/06/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: HR Savings	£1.00	£0.00	£13,785.13
23/06/2025	Credit	Matthew Newman	£0.00	£17.50	£13,802.63
25/06/2025	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: HR Savings	£5,000.00	£0.00	£8,802.63
30/06/2025	Direct Debit	Direct Debit (ICO)	£47.00	£0.00	£8,755.63
30/06/2025	Fee	Service Charge	£6.00	£0.00	£8,749.63



**For Businesses.  
For Communities.  
For Good.**

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Mr A Drew, Mr H Fowler-Wright & Mr T Yair  
Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council  
The Coach House  
Pencombe  
Bromyard  
Herefordshire  
HR7 4RL

26<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Dear Mr Drew, Mr Fowler-Wright & Mr Yair

**Your new Local Council 90 Day Notice Deposit Account**

Thank you for opening a new account with the Society. Your new account details and opening balance are:

Open Date	-	3rd June 2025
Account Balance	-	£5,001.00
Account Number	-	17011058123

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To pay money into your account online or set up a regular Standing Order, use these details:

**Account type:** Business account

**Account name:** The account name of your organisation

**Sort Code:** 40-05-30

**Account Number:** 74575938

**Reference or roll number:** Your 11-digit Hinckley & Rugby account number, shown above.

Without this, we will not be able to allocate the money to your account, and it will be returned to sender.

Please note that withdrawals can only be made by electronic funds transfer and can only be withdrawn to the council's nominated bank account.

Withdrawals are subject to a 90-day notice period and must be made within 14 days of the notice period becoming effective. Instant withdrawals (outside of the notice period) are not permitted under the term and conditions of this account. The total amount on notice of withdrawal at any time must not be more than the balance of the account.

You can give notice of a withdrawal at any of our branches or agencies, by calling our Customer Service Team on 0800 434 6343, or by posting a signed letter to the branch or to our head office. You can also give notice of a withdrawal of up to £25,000 on our H&R Online service (if you are registered).

When the notice becomes effective, withdrawals of up to £250,000 will be processed on the first business day of the 14-day withdrawal window, and credited to your nominated bank account the same business day. No charge will be made for this service.

Withdrawals over £250,000 are sent by telegraphic transfer (CHAPs). There is a charge for this service; please refer to the current tariff of charges in the Interest Rates for Savers leaflet or on the Society's website.

## H&R Online

Our H&R Online service offers many useful features. For withdrawal requests, any one signatory can make the request to transfer funds to your nominated bank account. To register for H&R Online, please visit our website [hrbs.co.uk](http://hrbs.co.uk) and click the **H&R Online** button to begin your registration process.

## Other information

The following documents have been shared with you before: Savings Terms and Conditions, Deposit Guarantee Scheme, Customer Privacy Notice, and the declaration you signed for your new account. You can also view these documents at [hrbs.co.uk/important-savings-information](http://hrbs.co.uk/important-savings-information) or by visiting your local branch.

If you need any help, or if you would like more information about our range of accounts, please contact us on **01455 250959** or [hinckleybranch@hrbs.co.uk](mailto:hinckleybranch@hrbs.co.uk) or visit your local branch.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Tebbutt  
Senior Customer Assistant  
Hinckley Branch

BUDEGET MONITOR			2025-26			
		OUTTURN 2024-25	BUDGET	YEAR TO DATE	FORECAST OUTTURN	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET
1	Precept	15322.00	22696.00	11348.00	22696.00	0.00
2	Pump Advertising	2487.00	2750.00	1495.00	2750.00	0.00
3	Pump Postage	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	0.00
4	Grants	6317.63	10000.00	955.00	13300.00	3300.00
5	Other Income	3104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	VAT Reclaim	2097.15	1967.00	0.00	1967.00	0.00
7	CW Fundraising	695.38	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00
8	Other Projects	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>30313.16</b>	<b>37953.00</b>	<b>13798.00</b>	<b>41253.00</b>	<b>3300.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
10	Clerk	4969.68	8836.00	1462.38	8536.00	300.00
11	Administration	1025.14	500.00	48.00	500.00	0.00
12	Insurance, audit, professional	1294.64	1600.00	541.50	541.50	1058.50
13	Website & IT	553.49	900.00	0.00	900.00	0.00
14	Hire of Halls	210.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00
15	Training and development	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	Equipment	654.93	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
17	Maintenance	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
18	HMRC	3557.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
19	Other	1738.87	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
20	<b>DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>14004.48</b>	<b>12286.00</b>	<b>2051.88</b>	<b>10677.50</b>	<b>1608.50</b>
<b>PROJECTS</b>						
21	War Memorial	60.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
22	Parish Pump	5350.00	5100.00	1010.40	5100.00	0.00
23	Lengthsman	355.00	14752.00	900.00	14752.00	0.00
24	Community Week	496.67	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00
25	Environment Project	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
26	Road Safety	4958.98	5000.00	0.00	5000.00	0.00
27	Welcome pack		0.00		0.00	0.00
28	Trails Booklet	821.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
29	Project B	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
30	Project C	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
31					0.00	
32	<b>PROJECTS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>12041.65</b>	<b>25352.00</b>	<b>1910.40</b>	<b>25352.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	1966.97	3000	6.00	3000.00	0.00
				0.00		
34	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>28013.10</b>	<b>40638.00</b>	<b>3968.28</b>	<b>39029.50</b>	<b>1608.50</b>
35	<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>4267.03</b>	<b>315.00</b>	<b>9829.72</b>	<b>5223.50</b>	<b>4908.50</b>

## Notes for budget monitor Q1 2025-26

NOTES FOR Q1 BUDGET MONITOR 2024-25	
1	As agreed at meeting 15 January 2025. Increase to create drainage reserve of £10,000
2	
3	Nominal amount
4	Lengthsman scheme updated to include £2376 base grant & £1188 match funded Nominated Task. Applications for drainage grant of £5000 and PROW grant of £5000 will be made.
5	
6	
7	Estimate only
8	
9	
10	Based on Clerk's gross salary for 2025-26 plus arrears (~£300 for 2024-25)
11	Budget in line with normal spend. (Last year £600 for L/man advert)
12	Budget increased by £300 due to sharp and unexpected rise in insurance premium
13	New PC + some soft ware in readiness for W11.
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	Now included with Clerk line 10
19	
20	
21	Project closed
22	Price to be held at £460/issue for 11 issues + some misc. items (stamps etc.)
23	AMP £2376; Nom Task £2376 (incl. Parish match funding); Drainage £5000: PROW £5000
24	Estimate similar to 2024-25
25	No spend last year. Council to agree way forward on this project.
26	Budget set at £5000 as for last year.
27	Project closed
28	Project closed
29	
30	
31	
32	
33	VAT estimate based on increased Lengthsman works
34	
35	Surplus is calculated on ex-VAT costs. Note that funds to be used to create £10,000 drainage reserve

The RFO explained his thinking around the budget in particular that Grants (line 4) look as if they might be higher for this year. So total income then might well be higher than budget.

