

Financial Regulations

|  |
| --- |
| **Document Control** |
| Document No. | POL-02 |
| Adoption Date | Sep 2008 |
| Last Review Date | Sept 2022 |
| Next Review Date | May 2024 |

Parish Office

Whittle Hall Community Centre

Lonsdale Close

Great Sankey www.greatsankeypc.org.uk

Warrington enquiries@gs-pc.net

WA5 3UA 01925 712279

**Contents Page**

1. General 3

2. Annual Estimates 5

3. Budgetary Control 5

4. Accounting and Audit 6

5. Banking Arrangements 7

6. Payment of accounts 9

7. Payment of Salaries and Wages 10

8. Loans and Investments 10

9. Income 11

10. Orders for Work, Goods and Services 12

11. Contracts 12

12. Payments under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works 14

13. Stores and Equipment 14

14. Properties and Estates 15

15. Insurance 15

16. Risk Management 16

17. Revision of Financial Regulations 16

**1. GENERAL**

* 1. These financial regulations shall govern the conduct of the financial transactions of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations are one of the council’s three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council’s standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council’s functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

1.3 The council’s accounting control systems must include measures:

* for the timely production of accounts.
* that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money.
* to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud.
* identifying the duties of officers.

1.4 These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5 At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

1.7 Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

1.8 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.

1.9 The RFO;

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

1.10 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council’s transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

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

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

* procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible.
* procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records.
* identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions.
* procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records.
* measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

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

* setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement).
* approving accounting statements.
* approving an annual governance statement.
* borrowing.
* writing off bad debts.
* declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence.
* addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.

1.14 In addition, the council must:

* determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts.
* approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of [£5,000].
* in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or ‘the regulations’ shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

**2. ANNUAL ESTIMATES**

2.1 Detailed estimates of income and expenditure on revenue services, receipts and payments on capital account shall be prepared each year by the Clerk/RFO in the form of a budget to be considered by the Finance Committee and the council.

2.2 The Council shall prepare and have regard to a three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments which shall be prepared at the same time as the annual budget.

2.3 The Finance Committee shall review the annual budget proposals in relation to the three-year forecast, including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding, and submit them to the council not later than the January meeting in each year. The Finance Committee shall recommend the precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The Clerk/RFO shall supply each member with a copy of the approved estimates.

2.4 The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

**3. BUDGETARY CONTROL**

3.1 Expenditure on the revenue account may be incurred up to the amounts included in each category of expenditure in the approved budget.

3.2 No expenditure may be incurred which cannot be met from the amount provided for in the appropriate category of the budget unless a virement has been approved by the Finance Committee of the Council.

3.3 The Clerk/RFO shall regularly provide the Finance Committee with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the approved annual revenue and capital budgets comparing actual expenditure against that planned as shown in the budget.

3.4 The Clerk/RFO may incur expenditure on behalf of the council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £2500. The Clerk/RFO shall report the action to the appropriate Committee as soon as practicable thereafter.

3.5 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with regulation 3.4 above and the sum required cannot be met by savings made elsewhere within the approved budget, it shall be subject to the provisions of a supplementary estimate approved by the Finance Committee or council.

3.6 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

3.7 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving expenditure on capital account unless the Council are satisfied that it is contained in the rolling capital programme and the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval can be obtained.

3.8 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

3.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

**4. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT**

4.1 The Clerk/RFO as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 (or any subsequent regulations or amendments) shall determine all accounting procedures and financial records of the Council.

4.2 On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Finance Committee.

4.3 The Clerk/RFO shall be responsible for completing the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them and report thereon to the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.4 The Clerk~~/~~RFO shall be responsible for ensuring that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the Clerk/RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the Clerk/RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the Clerk/RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Clerk/RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.

4.5 The internal auditor shall:

* be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council.
* report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year.
* demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships.
* have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.

4.6 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

* perform any operational duties for the council.
* initiate or approve accounting transactions.
* direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

4.7 The Clerk/RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors’ rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.8 The Clerk/RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

**5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

5.1 The Council's banking arrangements shall be made by the Clerk/RFO and approved by the Finance Committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.

5.2 A schedule of the payments required, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting, shall be prepared by the Clerk/RFO and, together with the relevant invoices, be presented to the Finance Committee. The schedule shall clearly state the method of payment, e.g., cheque or BACS. If the schedule is in order, it shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council and shall be initialled by the Chair of the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.

5.3 The Finance Committee is delegated power to authorise payments for salaries, Inland Revenue, utilities, office and cleaning supplies. Such payments must be authorised by resolution of the Finance Committee and checked as set out in paragraph 5.2. Payments so authorised must be reported to and ratified by the next available meeting of the council.

5.4 Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 or in accordance with paragraph 6.6, shall be signed by two members of council.

5.5 To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

5.6 Online banking

a) The Clerk/RFO and Deputy Clerk shall have authority to view the Council’s accounts, download statements and submit, but not authorise, payments to be made by BACS. Authorisation of payments shall be by bank signatories only.

b) BACS payments shall be submitted in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2, or in accordance with paragraph 6.6.

c) Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly via the bank’s access page and not through a search engine or email link. Remembered or saved password facilities shall not be used on any computer used for council banking.

5.7 Prepaid cards issued through the Council’s bank may be given to delegated council officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

a) Vouchers or receipts for payments shall be submitted to the Clerk/RFO as soon as practicable.

b) The Clerk/RFO shall maintain a record of payments made to, and balances of, the overall account and the individual cards. This record shall be presented to the Finance Committee for agreement at each meeting. A sample of payments shall be checked against the relevant invoices by a member of the Finance Committee and initialled accordingly.

c) Payments to maintain the float (£1000) on the prepaid cards shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to Council under 5.2 above.

d) Prepaid cards may have the limit increased between meetings for a specified expenditure if agreed by the Committee and checked at the next meeting.