Payments for Authorisation

Payments made since last meeting.					
No.	Name	Ex-VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	Clerk's April 2025 salary
2	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	Clerk's May 2025 salary payable 25 May 2025
3	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	INV-13951 May 25 Pump
4	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	INV-13858 April 25 Pump
5	Geosphere	30.00	6.00	36.00	Parish online mapping services
6	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	01/04/2025 PAYE
7	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	01/05/2025 PAYE
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2412.38</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>2583.38</b>	

Income received since last meeting –			
No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	Herefordshire Council	955.00	Refund for drainage projects 2024-25
2	Lion Court Podiatry	120.00	Pump Advert
3	Thomas Humber W/land	120.00	Pump Advert
4	Services for Indep.	210.00	Pump Advert
5	Matthew Newman	17.50	Pump Advert
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1422.50</b>	

Payments for Authorisation					
No.	Name	Ex VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	June 2025 salary
2	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	July 2025 salary, due 25th July
3	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	INV-14066 June 2025 Pump
4	Barrington Print	448.00	0.00	448.00	INV-14209 July 2025 Pump
6	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE June 2025
7	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE July 2025
6	SLCC	183.00	0.00	183.00	Annual subscription
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2553.38</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2553.38</b>	

The RFO had received two additional invoices one for £375+VAT for the new W11 laptop (from CSS Computers) and the other from Gwent Web Design for £120+VAT for the hosting charge for the Council website. He asked that Council authorise these additional payments.  
Council authorised these payments of £2553.38+£375.00+£120.00 + VAT as appropriate.  
(Total £3147.38)

## 58/25 Annual Business from Forward Plan 2025-26

The business carried over from the May meeting and scheduled for this meeting is-

- adoption of new model Standing Orders as recommended by HALC Internal Audit
- updates to all Council (non-GDPR) policies.
- committees & membership

### Update to Standing Orders

At the 2024-25 Internal Audit HALC stated that Council's Standing Orders were now quite old (though they have been reviewed every year and updates made). It was recommended that Council adopts the model Standing Orders published by NALC, which was something that had been intended anyway.

The basic set of Model Standing Orders requires Council to make choices about the specific wording. The Clerk had reviewed all these choices, summarised them in a table and recommended which wording Council could adopt. Council discussed these recommendations and mostly accepted them with three exceptions where minor changes were agreed. Council then resolved to adopt the new set of Standing Orders which are contained in appendix 1 to these minutes.

### Update to non-GDPR policies

Council has the following policies which are non-GDPR.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>General Description</b>	<b>Last Review</b>	<b>Last Update</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Grievance Procedure	For employees with a grievance against the Council as an employer	2022	N/A	New policy drafted for consideration
Disciplinary Policy & Procedure	Management of employee performance and misconduct	2022	N/A	New updated policy drafted for consideration
HFSP Equalities policy May 2025	To comply with Council obligations under the Equalities Act 2010	2025	2022	No changes proposed
HFSP Protocol on the recording and filming of Council and Committee meetings May 2025	To comply with legislation promoting openness and transparency in Council business	2025	N/A	No changes proposed
HFSP Complaints Procedure Jan2013 amended May 2025	Complaints from residents to Council regarding Council administration, procedures or against Council employees.,	2025	2025 Contact details updated	No changes proposed
HFSP Publication Scheme Schedule Classes of Information as amended May 2025	The information available from Council concerning all aspects of its activities	2025	2025	Details updated particularly around financial information
HFSP Safeguarding Statement	To ensure all facilities and activities offered by Council limit risk to children, young people and adults at risks.	2025	2023	All links and references in the statement are still valid. No changes required.

All these policies have been reviewed and in the case of the Grievance Procedure and the Disciplinary Policy & Procedure recent updates to employment law meant that new policies/procedures would be the most effective route to improvement. A draft Grievance Procedure and a draft Disciplinary Policy & Procedure were discussed and a number of amendments considered and agreed. The finalised Grievance Procedure is at appendix 2 and the finalised Disciplinary Policy & Procedure is at appendix 3. Both policies were adopted by Council.

The Chairman confirmed with Members that the remaining non-GDPR policies were satisfactory and required no further discussion.

### **Committees & Membership.**

The roles as agreed for 2024-25 are shown below. Following discussion Council agreed these roles would remain unchanged for 2025-26.

#### **Council Committees**

- a) Planning Committee  
Current members of the committee are Chairman & vice-Chairman (ex-officio), Cllrs. Bemand, Marston, Fullwood and Grace.
- (b) Community Week Committee  
Current Members - the Chairman and vice-Chairman ex-officio, Margaret Brown (Secretary and Treasurer) and any other member of the community wishing to attend.
- (c) Finance Committee  
Current Members - the RFO, Cllr Tim Yair and Cllr. Chris Marston.

## Membership of other bodies and representatives 2025-26

Current subscriptions to other bodies are-

HALC	~£700/year
CPRE	£36/year
Parish Online	£36/year
SLCC	~£118

Council resolved these subscriptions should continue

To appoint Councillors to the following positions-

Risbury Village Hall Committee representative:	currently Cllr. Harris
Stoke Prior Village Hall Committee representative:	currently Cllr. Fulwood
Police Liaison Officer:	currently Cllr. Fowler-Wright.
Safeguarding Officer:	currently Cllr. Yair
Humber Close Liaison Officer	currently Cllr. Grace
Public Rights of Way Officers: Iain Cholerton assisted by Cllr. Harris (bridleways), Philip Brown (Humber) and Cllr. Sneyd (Stoke Prior)	

## 59/25 Lengthsman & PROW

Council's new Lengthsman has submitted quotations to carry out a program of work on PROWs based on the PFOs annual reports. The quotations follow and in total amount to £2750

PROW-Stoke Prior	Action Required	Estimate
SP1	More details required – site visit required to outline the work that needs to be done.	Unknown – further information is required.
SP2	Clear the route & signage	£280
SP4	Replace broken post and add signage.	£240
SP31	Clearance of undergrowth, check bridge and handrail for defects and safety.	£180
SP31	Improve signage and clear path.	£280
FD4	Improve signage across the golf course.	£60
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£1040</b>

PROW-Humber	Action Required	Estimate
HU13	Straighten and support fingerpost sign and clear vegetation.	£60
HU3	Stile / gate 1 - is in need of repair and signage added.	£320
HU3	Bridge 2 – in need of repair	Inspection is required.
HU3	Stile 4 and 5 – overgrowth, path clearance. Stile 6 – Stile needs replacing.	£380
HU5	Stile 2- Minor repairs.	£120
HU6	Stile 1- Replace stile.	£320
HU6	Stile 6 – Replace stile.	£320
HU7	Waymarker post required	£40
PG12	Clearance of undergrowth	£150
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£1710</b>

Council accepted the quotations and the Lengthsman has been instructed to carry out this work.

The Lengthsman has also been instructed to carry out work on the annual maintenance plan

The Chairman raised the longstanding problem of SP1 which disappeared over 20 years ago as a result of a landslip. The Clerk recounted his attempts to engage Herefordshire PROW on the problem but had been unsuccessful. Council discussed legal remedies to this problem using section 56 of the Highways Act 1980 and although this would be a last resort, it was not ruled out.

The Clerk would make another attempt to get a site meeting with PROW.

The Clerk has asked Cllr. Sneyd for further details on SP13 overcropping to find the landowner.

Cllr. Fullwood reported that she had asked Colin Smith the Locality Steward if the Prill pipe under the road in the village centre had been cleared. A BB team had attempted clearance but had encountered an obstruction and said a camera survey was necessary. The Clerk contacted Colin Smith for an update and received the following response-

*Good afternoon,*

*I have checked job no. 41703843. It appears that the jetting crew went out on 1<sup>st</sup> July and completed the job at 08.12 hrs. There is not any mention of an inline blockage in the notes.*

*Kind regards,*

**Sue Matthews**

**Customer Service Administrator** | Balfour Beatty Living Places | Herefordshire

At some time in the near future the Lengthsman will need a camera team to support his work program and it is suggested that the Prill pipe is checked when the team is in the area.

Cllr. Yair mentioned there was an unexpected road closure near Old Hall but these signs have now been removed.

#### **60/25 The Lamb Inn**

There was no specific update provided on The Lamb Inn other than that Keiran Wyldes has now received the keys for the Inn.

#### **61/25 Current projects**

##### **Traffic Management Plan Cllrs. Grace & Marston**

In Cllr. Grace's absence Cllr. Marston reported that a formal meeting of the A44 TSG would be called in the near future. Also following the last site meeting Herefordshire would arrange re-painting of the white lines at Humber Close/A44 junction. This has not yet happened and would be urged.

##### **Environment Cllrs. Yair & Hinton**

Cllrs. Yair and Hinton had met with BB and a drainage consultancy to discuss the inadequate drainage at Steensbridge on the A44. The flooding problem was sufficient to trigger a Herefordshire response and the group would see what could be achieved to mitigate water ingress. Currently there is little hope that much progress would be made, although BB seemed inclined to implement some simple mitigation measures which might well make a difference.

#### **62/25 Matters for discussion at the next meeting**

##### **Annual Business from Forward Plan**

Financial Regulations  
Non-GDPR policies  
Role of Councillors

##### **Date of next meeting**

*To note:* the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior village hall

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Standing Orders

Drafted	2025
Adopted	16 July 2025
Review Period	Annual
Last Reviewed	N/A
Next Review	2026
Author	NALC + Allan Drew, Clerk

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## INTRODUCTION

### HOW TO USE STANDING ORDERS

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

The standing orders do not include financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. financial regulations are available to councils in membership of NALC.

### DRAFTING NOTES

standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. Standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. It is NALC's view that all model standing orders will generally be suitable for councils.

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights. Standing orders use gender-neutral language (e.g. "Chair").

## 1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chair of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chair of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chair of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chair of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
  - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation; or

- v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;
  - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the chair of the meeting.

## **2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

## **3. MEETINGS GENERALLY**

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chair of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chair of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral**

- commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.
- n The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
- o Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one).
- p The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- q Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.
- r The chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

*See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.*

- s Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
  - i. the time and place of the meeting;
  - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
  - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
  - vii. the resolutions made.
- u A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and

**vote on that matter.**

- v **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

*See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*

- w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours.

#### **4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
  - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
  - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
  - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair of the standing committee;
  - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee;
  - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
  - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and

- also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

## 5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chair of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chair of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
  - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
  - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
  - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
  - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;

- v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
- vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
- vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
- viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
- ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
- x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
- xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
- xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

## **6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chair of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chair of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any 2 members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

## **7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 4 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

## **8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chair of the meeting.

## **9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 3 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

## 10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
- i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - ii. to move to a vote;
  - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
  - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
  - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
  - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
  - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
  - viii. to require a written report;
  - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
  - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
  - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
  - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
  - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
  - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
  - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
  - xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - xvii. to close the meeting.

## 11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

*See also standing order 20.*

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**

- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

## 12. DRAFT MINUTES

Full Council meetings	●
Committee meetings	●
Sub-committee meetings	●

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- e Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

## 13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

*See also standing order 3(u).*

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is

required.

- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
  - i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
  - ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
  - iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

#### 14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**
- b

#### 15. PROPER OFFICER

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
  - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
    - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
    - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See *standing order 3(b)* for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and *standing order 3(c)* for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 3 days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;  
(see also *standing order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or, in their absence, the Vice-Chair of the Council within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting or a meeting of the Planning Committee if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council.
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.  
(see also *standing order 23*).

## **16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

## 17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of “Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide”.
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council’s financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
  - i. the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
  - ii. the Council’s aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
  - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
  - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
  - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

## 18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
  - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
  - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
  - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
  - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council’s accounts and/or orders of payments; and
  - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below [60,000] due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
  - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
  - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

## 19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council is subject to standing order 11.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Clerk shall notify the chair of the absence occasioned by illness or other reason and the Clerk shall report such absence to the next Council meeting.
- c The chair or in their absence, the vice-chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution of the Council.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Clerk shall contact the Council chair in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or

formal grievance matter raised by the Clerk relates to the chair or vice-chair of the Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.

- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

## **20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

*See also standing order 21.*

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b. **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

## **21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

*See also standing order 11.*

- a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
- c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

## **22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

## **23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

*See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).*

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.]**

The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.

## **24. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the Unitary Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

## **25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

## **26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 4 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.

The decision of the chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Grievance Procedure

Drafted	July 2025
Adopted	16 July 2025
Review Period	2 Years
Next Review	2027
Author	Allan Drew, Clerk

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

**1. Informal grievance procedure**

In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with the Chair of the Parish Council, with a view to resolving the matter informally if possible (and appropriate). If the employee feels that this is not appropriate or they wish to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below.

**2. Formal grievance procedure**

2.1 The employee must set out their grievance in writing (“Statement of Grievance”) and provide a copy to the Chair.

2.2 The vice-Chair will arrange a specially convened subcommittee of the Parish Council to discuss the matter and invite the employee to attend that meeting. The employee should take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Grievance meetings will normally be convened within 14 days of the Council receiving the Statement of Grievance. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance meeting by a representative or colleague. If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or their representative, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

2.3 A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford the subcommittee time to consider the fairest outcome.

2.4 Within 5 working days of that meeting the employee will be informed of the subcommittee’s decision. This decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

2.5 If the employee wishes to appeal against the Council’s decision they must inform the Chairman within 5 working days of receiving the decision.