5.8 The Clerk/RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the Clerk/RFO with a claim for reimbursement:

a) The Clerk/RFO shall maintain as petty cash float of £50 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to Council under 5.2 above.

5.9 No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts to any person not authorised in writing by the Council or delegated Committee.

5.10 Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.

5.11 The council, and any members using computers for the council’s financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

5.12 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

## **6. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

6.1 All payments shall be effected by BACS or cheque or other order drawn on the Council's bankers. Regular standard payments may be made by the direct debit/standing order banking mechanism by approval of the Finance Committee. Such payments shall be separately detailed on the schedule of payments to the committee (section 5.2).

6.2 Changes to account details for suppliers which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by the RFO.

6.3 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk/RFO. Before certifying an invoice, the Clerk/RFO shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved. The Finance Committee shall randomly select and check several payments against the invoices and countersign the invoices accordingly along with the relevant item on the BACS schedule or cheque stub.

6.4 The Clerk/RFO shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available Finance Committee/Council Meeting.

6.5 Payments of invoices may be made by BACS outside of meetings of either the council or the Finance Committee under the following specified circumstances:

* a quote for the work or supply has been previously received and approved by the Finance Committee.
* the invoice accurately reflects the quote received. If additional expenditure was incurred, the payment must be approved at a meeting of the Finance Committee.
* any payment made in this way must be clearly shown on the schedule of payments submitted to the Finance Committee with the agenda for the meeting.

6.6 If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Council, where the Clerk/RFO certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, the RFO may (notwithstanding para 6.4) take all steps necessary to settle such invoices provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

## **7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND WAGES**

7.1 The payment of all salaries and wages shall be made by the Clerk/RFO in accordance with the payroll needs. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by council. A sample of salaries listed on the wages spreadsheet shall be checked against the relevant payslip and BACS schedule for accuracy and initialled accordingly.

7.2 The Clerk/RFO shall certify all time/expense sheets as to accuracy.

7.3 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates, authorised by the Finance Committee, provided that each payment is reported to and ratified by the next available council meeting.

7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know.

b) by the internal auditor.

c) by the external auditor.

d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.

**8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS**

8.1 All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.

8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

8.3 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with Council policy. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.

8.4 The Council’s Investment Policy shall be in accordance with the Trustee Act 2000 and shall be reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually).

8.5 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

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

**9. INCOME**

9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the Clerk/RFO.

9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the Clerk/RFO and the Clerk/RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Clerk/RFO.

9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the Finance Committee and shall be written off in the year.

9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be paid to the Clerk/RFO for banking intact. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the Clerk/RFO considers necessary.

9.6 A reference to the related debt, or otherwise, indicating the origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

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

9.8 The Clerk/RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

9.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the Clerk/RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

**10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES**

10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

10.2 Order books shall be controlled by the Clerk/RFO.

10.3 The Clerk/RFO is responsible for obtaining value for money as all times and, when issuing an official order is to ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

10.5 The Clerk/RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the Clerk/RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

**11. CONTRACTS**

11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

(a) every contract whether made by the Council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than by direction of the Council or in an emergency by such a committee as aforesaid provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

(i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage, and telephone services.

(ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors, and planning consultants.

(iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant.

(iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council.

(v) for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk/RFO shall act after consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Council).

(vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.

(b) A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in the councils Standing Order 31.15 is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).

(c) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.

(d) Every exception made by the Finance Committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated shall be reported to the Council and the report shall specify the emergency by which the exception shall have been justified.

(e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk/RFO shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk/RFO and the last date by which such tenders should reach the Clerk/RFO in the ordinary course of post. 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.

(f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk/RFO in the presence of at least one member of Council.

(g) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £25,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.

(h) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 25.9 and 25.11 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

(i) When it is to enter into a contract:

(i) less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk/RFO shall obtain 3 formal written quotations (i.e. priced descriptions of the proposed supply) for the Council/Finance Committee to consider;

(ii) where the value is below £3,000 and above £100 the Clerk/RFO shall strive to obtain 3 quotations, written if possible but verbal will be accepted, and less than 3 will be considered if efforts to obtain 3 fail. Price comparisons from catalogues, advertisements and internet sites will also be acceptable when the value is less than £1000. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.

(j) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest of any tender, quote or estimate.

(k) for expenditures of £10,000 or less in value the Chair of the Council, Vice Chair, Chair of Finance, or Chair of Employment, with the Clerk, shall have executive powers to authorise expenditure in cases of urgent need.

l) Should it occur that 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, provided that the specification does not change, 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.

**12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the Clerk/RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the Clerk/RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.

12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Clerk/RFO to the Contractor in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

**13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

13.1 Council Officers and Caretakers of the Community Centres shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in their premises.

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

13.3 Stocks shall generally be maintained at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

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

**14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

14.1 The Clerk/RFO shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The Clerk/RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

14.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.

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

14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property (above £2000) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council.

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

**15. INSURANCE**

15.1 Following an annual risk assessment, the Clerk/RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

15.2 The Clerk/RFO shall attend to all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

15.3 The Clerk/RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

15.4 The Clerk/RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.

15.5 All appropriate employees of the council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the council or duly delegated committee.

**16. RISK MANAGEMENT**

16.1 The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk/RFO shall prepare and promote risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

16.2 When considering any new activity, the Clerk/RFO shall prepare a draft risk management policy for the activity and shall bring a draft addressing the legal and financial liabilities and risk management issues that arise to council for consideration and, if thought appropriate, adoption.

**17. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

17.1 It shall be the duty of the Finance Committee to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time and to make such recommendations to the council as the committee considers are required.

17.2 The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.