2.6 The employee will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting. The appeal will be heard by three Councillors who were not involved with the original hearing/decision. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance appeal meeting by a representative or colleague.

2.7 A grievance appeal meeting will normally be convened within 15 working days of the Chairman receiving notice that the employee wishes to appeal pursuant to 2.5 above. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or his or her companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

2.8 After the grievance appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the final decision within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

**3 Modified Council grievance procedure for former employees**

3.1 If an ex-employee wishes to raise a grievance, they must set out their grievance and the basis for that grievance in writing to the Chair.

3.2 Following receipt of a statement of grievance as in 3.1 above, the Chair will write to the ex-employee inviting them to choose one of the following-

attend a meeting to discuss the grievance,

*or*

have the Parish Council respond to the grievance in writing.

If the ex-employee does not agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence then within 7 working days of that choice the above steps 2.1 to 2.4 of the standard council grievance procedure will be followed

If the ex-employee does agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence, the Council will consider his or her grievance. Council will inform the ex-employee in writing within 14 days of the receipt of such confirmation setting out the basis for the Council's decision.

# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.

Drafted	2025
Adopted	16 July 2025
Review Period	5 Years
Last Reviewed	N/A
Next Review	2030
Author	Allan Drew, Clerk

# HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY POLICY & PROCEDURE

## Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>).
- 2 It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. [https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG\\_Guide\\_Feb\\_2019.pdf](https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf)
- 3 The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.
- 4 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 5 This policy confirms:
  - informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance
  - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
  - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
  - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
  - employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing
  - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case
  - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
  - if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within 7 calendar days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
  - any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
  - information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
  - audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
  - employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final

- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it,
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the consent of affected parties

### **Examples of misconduct**

- 6 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.
- unauthorised absence
  - poor timekeeping
  - misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
  - inappropriate behaviour
  - refusal to follow reasonable instructions
  - breach of health and safety rules.

### **Examples of gross misconduct**

- 7 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: The list is not exhaustive
- bullying, discrimination and harassment
  - incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
  - violent behaviour
  - fraud or theft
  - gross negligence
  - gross insubordination
  - serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
  - serious and deliberate damage to property
  - use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
  - disclosure of confidential information.

### **Suspension**

- 8 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.
- 9 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.

- 10 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

### **Examples of unsatisfactory work performance**

- 11 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: The list is not exhaustive.
- inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
  - inadequate IT skills
  - unsatisfactory management of staff
  - unsatisfactory communication skills.

### **The Procedure**

- 12 Preliminary enquiries\_ The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.
- 13 If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct. Should the employee not have a line manager (e.g. the Clerk) then the Council Chair will form a subcommittee (the staffing committee) of three Councillors to establish the facts
- 14 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

### **Disciplinary investigation**

- 15 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 16 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Council's staffing committee will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The staffing committee will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:
- the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
  - whether a recommendation is required
  - how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
  - who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.
- 17 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings usually within 35 Calendar days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 22).

- 18 The staffing committee will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that they have reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when they meets with the Investigator, they will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.
- 19 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 20 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 21 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. Their role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be considered under the policy.
- 22 The Investigator's report will contain their recommendations and the findings on which they were based. They will recommend either:
- the employee has no case to answer and there should no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
  - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
  - the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 23 The Investigator will submit the report to the staffing committee which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 24 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

### **The disciplinary meeting**

- 25 If the staffing committee decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of 3 councillors, to formally hear the allegations. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chair from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee.
- 26 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:
- the names of its Chair and other two members
  - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
  - a copy of the information provided to the sub-committee which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
  - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that they has sufficient time to prepare for it
  - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least 2 working days before the meeting
  - that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official

- 27 The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:
- the Chair will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
  - the Chair will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
  - the Chair will invite the employee to present their account
  - the employee (or the companion) will set out their case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)
  - any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
  - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up
- 28 The Chair will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within 7 calendar days of the meeting. The Chair will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.
- 29 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the sub-committee.

### **Disciplinary action**

- 30 If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

#### First written warning

- 31 If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:
- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
  - that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
  - the employee's right of appeal
  - that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

#### Final written warning

- 32 If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:
- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
  - that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
  - the employee's right of appeal
  - that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

#### Dismissal

- 33 The Council may dismiss:
- for gross misconduct

- if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
  - if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.
- 34 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, they will receive a written statement of the reasons for their dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of their right of appeal. If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

### **The appeal**

- 35 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. Their written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within 7 calendar days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.
- 36 The grounds for appeal include;
- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
  - the sub-committee's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
  - the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
  - new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.
- 37 Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a panel of 3 members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of 3 members of the Council who may include members of the staff committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from one of its members.
- 38 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 14 calendar days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that they may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
- 39 At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:
- introduce the panel members to the employee
  - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the disciplinary decision
  - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 40 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 41 The Chair will inform the employee that they will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 42 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 43 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 44 The appeal panel's decision is final.

## Agenda item 70/25 Planning Committee and planning applications update

*To consider for comment new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council.*

### Ford & Stoke Prior

**252407 Stoke Haven Stoke Prior HR6 0LG** Proposed erection of conservatory.  
The applicant (Mr Mike Wyldes) has been invited to attend the meeting.

**252071 Priory Farm Stoke Prior HR6 0ND** Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 2 3 & 4 attached to planning permission 233094 **Split decision: Condition 2 (landscaping) & condition 4 (biodiversity) are discharged. Condition 3 (water efficiency) is not discharged**

**251923 Land adjoining Croft Gate Farm Stoke Prior** Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 (orchard management plan) attached to planning permission 200705.  
**Discharged**

### Humber

**252379 Land adjacent to Butt Oak Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ** Proposed erection of a self-build, split level family home with detached garage/workshop, parking area, landscaping and associated development.

This application is very similar to 210974 and the applicant is the same (Mr James Bendle). Mr Bendle has been invited to attend the meeting.

### **To note: updates on current planning applications**

#### Ford & Stoke Prior

**223610 Land north of Bowley Court farm** Change of use from a water storage lagoon to a water and anaerobic digestate storage lagoon (retrospective). **Undecided.**  
This application is due to be determined by Herefordshire Planning and Regulatory Committee. However, it is not on the latest posted agenda for the meeting of 3 September 2025.

**204437 Plot 1 Land at Old Hall Stoke Prior HR6 0LH** Proposed construction of a new self-build custom home and garage **Undecided - on hold due to phosphates**

#### Humber.

**241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ** Proposed Conversion of Building to a self-build dwelling House

**Undecided**

**212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG**  
Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses). **Undecided - on hold due to phosphates**

**212473 Dev 1 Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage Risbury HR6 0NG**  
Proposed permission for the siting of a caravan to provide accommodation on site during the construction of a dwelling on Plot 5 approved under application ref 181648. **Undecided- on hold due to phosphates.**

**211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire**  
Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687. **Undecided**

**193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ** Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm. **Undecided**

## **Agenda item 71/25 General Financial Matters Report from the RFO.**

Bank balances on 10 September 2025 are- £11,273.32

Unity Bank current account £6272.32

H&R 90 day account £5,001.00

### **Cost of a community noticeboard**

In the past Council has sourced noticeboards from the Parish Noticeboard Company. These are of aluminium construction, powder coated and if the magnetic mounting board is ordered work well. (The pinboard version for drawing pins tends to degrade and is not recommended). Prices tend to be lower than most other suppliers.

Since this noticeboard is for single use a board with only one section would be satisfactory. High security is unhelpful since residents must be able to easily open the door and post a notice. Such a board is described as a "poster case" which can include a header panel with (say) STOKES PRIOR COMMUNITY NOTICES added.

If wall mounting is possible then the board is cheaper, otherwise aluminium posts are supplied for a free standing board. The colour can be matched to the SPVH boards.

Prices for the various sizes are-

### Wall mounted

#### Portrait

Left or right hinged

A4 (display 297mm x 210mm)	£115.00 + vat
A3 (display 420mm x 297mm)	£165.00 + vat
A2 (display 594mm x 420mm)	£195.00 + vat
A1 (display 841mm x 594mm)	£270.00 + vat

#### Landscape

Top hinged with stay brackets

A1 (display 841mm x 594mm)	£325.00 + vat
A0 (display 1189mm x 841mm)	£390.00 + vat
6040 (display 1524mm x 1016mm)	£535.00 + vat

### Rail Mounted

#### Landscape

Top hinged with stay brackets (£ includes universal rail fixings)

A1 (display 841mm x 594mm)	£460.00 + vat
A0 (display 1189mm x 841mm)	£545.00 + vat
6040 (display 1524mm x 1016mm)	£700.00 + vat

### Freestanding

#### Landscape

Top hinged with stay brackets (£ includes 2 x 76mm aluminium posts)

A1 (display 841mm x 594mm)	£535.00 + vat
A0 (display 1189mm x 841mm)	£620.00 + vat
6040 (display 1524mm x 1016mm)	£775.00 + vat

#### Header panels for poster cases

A1	£55.00 + vat
A0	£65.00 + vat
6040	£90.00 + vat

Assuming a wall mounted portrait board size A1 was ordered with a header then the price is-  
270+55=325 (+VAT). Carriage is an additional £66.66+VAT.

Size A0 is available (though not listed above) at £455+VAT+carriage

Council should discuss the above and, if thought necessary, seek community views on location and size.

### **External auditor's closure and opinion for 2024-25 accounts.**

The documents following have to be presented to Council which should discuss any action necessary. (Given the auditor's opinion that all is in order there are no actions to take other than minuting that Council noted the opinion and final closure of 2024-25 accounts).

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

**HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.		✓	<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

\*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

21/5/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

38/25 (e)

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

### Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

	Yes	No
The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.	✓	

[WWW.HFSPGROUPPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK](http://WWW.HFSPGROUPPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK) WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

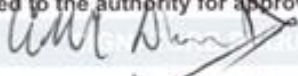
### HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	3,827	1,621	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	15,000	15,322	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	10,740	14,991	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	5,448	8,527	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	22,498	19,485	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,621	3,921	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,621	3,921	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	18,945	19,544	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

 REQUIRED

Date

09/04/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

21/05/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

38/25 (f) NCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED



## Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of **Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council – HE0058**

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance Assertion in Section 1, Box 4, but it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified. This is consistent with the Internal Auditor’s response to Internal Control Objectives M & N.

### 3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

**PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP**

External Auditor Signature

Date

08/09/2025

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3  
Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities\*

Page 6 of 6

Payments made since last meeting					
No.	Name	Ex VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	June 2025 salary
2	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	July 2025 salary, due 25th July
3	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	INV-14066 June 2025 Pump
4	Barrington Print	448.00	0.00	448.00	INV-14209 July 2025 Pump
6	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE June 2025
7	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE July 2025
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2370.38</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2370.38</b>	

Income received since last meeting-			
No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	Treiber M	18.00	TP 86
2	Alan Davies T/A Lockrite	120.00	TP 85
3	Oak Tree Funerals	210.00	TP 81
4	Margaret Brown	36.60	Community Week
5	Matthew Newman	35.00	Advert
6	Risbury Village Hall	40.00	Community Week
7	Credit	3.06	National Grid wayleave payment
8	Margaret Brown	37.10	Community Week
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>499.76</b>	

Payments for Authorisation					
No.	Name	Ex VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	INV 14313 August 2025 Pump
2	Barrington Print	489.00	0.00	489.00	INV 14398 Sept 2025 Pump
3	Enviroloo	83.33	16.67	100.00	Community Week
4	Stoke Prior village hall	75.00	0.00	75.00	July, Sep, November 2025 meetings
5	A M Drew	552.01	0.00	552.01	August 2025 salary
6	A M Drew	552.01	0.00	552.01	September 2025 salary
7	Viking Office Uk	202.44	40.49	242.93	INV 6248681 New B&W printer. Box of printing paper
8	PKF Littlejohn	210.00	42.00	252.00	External audit fee
9	SLCC	118.00	0.00	118.00	Annual subscription
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2741.79</b>	<b>99.15</b>	<b>2840.94</b>	

Council is invited to authorise payments of £2741.79+VAT as appropriate

## Agenda item 74/25 Annual Business from Forward Plan 2025-26

The business carried over from the May meeting and scheduled for this meeting is-

- adoption of new model Financial Regulations as recommended by HALC Internal Audit
- updates to Council GDPR policies.
- roles of Councillors

### Financial Regulations

Rather like the Standing Orders (SOs) reviewed and adopted at the July meeting there is also a set of model Financial Regulations (FRs) which also should be tailored to the needs of a particular Council. Following the relative success of the process followed for SOs the Clerk has worked through these FRs and suggested which wording should be adopted. Councillors received both the model FRs (with wording where choices are required highlighted in yellow) and the suggested options for these highlighted areas some days in advance so there was extra time for consideration. These documents are contained at appendix 1 of these papers and an agreed choice should be made for each yellow area. Any areas not marked as yellow may still be considered for change if thought necessary. Once completed the FRs should be adopted as the Council Financial Regulations.

### GDPR Policies

Council has a number of policies and procedures resulting from the Data Protection Act 2018 and the subsequent General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR). These policies & procedures are available on the Council website and are as follows-

- HFSP Data Protection Policy revised May 2018 - Council's overall policy statement
- HFSP Data Privacy Policy - why and how Council holds and processes residents' data, and their rights
- HFSP Subject Access - How to access your records find out what data the Council holds about you
- HFSP Subject Access request form - request for a copy of your data
- HFSP Data Breach Procedure revised May 2018 - how any data incident will be dealt with
- HFSP Data Retention Schedule - how long data and documents are retained
- HFSP Data Privacy Impact Assessment - the procedure used for any major project

These policies & procedures have been reviewed quite regularly at past Annual Meetings and it is the intention to continue that process for 2025-26. However, Council should note that a new Act (Data Use and Access Act) received Royal assent in June 2025 and will make some significant changes to the GDPR landscape. Exactly how these changes will affect local Councils is not yet clear.

In these circumstances the Clerk recommends that a relatively mild update (addressing anything major) is carried out on the above documents pending a full review in 12 months' time when the full impact of the new legislation will be better understood.

Changes proposed are as follows-

HFSP Data Protection Policy revised May 2018. This policy had been reviewed for the meeting in May 2025 **but no changes are proposed.**

HFSP Data Privacy Policy:

**Concise version at appendix 3 drafted for consideration and adoption.**

HFSP Subject Access How to access your records to find out what data the Council holds about you  
**Update of contact details only**

HFSP Subject Access request form - request for a copy of your data

**Update of contact details only**

HFSP Data Breach Procedure revised May 2018 This policy was re-drafted for the May 2025 meeting. The main change is the removal of the Data Protection Adviser as an explicit role within the policy. The use of such an adviser remains acceptable but such involvement should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

**The revised document is at appendix 4 which Council should consider for adoption**

HFSP Data Retention Schedule - how long data and documents are retained

**Reviewed with no changes**

HFSP Data Privacy Impact Assessment - the procedure used for any major project

**Reviewed with no changes**

### **Roles of Councillors**

The current roles for Councillors are as decided at the July 2023 meeting-

<b>Lead Role</b>	<b>Councillor(s)</b>
Environment	Cllrs. Yair & Hinton
Website	Cllrs. Yair & Marston
Ford & Stoke Prior	Cllr. Fullwood
Humber drainage	Cllr. Pugh (with Cllr. Bemand)
Finance	Cllrs. Yair & Marston
Police liaison	Cllr. Fowler-Wright
Pump liaison	Cllr. Fowler-Wright
Traffic & road safety	Cllrs. Marston & Grace
Safeguarding	Cllr. Yair
Humber Close liaison	Cllr. Grace
Community Week	Cllrs. Fowler-Wright & Marston
Stoke Prior VH	Cllr. Fullwood
Risbury VH	Cllr. Sneyd
<b>Planning</b>	
<i>Humber</i>	Cllrs. Fowler-Wright & Grace
<i>Ford &amp; Stoke Prior</i>	Cllrs. Bemand, Grace & Fullwood
<b>Public rights of way</b>	
<i>Humber footpaths</i>	Mr Philip Brown
<i>Stoke Prior footpaths</i>	Cllr. Sneyd
<i>Bridlepaths</i>	Mr Iain Cholerton (with Cllr. Harris)

Council should discuss this allocation of roles and agree changes, if any

### **Agenda item 75/25 BT K6 kiosk in Stoke Prior**

Council has been advised that following the end of consultation by Herefordshire Council, there is no objection to transferring the kiosk to the Group Parish Council. (The kiosk is listed).

At the end of August 2025 the Council and BT concluded a contract for the Council to buy the kiosk (£1.00) so the kiosk is now Council property.

Such kiosks have been used for many varied purposes around the UK and usually the community is involved in making the decision about how best to utilise this iconic asset. Often the front runner is to house a community defibrillator and that is certainly a strong possibility in Stoke Prior.

However, irrespective of the use of the kiosk, a first priority is to restore it. Follows is a list of tasks and prices based on the Clerk's experience of other kiosk restorations.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Carried out by</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Remove BT equipment	BT	£0	Already arranged but no date yet from BT
Check electric supply suitability and make safe	Local electrician	£100	
Remove glazing	DIY	£0	Simple work. Essential to take care and minimise breakages.
Screen & sandblast shell	Local contractor	£450	Lead paint likely. Use of qualified contractor essential
Repaint in currant red	Local contractor	£150- paint £150 - labour	Usually combined with sandblasting. Bare shell will surface rust very quickly
Replace glazing	DIY	£0	Simple work but has cost if any broken panes
Replace glazing rivets + sealant	DIY	£48	Rivets come as full packs (£30). Sealant is red at £9/tube (2 tubes)
Repaint Crowns	DIY	£0	Gold paint
Modify signage	DIY	£60	Custom signage. Depends on use
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£958</b>	

Above costs are ex-VAT and carriage.

**Notes:**

1. A K6 has 24 large panes and 48 small panes of glass. One of the small panes is a PUSH PULL sign.
2. Removing the glazing is reasonably straightforward. However, each pane is held in a slim cast iron frame which is easily broken. The glass can shatter, particularly the small panes.
3. Replacement glass & frames – large pane £4.90 large frame £8.60  
small pane £2.70 small frame £6.40
4. Kits of frames and glass are available which reduce the cost/item somewhat.
5. Since this kiosk is listed there may be a requirement to achieve planning consent for removal of the TELEPHONE sign and replacing it with (say) Defibrillator. However the planning officer thinks that-
6. If the TELEPHONE sign is turned around so that the script is not visible from outside and (say) a DEFIBRILLATOR sign using the same script and colour added this would be fine. (The TELEPHONE sign has not been removed). Defibrillator signs tend not to come in the same colour/script as the original TELEPHONE sign so a custom sign is necessary. That has been priced above.

If the funds for restoration are agreed then the best way to proceed is to form a working party to carry out the DIY tasks listed above. 4-5 members would be sufficient.

Council should consider the above and decide if the restoration should be carried out as a community project. (Currently there are no community projects for 2025-26).

## Agenda item 76/25 Lengthsman & PROW

The Clerk has discussed the winter works program with the Lengthsman (G&S Longfield Services). This program will form the basis for the grant application due into Herefordshire Council by 26 September. Some of this program will be works not completed last year (due to Lengthsman resignation) and some new works which should start to improve drainage.

- So far no pricing information has been received from the Lengthsman but it is promised in time to submit the grant application.
- Some drain sucking/clearing is included and the Lengthsman has a contractor he uses which he will include in his pricing.
- A camera survey team will also be hired as necessary.

Council should consider these proposals and add/modify as it thinks necessary.

Suggested works are as follows-

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL. DRAINAGE WORKS 2025-26							
Category	Detailed work	Parish	Estimated days of work	Contractor	Estimated non-Labour Cost	Estimated Labour Cost	Notes
1. Ditching Works	Around Risbury, Blacksmiths Lane, C1110 east of village	H		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			
	Downhill from Sunny Bank farm on SW side of C1110	F&SP		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>0</b>				
2. Minor Drainage Schemes	Create silt trap in sump serving drains at The Heath	F&SP		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			tradition.frozen.highly
	Investigate & repair blocked/crushed drain on C1110 around The Gate House	H		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			jaws.ballpoint.successor
	Investigate & repair blocked cross road drain on C1110 near Butterfield on C1110	H		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			field.pheasants.stray
	Build new drain near St Lukes church. Exit into Prill?	F&SP		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			discloses.young.flinch
	Build new drain from C1110 north of the Heath running east to Humber Brook	F&SP		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			banana.tradition.trickles
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>0</b>				
3. Gully Clearing and Cleansing	Drains around Stoke Prior centre	F&SP		TBA			lunges.forkful.washroom
	Drains around the Heath	F&SP		TBA			tradition.frozen.highly
	Drains from SP school to village	F&SP		TBA			exits.reports.zinc
	Drains along C1110 in Risbury centre	H		TBA			excavated.adhesive.specifies
	Drains between Risbury and Bowley Lane junction	H		TBA			jaws.ballpoint.successor
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>0</b>				
4. Other Works	Depth gauge at Ford Bridge	F&SP		G&S Longfield Services Ltd			stupidly.froze.betrayal (approx.)
	Camera survey of problem drains	GPC		TBA			
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>0</b>				

The PROW and annual maintenance plan work is underway as instructed on 21 July 2025.



# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Financial Regulations

Drafted	2025
Adopted	
Review Period	Annual
Last Reviewed	N/A
Next Review	2026
Author	NALC + Allan Drew, RFO

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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

## General

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

**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**

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

## Risk management and internal control

**The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**

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

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

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

**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.**

At least [once in each quarter], and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair {or a cheque signatory} 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 reported to and noted by the council {Finance Committee}.

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.

## **Accounts and audit**

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

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

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

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

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.

**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.**

**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.

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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

## **Budget and precept**

**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.**

Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually in November for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council.

No later than November each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments for the following financial year, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward with the formal approval of the full council.}

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

The draft budget with any committee proposals, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the finance committee and a recommendation made to the council.

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.

**Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**

The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of January** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.

Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

## **Procurement**

**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.

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.

Every contract shall comply with the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.

**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.**

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

**For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT, the Clerk shall {seek formal tenders from at least [three] suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.**

**For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation<sup>1</sup> regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**

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

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

**For smaller purchases, [the clerk] shall seek to achieve value for money.**

**Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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.

The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- [the Clerk], under delegated authority, for any items below [£500] excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council {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 [£5,000] 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 [£5,000];

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

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

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.

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.

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.

An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services {above [£250] 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.

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

## Banking and payments

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 Unity Trust Bank plc The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

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.

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]. {Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO}.

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.

All payments shall be made by [online banking/cheque], in accordance with a resolution of the council {or duly delegated committee}{or a delegated decision by an officer}, unless [the council] resolves to use a different payment method.

{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}.

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

{A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee} for information only.

The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:

- i. any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
- ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
- iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the RFO certifies 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.

The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council {or finance committee}. The council {or 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.

## Electronic payments

Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. {The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.}

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

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.

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 two authorised signatories.

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

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

Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.

A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting {and appended to the minutes}.

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 [signed/approved online] by [two authorised members]. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.

Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of [the council] provided that each payment is approved online by [two 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.

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 or approved online by two 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.

Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by [two of] the Clerk and [the RFO] [a member]. 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].

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.

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

### **Cheque payments**

Cheques or orders for payment in accordance in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be raised by the RFO and signed by two members

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.

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.

Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council meeting}. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.

### **Payment cards**

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 £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

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 council's discretion.

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

Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall be re-imbursed following the normal verification rules contained within these Regulations

## **Petty Cash**

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 shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.}

## **Payment of salaries and allowances**

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

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

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.

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.

Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.

Each payment 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 committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

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.

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

## **Loans and investments**

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

## **Income**

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

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.

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.

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.

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

The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date. Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least annually at the end of the financial year.}

### **Payments under contracts for building or other construction works**

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.

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.

### **Stores and equipment**

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

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.

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

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

### **Assets, properties and estates**

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.

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.

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

### **Insurance**

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.

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

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 {in consultation with the Clerk}.

All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council.

## **Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations**

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.

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.

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.

## FINANCIAL REGULATIONS - ITEMS REQUIRING COUNCIL CHOICE/AGREEMENT

The relevant FR, or part of, is highlighted in yellow on the FR document

FR Ref.	Page no.	Text	Clerk's Recommendation	Council Determination
5.6	7	For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT, the Clerk shall {seek formal tenders from at least [three] suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.	For contracts estimated to exceed £30,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.	
5.8	8	For contracts greater than [£3,000] excluding VAT the Clerk [or RFO] shall seek at least [3] fixed-price quotes;	For contracts greater than £5,000 excluding VAT the RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;	
5.9	8	where the value is between [£500] and [£3,000] excluding VAT, the Clerk [or RFO] shall try to obtain 3 estimates {which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.}	where the value is between £500 and £5,000 excluding VAT, the RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates {which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.}	
5.10	8	For smaller purchases, [the clerk] shall seek to achieve value for money.	For smaller purchases, the RFO shall seek to achieve value for money.	
5.13	8	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.	When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.	

<b>FR Ref.</b>	<b>Page no.</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Clerk's Recommendation</b>	<b>Council Determination</b>
5.15	8	[the Clerk], under delegated authority, for any items below [£500] excluding VAT.	the RFO, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.	
5.15	8	the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council {or Chair of the appropriate committee}, for any items below [£2,000] excluding VAT.	the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council {or Chair of the appropriate committee}, for any items between £500 and £1000 excluding VAT.	
5.15	8	{a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under [£5,000] excluding VAT}	Omit this regulation	
5.15	8	{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.}	Omit this regulation	
5.15	8	the council for all items over [£5,000];	the council for all items over £1,000	
5.16	8	No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order {unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council} or make any contract on behalf of the council.	No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.	
5.17	9	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.	No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council. In cases of emergency the RFO will discuss the problem with the Chair and act appropriately following agreement	

FR Ref.	Page no.	Text	Clerk's Recommendation	Council Determination
5.18	9	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.	Accept as written	
5.19	9	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	Accept as written	
5.20	9	An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services {above [£250] 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..	Accept as written	

FR Ref.	Page no.	Text	Clerk's Recommendation	Council Determination
6.2	9	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.	The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. The RFO is the only person with authority to raise payments. The RFO will forward copies of the relevant invoices to Councillors authorising the payments. Such payments are authorised by two Councillors registered on the bank mandate. These arrangements apply to online and cheque payments.	
6.3	9	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]. {Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO}.	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.	
6.5	9	All payments shall be made by [online banking/cheque], in accordance with a resolution of the council {or duly delegated committee}{or a delegated decision by an officer}, unless [the council] resolves to use a different payment method.	All payments shall be made by online banking/cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the council or a delegated decision by an officer.	

FR Ref.	Page no.	Text	Clerk's Recommendation	Council Determination
6.6	10	<p>{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}.</p>	<p>Omit this regulation.</p> <p>Also by inference omit 6.7 &amp; 6.8</p>	
6.10	10	<p>The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council {or finance committee}. The council {or 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.</p>	<p>The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.</p>	

<b>FR Ref.</b>	<b>Page no.</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Clerk's Recommendation</b>	<b>Council Determination</b>
7.5	11	In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator [an authorised signatory] shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.	In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator, the Chair, in the presence of a member of the Finance Committee, shall open the sealed envelope containing the information necessary to logon as the Service Administrator. The Finance Committee member will then use this information to act as the Service Administrator until the return of the regular Service Administrator. Logon information will be changed before the regular Administrator raises any transactions.	
7.12	11	Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by [two of] the Clerk and [the RFO] [a member]. 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].	Account details for suppliers will be verified by the bank on supplier setup and may not be overridden by the Service Administrator. Should a supplier fail the bank's verification the supplier should be contacted and no payment made until the problem is properly resolved.	
13.6	14	The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date. Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least annually at the end of the financial year.}	Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least annually at the end of the financial year.	

# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Data Privacy Policy

Drafted	2025
Adopted	
Review Period	5 years
Last Reviewed	2022
Next Review	2030
Author	Allan Drew, Clerk

**Introduction** This Privacy Policy outlines how we hold and process your data, and your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

**Personal Data** Personal data refers to any information about a living individual that allows them to be identified. This includes names, photographs, email addresses, and more.

**Data Controller** The Data Controller for your data is Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council. Contact details: The Coach House, Pencombe, Bromyard, HR7 4RL. Email: [clerk@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Data Processing** We process personal data for various purposes, including:

- Delivering public services
- Confirming identity
- Contacting you
- Preventing fraud
- Meeting legal obligations
- Safeguarding procedures
- Promoting council interests
- Maintaining records
- Seeking your views
- Notifying you of changes
- Processing financial transactions
- Statistical analysis

**Legal Basis** We process personal data to comply with legal obligations, perform contracts, and with your consent when necessary.

**Data Sharing** We may share your data with agents, suppliers, contractors, and other local authorities when necessary to perform our functions.

**Data Retention** We retain data only as long as necessary, following legal requirements and best practices. We have a data retention policy with more information, also available on this site.

**Your Rights** You have rights regarding your personal data, including access, correction, erasure, objection, data portability, and the right to withdraw consent. Contact the data controller if you wish to exercise any of these rights.

**Data Transfer Abroad** Personal data transferred outside the EEA will be protected by equivalent measures.

**Further Processing** If we use your data for new purposes, we will inform you and seek your consent if necessary.

**Policy Updates** This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as needed. Last updated: September 2025.

**Contact** For questions or to exercise your rights, contact: Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council, The Coach House, Pencombe, Bromyard, HR7 4RL. Email: [clerk@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk)

# Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

## Draft Data Breach Procedure

Drafted	2025
Adopted	
Review Period	5 years
Last Reviewed	N/A
Next Review	2030
Author	Allan Drew, Clerk

## **Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council is a Data Controller.**

The Parish Council is required to keep the personal data it holds secure, to identify when a breach has occurred and to know how to deal with a breach should one occur. All matters relating to data protection, including the handling of data breaches are delegated to the Clerk.

### **What is a personal data breach?**

A personal data breach means a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data.

This includes breaches that are the result of both accidental and deliberate causes. It also means that a breach is more than just about losing personal data.

Personal data breaches can include:

- access by an unauthorised third party;
- deliberate or accidental action (or inaction) by a controller or processor;
- sending personal data to an incorrect recipient;
- computing devices containing personal data being lost or stolen;
- alteration of personal data without permission; and;
- loss of availability of personal data.

A personal data breach can be broadly defined as a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity or availability of personal data. In short, there will be a personal data breach whenever any personal data is lost, destroyed, corrupted or disclosed; if someone accesses the data or passes it on without proper authorisation; or if the data is made unavailable, for example, when it has been encrypted by ransomware, or accidentally lost or destroyed.

### **What to do when a breach occurs**

1. The Clerk must be notified as soon as a Councillor becomes aware that it has occurred. This includes evenings, weekends, and holidays.
2. The Clerk will obtain as much information as possible from the person reporting the breach.
3. The Clerk will establish the likelihood and severity of the risk to people's rights and freedoms, referring to the guidance published by the Information Commissioner's Office.
4. If it is likely that there will be risk, the Clerk will notify the Information Commissioner's Office via their website within 72 hours of the time that the employee or councillor became aware that the breach occurred.
5. If the Clerk concludes that there is unlikely to be a risk to people's rights and freedoms, then the breach will not be reported.
6. The Clerk will make a clear record of the reasons for not reporting the breach.
7. The Clerk will ensure that any and all steps are immediately taken to contain the breach and minimise any potential risk of harm to the people whose data has been breached
8. If the Clerk concludes that the breach is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, the Clerk will consider whether the individuals affected should be informed directly, applying the assessment guidance published by the Information Commissioner's Office. Where necessary the Clerk will ensure that these individuals are informed directly and without undue delay to enable them to take steps to protect themselves from the potential effects of the breach.
9. The Clerk will also consider whether it would be necessary to notify third parties such as the police, insurers, professional bodies, or bank or credit card companies who can help reduce the risk of financial loss to individuals.

When assessing how to deal with a breach the Clerk will ensure that the decision-making process is fully documented in accordance with the principle of accountability in data processing. The Clerk will then carry out an investigation to determine how the breach occurred, whether any Council policies were breached and by whom, and what measures can be put in place to reduce the risk of a similar breach occurring in the future. If the breach is deemed to be due to any action or inaction by an employee or councillor, then there will be an assessment of whether it will be appropriate to invoke the Parish Council's Disciplinary Policy or the Code of Conduct Policy (for Councillors).

### **The role of external Data Processors**

The Parish Council uses the following external organisations to store personal data:

- Autela to store the Parish Council's payroll data;
- 20i - for emails.
- Microsoft OneDrive for cloud backup of files

If an external processor suffers a breach, it is required to inform the Parish Council without undue delay as soon as it becomes aware. This requirement enables the Parish Council to take steps to address the breach and meet its reporting obligations under the GDPR.